



**Pathways**  
**TO**  
**GENEROSITY**

**Daily Devotional**  
**January 9 – February 4, 2022**

Dear Family and Friends of Second Presbyterian Church,

As you receive this Stewardship devotional early in January, it may seem to be a strange time for Stewardship. In the churches I served we had the annual fall stewardship campaign. You would have thought it was part of the liturgical year that came before thanksgiving! So a winter stewardship timeline may seem odd. Then I remembered the story of the Magi who we remember during Epiphany. We remember that in response to the birth of Christ, they brought precious gifts to the Christ child. This is how Matthew spoke of it in Matthew 2:

*On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*

Note how their desire to offer gifts is connected to their worship of Christ. Spirituality and giving come together. In that spirit your Stewardship team offers you this devotional as an opportunity for worship and spiritual reflection as you prayerfully consider the gift you will make through your pledge. This pledge is your gift to the mission and ministry of Christ at Second Presbyterian Church. I encourage you to use this devotion to read, reflect and pray about the gift God has given us in Christ. May this time be a time when we connect the giving of our gifts with our desire to worship, honor and serve Jesus Christ. May you find joy in knowing that your gifts support the very reason Christ came into the world. Howard Thurman put it this way:

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal the broken,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people,  
to make music in the heart.*

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jody Welker'. The signature is stylized with loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jody Welker  
Transitional Pastor

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each day's reading has four parts. Expect to spend a few minutes reading, meditating and praying.

### Read

Slowly read the passage listed. The passages are short, so take time to consider each phrase. If you do not understand something, you might refer to your Bible's study notes or refer to an online source.

### Apply

Read the brief interpretation in light of the passage. What is the Biblical writer trying to say? What is the main point? Using the questions, seek the Spirit's guidance in your own response to the passage. These questions are intended to cause you to slow down and reflect on the truth God is teaching you. How does the Biblical teaching apply to your life? Where do you need to grow or change? How has Christ already changed you?

### Pray

Spend time listening and talking with God. Ask God what the passage is saying to you. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you.

### Do

Daily suggestions that may help root the message of the scripture into your heart and life.

# DAY 1 – TREASURE – January 9, 2021

***Matthew 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”***

Read - **Matthew 6:19-24**

<sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust<sup>[a]</sup> consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust<sup>[b]</sup> consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. <sup>22</sup> “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; <sup>23</sup> but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! <sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.<sup>[c]</sup>

## Apply

Jesus reminds us that much of what we treasure has no lasting value. Money and things will not accompany us to heaven. Yet, we live in a society that encourages us to want more; more things, more money, more power. In these verses, Jesus teaches us that one of the most important things we can discover is what we most treasure. That is where our hearts are most closely aligned. What is your treasure?

Jesus alerts us to the powerful tug that material wealth often possesses, an allure that makes us act contrary to our Christian faith. We say that we live for heaven and yet our spending habits would argue otherwise. Jesus calls us to examine where we place our money and our heart.

- 1. Where is the bulk of your treasure? Is that where your heart is?**
- 2. When you give, does that frighten or excite you? Why?**

## Pray

For a heart that desires to pursue treasure that will further the Kingdom of God.

## Do

Look at your bank statement and your credit card statements. Specifically, where does most of your money go? Are those your priorities?

# DAY 2 – THANKS – January 10, 2021

***Deuteronomy 8:17-18 “Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.”***

## Read

### **Deuteronomy 8:10-18**

<sup>10</sup>You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

<sup>11</sup>Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. <sup>12</sup>When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, <sup>13</sup>and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup>then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, <sup>15</sup>who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous<sup>[a]</sup> snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, <sup>16</sup>and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. <sup>17</sup>Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” <sup>18</sup>But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

## Apply

The Israelites had been very aware of God’s grace for 40 years. God had provided them with the essentials of life: food, water, and clothing that had not worn out. God had lead them with pillars of fire and cloud. There had been challenges but at the end of the day, they were doing well. This scripture is reminding us that it is God who blesses us and it is God to whom we offer thanks.

Giving thanks nurtures our relationship with God, diminishes our pride and enables us to walk humbly with God and others.

- 1. How often do you offer thanks to God? Do you practice daily habits of gratefulness?**
- 2. What causes you to struggle with pride?**

## Pray

For a thankful heart and a spirit of humility as you reflect on the blessings of God.

