

1 September 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am so glad you have taken a set of these devotions for September and now I hope you use them. Having them is good, but using them is much better.

You will notice that I wrote part of these devotions in a smaller font than usual. Sorry about that. I hope it doesn't bother you too much. It was my mistake and I decided to leave them like that rather than go back and write them over.

God bless you as you study His Word this month.

Gladly in His Service,

Dr. Jason B. Brittain

Saturday September 1

Scripture Reading: Psalms 148-150

1 Corinthians 11:16-34

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:151 says, **Yet You are near, O LORD, and all Your commands are true.** This is interesting to me. David said that God was near and then he mentioned the Word. You see, God reveals Himself through the Word. So, when the Word was near, God was near.

In our reading from 1 Corinthians 11, Paul talked about Communion. Look at what he said in verse, 23, **For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread.**

Paul said that Jesus gave the things he was teaching about communion to him personally. Paul was not a disciple of Jesus until after He died and went to Heaven. That means communion was such an important subject that Jesus made a special appearance to him to teach him about it.

In our reading, Paul covered several things about communion but look at verse 28 for today, **A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.** We should always want to live like God wants and communion is a good time to stop and think about how we are doing. When you do this, listen to what God is saying and do what He says. If He tells you something to repent for, take care of it and then take communion.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. Please help me to really live for You. I know that You are always near and that Your Word is always true. Help me to remember these things when I need them the most. I also want to ask You to bless Church tomorrow. Help us to worship You like You deserve and help us to learn from Your Word. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday September 2

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 1-2
1 Corinthians 12

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:152 says, **Long ago I learned from Your statutes that You established them to last forever.** David had a wonderful revelation here and it was one that he had settled in his life a long time before. You see, there are some things that we need to settle in our lives and then we need to keep them settled. Believing in God's Word is one of those things. Settle it today and don't ever turn back.

Look at what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:12, **The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.** We need each other and we are always stronger together than we are apart. This might seem like something that we should already know but many people need to be reminded.

Look at what David wrote about unity in the first and the last part of Psalms 133, **How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! . . . For there the LORD bestows His blessing, even life forevermore.**

So, we have David and Paul telling us to get along and to work together. Today is Sunday and you have a great opportunity to put all this into action in your life. Let God place you in the Church where He wants you and then work together with the others there. This really is important and you will find more of God's blessings coming to you as you live like God wants you to live.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am thankful for the Church where You have placed me. Help me to always build others up and help me to do my part in the work. I am also thankful for Your Word and I want to remember that it is always true and that I can base my life on it. I want all the life that You have for me and I don't want to miss out on any of the blessings You have for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday September 3

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 3-4
1 Corinthians 13

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:153 says, **Look upon my suffering and deliver me, for I have not forgotten Your law.** David was committed to God and His Word all the time. Even in the hard times, he turned to God's Word for help and comfort. The more we base our lives on the Word, the better we will do.

1 Corinthians 13 is called the love chapter. Look at verse 8, **Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.**

Love never fails! That is quite a statement. 1 John 4:8 says, **Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.** I am sure this is part of the reason that Paul said that love never fails. You see, the love referred to here is Agape love. It is the love of God.

With these things in mind, look at what Romans 5:5 says, **And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.** Again, the word used here is Agape. We have the Agape love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit and God's Agape love never fails. We need to stay close to God, keep learning from His Word and let His love operate through our lives. We all face times when we can spread God's love and we need to take those opportunities.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be more like David. I want to base my life on Your Word and I don't ever want to quit. Even when I am facing something hard, I want to keep seeking You and Your ways. Help me to know that this is always the right way to live. I also ask You to help me to rely on Your love more. I know that I have it because Your Word says so and I want to show it to others more often and more consistently. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday September 4

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 5-6
1 Corinthians 14:1-20

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:154 says, **Defend my cause and redeem me; preserve my life according to Your promise.** God is our defense and He preserves our life because of His promises. Look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:20, **For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.** All of God's promises are YES for us because of Jesus' work in our lives.