## Do

Make a list of all the things you have to be thankful for today.

# DAY 3 – BLESSED – January 11, 2021

***2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ”***

## Read

### **2 Corinthians 9:6-11**

<sup>6</sup>The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup>Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. <sup>9</sup>As it is written,

“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;  
his righteousness<sup>[a]</sup> endures forever.”

<sup>10</sup>He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>11</sup>You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us;

## Apply

God provides “every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” There is no need to be hesitant in generosity because of a fear that we will not have enough for our life. Instead, we can give with a cheerful heart, trusting that God will bless us abundantly. God knows our situation. God is aware of our scarcity and abundance. Our giving comes from a heart that trusts God in all circumstances.

- 1. What would it look like to trust God fully with your material wealth?**
- 2. What helps you to be a cheerful giver?**

## Pray

For thanksgiving for God’s abundance in your life.

## Do

Write down three times when you have been a cheerful giver.

# DAY 4 – SECURITY – January 12, 2021

***Luke 12:15 “And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”***

## Read

### **Luke 12:13-21**

<sup>13</sup>Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” <sup>14</sup>But he said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” <sup>16</sup>Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. <sup>17</sup>And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup>Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ <sup>21</sup>So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

## Apply

The rich fool thought he could trust in his grain. Yet the grain outlasted his own life. He invested his wealth with something it could not give, security. It would always be there to make his life comfortable. However, the things of this world are unstable, like a pile of sand ready to collapse. God’s response to him is blunt: “You fool.”

Having an abundance of money is not construed as negative in God’s eye, but believing money will make us happy is foolish. When is enough, enough? When we trust God with our life, including our wealth, we can relinquish the grip we have on wealth and give our financial worries to God. We can ask God to help us acknowledge how much our wealth could be used to bless the world.

- 1. How much money is ‘enough’ for you and your family?**
- 2. What would it look like to use your wealth to bless the world?**

## Pray

For a renewed heart that sees money as a gift to use to bless the world.

## Do

Look at your long-term goals: home, retirement and children. How could you reprioritize your spending so that you would gain some financial freedom?

# DAY 5 – TRUST – January 13, 2021

**Matthew 6:24-25** *“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”*

## Read

### Matthew 25:14-30

<sup>14</sup> “For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five talents,<sup>[a]</sup> to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup> The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup> In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ <sup>21</sup> His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ <sup>22</sup> And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ <sup>23</sup> His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ <sup>24</sup> Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ <sup>26</sup> But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup> For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

## Apply

We tend to think what we have is not enough. We can squander opportunities in the mistaken belief that we need to hold on tightly to what we have in our hands. In this well-known parable

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of the talents, the message is to use it or lose it. How we use what we have tells us who is in charge of our life.

**1. What would it take to trust God with all that you have? Imagine what you could do with what is available to you right now.**

**2. What is the difference between hoarding and saving? Which one do you practice most?**

## Pray

For a heart that can trust God enough to take a calculated risk.

## Do

Dream about what you might do if you invested some of what you have now. Develop a plan for making that happen.

# DAY 6 – CONTENTMENT – January 14, 2021

***Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.”***

## Read

### **Hebrews 13:1-6**

**13** Let mutual love continue. <sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>4</sup> Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. <sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” <sup>6</sup> So we can say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper;  
I will not be afraid.  
What can anyone do to me?”

## Apply

In the midst of exhorting Christians to live accordingly to the gospel, the writer to the Hebrews actually commands contentment. Just as contentment is a result of trusting God, it is also the means of trusting God. To be discontent is to accuse God of being either unloving or impotent. Contentment with our life is as important as the virtue of love, hospitality or mercy.

Unfortunately, we live in a culture of discontentment. So often we see ads on television and on social media trying to convince us that what we have is not good enough. The message they convey is that we need something new, something better and something more fashionable. Desires began to direct our thinking.

Paul advises Timothy to stay focused on the lasting joy of contentment. “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.” (1 Timothy 6:6)

- 1. Are you content with what you have? If not, then why?**
- 2. How do you handle the pressure to ‘keep up’ or conform to a higher standard of living?**

## Pray

For a heart that is content, that isn’t always looking to new things for satisfaction.

## Do

Carefully look at a few ads today. What type of better life do they promise? Is it real? How are people enticed into thinking that their life isn’t good enough without a certain thing?

# DAY 7 – DO GOOD – January 15, 2021

**1 Timothy 6:18** *“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share.”*

## Read

### **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

<sup>17</sup> As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, <sup>19</sup> thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

## Apply

God wants us to be happy. He wants us to experience abundance as a gift to be shared with others and to be enjoyed. When we love money too much we become like Ebenezer Scrooge, focusing on financial gain and forgetting it is a gift to be shared. This scripture reminds us not to love money, but to love God and ask for God’s direction when sharing our abundance.

- 1. Take an honest look at some of your most intense desires. Does money play a role in them? In what way does it play a role?**
- 2. What do you think about the people who have a lot more money and possessions than you? Are they better people? More secure? Do they live a better life?**

## Pray

For a heart that recognizes the beauty of Christ above all the ‘things’ we might own.

## Do

Take one alluring aspect of money and write a list of the ways it affects your life. For example, “The ways that I act like money gives me pleasure are...” or “The ways I act like money makes me better than other people...”

# DAY 8 – WELCOME – January 16, 2021

***Luke 14:13-14 “But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed.”***

## Read

### **Luke 14:12-24**

<sup>12</sup> He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. <sup>13</sup> But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. <sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” <sup>15</sup> One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, “Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” <sup>16</sup> Then Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> said to him, “Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. <sup>17</sup> At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ <sup>18</sup> But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.’ <sup>19</sup> Another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.’ <sup>20</sup> Another said, ‘I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.’ <sup>21</sup> So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ <sup>22</sup> And the slave said, ‘Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.’ <sup>23</sup> Then the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you,<sup>[b]</sup> none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.’”

## Apply

In this parable Jesus helps us understand that all people have value in God’s kingdom. We would like to think that the social issues described here happened only in the first century and do not happen in our own society, especially in our churches. Unfortunately, far too often Christian communities are not always accessible for everyone. Jesus calls us to include those who are often excluded. As God’s people, we are to be humble and seek to live by a different social standard than the world.

- 1. When have you been aware of instances where people have been excluded because of ability or social standing? What did you do in response? What could you do?**
- 2. Who are poor, the crippled and the lame in your life?**

## Pray

For a God to soften your heart and reveal to you those you choose to avoid.

## Do

Find out how our church is welcoming to people of different abilities and social groups.

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# DAY 9 – GIFTED – January 17, 2021

**1 Corinthians 12:27** “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

## Read

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

<sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. <sup>14</sup>Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many members, yet one body. <sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; <sup>24</sup>whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, <sup>25</sup>that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

## Apply

Paul uses the workings of the human body to illustrate how the body of Christ is to work. He was speaking against an attitude of elitism that elevated some and put down others. He likens the church to the human physical body. He tells us that we are each gifted in particular ways; no gift is better than another. We are to discern what our individual spiritual gifts are and then cultivate them for Jesus.

- 1. What gifts do you have? How have you used them for God?**
- 2. What gifts do you see in other people? Are there some people whose gifts you have a hard time determining?**

## Pray

That you might fully utilize the gifts God had given you and that you might help others fully utilize their own gifts to glorify God.

## Do

Take a Spiritual Gift Inventory.

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# DAY 10 – ONE – January 18, 2021

***Galatians 3:28 “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”***

## Read

### **Galatians 3:26-29**

<sup>26</sup> for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. <sup>27</sup> As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring,<sup>[a]</sup> heirs according to the promise.

## Apply

The external social conditions of the world have no place in the body of Christ. When we become a Christ follower, we leave behind our old perceptions of the world and put on the ways of Jesus. The new reality directs our interactions with others and reminds us that our identity is found in Christ.

- 1. What social hindrances do you struggle with? How might you live into a different reality?**
- 2. What challenges do you see for the church today?**

## Pray

For a life that expresses the equality of all people.

## Do

Write five sentences about your understanding of being one in Christ.

# DAY 11 – FAMILY – January 19, 2021

***Psalm 115:14-15 “May the LORD give you increase, both you and your children. May you be blessed by the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”***

## Read

### Psalm 115

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and our faithfulness. <sup>2</sup> Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?” <sup>3</sup> Our God is in the heavens; he does whatever he pleases. <sup>4</sup> Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. <sup>5</sup> They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. <sup>6</sup> They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. <sup>7</sup> They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; they make no sound in their throats. <sup>8</sup> Those who make them are like them; so are all who trust in them. <sup>9</sup> O Israel, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. <sup>10</sup> O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. <sup>11</sup> You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. <sup>12</sup> The LORD has been mindful of us; he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron; <sup>13</sup> he will bless those who fear the LORD, both small and great. <sup>14</sup> May the LORD give you increase, both you and your children. <sup>15</sup> May you be blessed by the LORD, who made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup> The heavens are the LORD’s heavens, but the earth he has given to human beings. <sup>17</sup> The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any that go down into silence. <sup>18</sup> But we will bless the LORD from this time on and forevermore.

## Apply

In the Hebrew bible, families were held in high esteem. They understood how important it was for faith to be passed on from generation to generation. This Psalm reminds us to give God glory because of God’s love and faithfulness in our lives. The author reminds us to trust in God at all times and remember how God has been present when it felt like no one else understood. Verses 14-15 are a blessing of hope for Israel. We can understand them as a blessing of hope for the church today. Our prayer is that the church might grow and prosper for generations to come.

- 1. Why is it important to understand that children are not just the responsibility of their immediate families, but also of the community of faith?**
- 2. How can we strengthen families in our church? What could we do to encourage them in this time of confusion and anxiety?**

## Pray

For a heart of love for families. Pray that our church might be a place of safety and welcome for all of God’s children.

## Do

Write a note of encouragement to a family. Tell them you are praying for them and how you admire their faith.

# DAY 12 – DIRECTIONS – January 20, 2021

***Psalm 127:1 “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.”***

## Read

### **Psalm 127:1-5**

<sup>1</sup> Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain. <sup>2</sup> It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>3</sup> Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. <sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one’s youth. <sup>5</sup> Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

## Apply

This Psalm, written to David’s son, Solomon tells us of the importance of asking God to direct our lives. We are quick to assume responsibility for everything we do, we often forget to turn to God when making decisions. It is important to seek God in all of our lives ranging from business decisions to family decisions. This is not just a Psalm about the blessing of having children, it is a Psalm about the importance of turning to God in all that we do. In whatever way children are a part of our life, whether in our homes, students in a class or as young people we interact with at church, we need to remember they are gifts. We need to remember the great responsibility we have been given to help teach the way of faith.

**1. Are you allowing God to build your life?**

**2. How do you allow God to watch over your life and the life of your family?**

## Pray

For a humble heart that wants God to direct your life.

## Do

Make a list of all the young people you interact with on a daily basis. If you find you rarely interact with them, look for more opportunities. Perhaps you could volunteer at Vacation Bible School or serve on a Sunday morning with students.



# DAY 13 – WATCH – January 21, 2021

***Deuteronomy 4:9 “But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children.”***

## Read

### **Deuteronomy 4:8-10**

<sup>8</sup> And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? <sup>9</sup> But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children— <sup>10</sup> how you once stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, “Assemble the people for me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me as long as they live on the earth, and may teach their children so”;

## Apply

Moses wanted the people to understand that what they do and say makes a difference. Others were watching children of God taking note of their actions. Moses wanted them to remember their experience of trusting God in the wilderness so that they would remember how God was always present. It was important to teach their children, so they would also come to know the unfailing love of God. This scripture is as important today as it was for the Hebrew people. Remembering and sharing our faith experiences, both the challenging and the easy, help all the people of God grow in faith.

- 1. What do you think Moses was trying to teach the Israelites? Do you think it was helpful?**
- 2. Do you think this scripture is important for today? Why or why not?**

## Pray

For a desire to share your memories of God’s faithfulness with others.

## Do

Look in books or online for stories of how God has been faithful in other people’s lives.

# DAY 14 – SIMPLIFY – January 22, 2021

***Luke 18:16 “But Jesus called for them and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.”***

## Read

### **Luke 18:15-17**

<sup>8</sup>And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? <sup>9</sup>But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children— <sup>10</sup>how you once stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, “Assemble the people for me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me as long as they live on the earth, and may teach their children so”;

## Apply

Jesus loved children and admonished the disciples when they tried to keep them from him. He said that if we don’t “receive the kingdom of God like a child we shall not enter it.” Children have so much to teach adults. Children are open, humble, and often have a beautiful, simple acceptance of Jesus. We can learn from children, and approach Jesus with open hearts and eager minds. Instead of making everything so complicated we could try simply asking Jesus to help us be like little children.

- 1. What would it look like for you to open your heart like a child?**
- 2. How could you make your faith simpler and easier to access? Would that help you to be closer to Christ?**

## Pray

For a heart like an eager child.

## Do

How could you encourage other Christians to trust like a child? How could our church community do that?

# DAY 15 – CHOOSE – January 23, 2021

***Joshua 24:17 “It is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed.”***

## Read

### **Joshua 24:14-24**

<sup>14</sup> “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” <sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup> for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>18</sup> and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.” <sup>19</sup> But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. <sup>20</sup> If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.” <sup>21</sup> And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the LORD!” <sup>22</sup> Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” <sup>23</sup> He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.” <sup>24</sup> The people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.”

## Apply

In this text, Joshua lays out a challenge to the people of Israel. He wants to know if they will choose to serve God. The people respond, “We will serve God!” Joshua knows that the people have options. Either they can serve God, who has brought them out of slavery, or they can choose to serve other gods. They have to make a conscious decision. Today the choice is the same and equally important. If we are to help our children and students navigate today’s world with hope, then we must choose to serve the God of love and grace.

- 1. Have you chosen to serve God? How does that direct your life?**
- 2. In what ways do you help teach and care for students and children? How might you serve?**

## Pray

For our students and children and those who nurture and teach them every day.

## Do

Ask a child or student what the church means to them. Share with them what the church means to you.

# DAY 16 – PEACE – January 24, 2021

***Philippians 4:9 “Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.”***

## Read

### **Philippians 4:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> Finally, beloved,<sup>[a]</sup> whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about<sup>[b]</sup> these things. <sup>9</sup> Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

## Apply

Paul is writing to the Philippians in order to help them deal with stress, worry and disagreement. He understood that in order to be faithful people, we need to find ways to talk with a heart of peace. When we allow Christ to rule our hearts, we can live in a mode of rejoicing rather than one of worry and stress. A joyful heart does not mean we are always bubbly and happy, but it does mean we understand that our hope comes from God.

- 1. What things do you think about when you are in a time of stress or disagreement?**
- 2. What does Paul suggest that the Philippians think about in those times? How does that help you?**

## Pray

For a heart of peace.

## Do

Memorize this scripture passage. Start by writing it on an index card and reading it whenever you have an opportunity.

# DAY 17 – ADVENTURE – January 25, 2021

***Jeremiah 29:11 “For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”***

## Read

### **Jeremiah 29:10-14**

<sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon’s seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. <sup>12</sup> Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. <sup>13</sup> When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, <sup>14</sup> I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

## Apply

This is one of the most beautiful and comforting texts in scripture. We all want to know that God is guiding us and teaching us to follow in God’s ways. This is not to say that everything we do has been planned by God. What we do believe is that God desires happiness for our lives. When we follow God’s Word and live by God’s ways we will enjoy the joyful future God has intended for us.

- 1. What do you hope for your future? How does your faith in God guide that hope?**
- 2. What would you say to a student who was concerned about the direction of their life?**

## Pray

For a church that embraces the hope of God’s future.

## Do

What is one thing about the future that frightens you? Write a prayer to God asking for peace and an understanding of God’s promises. Share it with a friend.

# DAY 18 – TEACH – January 26, 2021

***Deuteronomy 11:19 “Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.”***

## Read

### **Deuteronomy 11:18-21**

<sup>18</sup>You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem<sup>[a]</sup> on your forehead. <sup>19</sup>Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. <sup>20</sup>Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, <sup>21</sup>so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

## Apply

This scripture tells us of the importance of teaching the Word of God to our children and students. It is to be talked about at home and away from home. The author is stressing the importance of Christian education at all times of the day. We are even told to display the Word of God in prominent public places. The more we are immersed in the Word of God, the more it becomes written on our hearts. Adults have the responsibility to keep the Word of God in front of themselves so that it will also be in front of the young people they encounter.

- 1. Where do you keep the words of God? Are they written on your heart? What does that look like?**
- 2. When do you talk about the importance of the words of your faith?**

## Pray

For a teachable heart.

## Do

Copy today's scripture. Carry it with you and read it over several times a day.

# DAY 19 – ENCOURAGE – January 27, 2021

***Proverbs 22:6*** “Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.”

## Read

### **Proverbs 22:4-6**

<sup>4</sup>The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life. <sup>5</sup>Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; the cautious will keep far from them. <sup>6</sup>Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.

## Apply

The job of the parent, or anyone who loves a child, is not to simply watch them grow, but to train and encourage them along the way. Proverbs 22 speaks of discerning a child’s strengths and weaknesses and guiding them in a way that takes those into account. When we encourage and mentor a young person in accordance to God’s given strengths, we are working in concert with the Holy Spirit. Our hope is that as they mature, they will not depart from God’s ways. However, there is no guarantee; but, giving young people the knowledge and wisdom of God can help them as they grow.

- 1. What is one thing you would want a student to know about God?**
- 2. How do you encourage students?**

## Pray

For opportunities to encourage students.

## Do

Talk to someone who works with students and ask them how you can pray for them.

# DAY 20 – WISDOM – January 28, 2021

***Proverbs 2:5 “Then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”***

## Read

### **Proverbs 2:1-5**

My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, <sup>2</sup> making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup> if you indeed cry out for insight, and raise your voice for understanding; <sup>4</sup> if you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures— <sup>5</sup> then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

## Apply

Proverbs is a book of wisdom written by a few authors. It is a collection of individual statements that have little connection with each other. Solomon, David’s son, is the author of much of the book. Proverbs is meant to teach wisdom and cause the reader to think about their actions. In Proverbs 2 we hear Solomon appealing to his son to receive his words with openness and to accept his teachings. His plea is not just the hope of a father for a son, but of someone who wants to share the Word of God. Solomon understands that the person who has the Word of God in his heart, will work from that heart of Godliness in all things. When we impress God’s teachings on our hearts we act in ways that are wise. Solomon wants his son to know that this wisdom and understanding must be sought out as if it were silver and precious treasure.

- 1. Where do you search for wisdom? What attracts you to the teachings of God?**
- 2. What do you think of Solomon’s desire to teach his son wisdom?**

## Pray

For a wise heart, open to the wisdom of God’s teachings.

## Do

Read the entire chapter of Proverbs 2 and make a list of what Solomon says wisdom will save you from.



# DAY 21 – POWER – January 29, 2021

***Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”***

## Read

### **Acts 1:1-8**

**1** In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup> until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> While staying<sup>[a]</sup> with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; <sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with<sup>[b]</sup> the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” <sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

## Apply

The church’s mission is not carried out by its’ own strength, rather it occurs with the power of the Holy Spirit. We are the church because of the power and presence of God in our midst. In this passage, Jesus assures us that when we allow the Holy Spirit to take up residence in our hearts we gain power. This power will propel us to share the message of the gospel to the “end of the earth”. We are the church, called to bear witness to the mighty acts of God, in our own lives and in the world. We are called to follow Jesus and serve him so that others may experience the same gift of love that we have come to know.

- 1. How have you experienced the power of the Holy Spirit?**
- 2. What has been the greatest lesson that you’ve learned while following Jesus? How might you share that with others?**

## Pray

For the power of the Holy Spirit to inhabit your heart and direct your path.

## Do

Talk to a fellow Christian about what it means/feels like to follow the promptings of the Spirit.

# DAY 22 – AMAZED – January 30, 2021

**Acts 2:12** *“All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”*”

## Read

### Acts 2:1-13

**2** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. **5** Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” **12** All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” **13** But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

## Apply

The Christian church was not begun by human initiative, but because of the presence and power of the risen Christ, through the Holy Spirit, empowering the actions of the community of Christ. In this passage, we read the story of Pentecost and of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples of Jesus. It was a powerful, mystifying and breathtaking time. Many people who witnessed it were confused and skeptical. The events themselves did not generate faith. Faith happened when the disciples shared their own words and what they knew to be true.

- 1. What words would you use to tell someone about your own faith?**
- 2. When have you witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit? What did it mean to you?**
- 3. How could our giving bring attention to Jesus instead of ourselves?**

## Pray

For the Holy Spirit to make you bold enough to talk about your faith in Jesus.

## Do

Practice an “elevator speech”, about two minutes long, that shares why you are a Christian.

# DAY 23 – GO – January 31, 2021

***Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”***

## Read

### **Matthew 28:16-20**

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

## Apply

When Jesus appeared to his disciples for the last time on earth, he charged them to go into the world. He also said that we should teach others to “obey everything”. Jesus knew that in order for us to make disciples, we needed to know how to help others transform, even as we transform in Christ. Obedience is a necessary part of transformation. When we learn how to fully follow Jesus, then we can help others do the same.

- 1. What does it look like to “make disciples”? What instructions would you give someone who was not sure how to be a disciple?**
- 2. How is this challenging for the church today?**

## Pray

That you have the courage to ‘go’ into the world.

## Do

Meet with three other Christians and talk about how you could encourage each other to ‘go’ into the world and make disciples.

# DAY 24 – LOVE – February 1, 2021

***John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”***

## Read

### **John 3:16-21**

<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”<sup>[a]</sup>

## Apply

As Christians, we should be proud and eager to share our faith in Jesus Christ. The truth is we are often fearful of how it will be received or we are afraid we do not have the right words. Maybe we have seen it done poorly and are worried we may offend someone.

We are called to share our faith so that others will have the opportunity to enjoy the same faith we enjoy. One way we can do this is to be a shining example of what a Christian represents. God is love and we can reflect love through our actions. We should also work on finding words that we can use to tell others about Jesus. It may take practice and quite a bit of courage, but if we remember how much God loves us, we will want to share that love with others.

- 1. How often do you share your faith in God?**
- 2. What would it take for you to engage someone in a conversation about Jesus? What would be helpful in taking that next step?**

## Pray

For a desire to share your faith with others.

## Do

Listen for times this week when you hear someone talking about their faith. How did it make you feel? If you never heard it, why do you think that is?

# DAY 25 – TELL – February 2, 2021

***Acts 8:35 “Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.”***

## Read

### **Acts 8:26-40**

<sup>26</sup> Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south<sup>[a]</sup> to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup> and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” <sup>31</sup> He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup> Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?”<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>38</sup> He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and P<sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup> But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea. Philip<sup>[c]</sup> baptized him.

## Apply

Philip has this amazing experience of telling a stranger about Jesus. In one of the most mysterious stories of the New Testament, Philip somehow finds himself next to this Ethiopian eunuch who wants to know more about his faith. It’s not important how it happened. What’s significant is that Philip was ready to talk about his faith in God and this man called Jesus.

**1. What would you say to someone who asked you to tell them about Jesus? What is the one big truth you would want to be sure they heard?**

**2. Why might this experience be challenging for Christians?**

## Pray

For the courage to share your faith with even strangers.

## Do

Tell a friend what you would say to a stranger who asked you about your faith.

# DAY 26 – TOGETHER – February 3, 2021

***Acts 2:44 “All who believed were together and had all things in common.”***

## Read

### **Acts 2:42-47**

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds<sup>[a]</sup> to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home<sup>[b]</sup> and ate their food with glad and generous<sup>[c]</sup> hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

## Apply

This scripture gives us a glimpse into the life of the early church. After committing their lives to Christ, the believers spent time together learning and growing in faith. They shared meals, both common meals and the Holy Communion. They understood the importance of sharing what they had with those who did not have enough.

Becoming a follower of Jesus is a personal decision, but not lived out in isolation. As Christians, we are called to be a part of a community of faith and to offer that opportunity to others.

- 1. What does it mean to you to be the church? In what ways do you need to grow in faith and as part of this community?**
- 2. When was the last time you invited someone to worship or to a church event or service opportunity?**

## Pray

For an opportunity to share your faith.

## Do

Choose something of your own that you treasure (not that thing you keep in the back of your closet!) and give it to someone else.

# DAY 27 – DIFFERENT – February 4, 2021

***Acts 3:10 “They recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”***

## Read

### **Acts 3:1-10**

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup>And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. <sup>3</sup>When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. <sup>4</sup>Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” <sup>5</sup>And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup>But Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,<sup>[a]</sup> stand up and walk.” <sup>7</sup>And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. <sup>8</sup>Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. <sup>9</sup>All the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup>and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

## Apply

We may never physically heal someone like Peter and John do in this scripture passage, but we have the same potential to show others what a difference Jesus can make in their lives. Peter and John were on their way to pray at the temple, something they did every day. This day, they responded to the cry of a man who wanted his life to be different. The crowds watching were “filled with wonder and amazement.” They wanted to know more. Why did this happen? Who made it happen? Peter and John were able to share with all of them what they knew about faith, possibly changing the lives of many other people that day.

- 1. When have you had an opportunity to tell someone about the church? Or Jesus?**
- 2. What words would you have for someone who was looking for a different way to live?**

## Pray

For an opportunity to tell someone about your faith.

## Do

Write the names of three people you know who need a word of hope.