Look at what Paul said about tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:2, **For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.** When we speak in tongues, we speak directly to God and we speak spirit to spirit. Those are certainly good things, and yet some people don't think we should speak in tongues.

Look at what Paul said in verse 18, **I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.** This is Paul giving another endorsement to the use of tongues.

Now, it is true that some people have misused tongues, but that isn't a reason to throw the whole subject out. We should just use tongues in the right way. When we do things God's way, we will have the blessings that should be ours. Look at what Jude 1:20 says, **But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.** Speaking in tongues is a way to build ourselves up in our faith and that is surely a good thing.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for all the promises You have made to me in Your Word. Please help me to really believe Your Word and help me to have all that You have for me. I can see that speaking in tongues is a good thing and that it brings good things so please help me to use my tongues more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday September 5

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 7-8
1 Corinthians 14:21-40

Praise the Lord! I hope you are enjoying the book of Proverbs. It is full of wisdom. So, don't miss what God is speaking to you. Psalms 119:155 says, **Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek out Your decrees.** People who are lost miss out because they don't turn to God and His Word. We are consistently looking to Him and His Word. So, we will find His salvation for every area of our lives.

Well, since I started talking about tongues yesterday, I might as well continue today. Yesterday, I basically said that we should speak in tongues because it is good for us and I also said we should use them properly.

Look at how Paul closed this whole section off in 1 Corinthians 14:39-40, **Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.**

These are the very points I was making. We should actually encourage speaking in tongues and yet it should all be done in a fitting and orderly way. If we would do these things, there wouldn't be as much controversy over tongues. Believe me, tongues are a gift from God and He only has good gifts for us. So, if there are any problems with tongues the problem is with us and not God.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for the Word. Please help me to seek You and Your ways even more. I know that Your Word is always right and I want to have it settle every matter in my life. I also know that Your Word brings me salvation and freedom and I want all that You have for me. I accept what You say about tongues in the Word. I know they are good because they are from You and I want to embrace Your good gifts more. Please help me to do all things (including speaking in tongues) and help me to do it all in a fitting and orderly way. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday September 6

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 9-10
1 Corinthians 15:1-32

Praise the Lord! Thank God for His compassion and thank Him for preserving your life. Psalms 119:156 says, **Your compassion is great, O LORD; preserve my life according to Your laws.** Aren't you glad that His compassion is GREAT? I sure am because we need it to be GREAT from time to time.

1 Corinthians 15 is all about the resurrection. It talks about the resurrection of Jesus and it talks about our resurrection. You see, we are all going to be raised from the dead because Jesus overcame death, hell and the grave.

Look at how Paul starts off in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. **For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.**

The resurrection of Jesus was the cornerstone of everything to Paul. In this verse he says it was "of first importance." You see, Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life and because of that He was able to die for our sins. Because He was sinless; death, hell and the grave could not hold Him. As we read further in chapter 15, we will see that Paul makes the point that we will be raised from the dead just like Jesus was. Now, in our case, it isn't because we are sinless. It is because we have the Sinless One living in us! Praise God!

Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your GREAT compassion. I know that I only have real life because I have You as my Lord and Savior. Please help me to live my life in a way that is worthy of Your presence. I also ask You to teach me more about the resurrection power that is at work in my life. Thank You for dying on the cross for me so that I can live forever with You. I really do want to represent You well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday September 7

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 11-12
1 Corinthians 15:33-58

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:157 says, **Many are the foes who persecute me, but I have not turned from Your statutes.** No matter what we face, we need to keep close to God. We do that by staying in His Word and never quitting. His ways are always right and there is always hope and encouragement for us in the Word. I know you have felt that as you do your Scripture Readings and let me assure you that you can always be blessed by the Word.

Well, as I said 1 Corinthians 15 is all about resurrection. It is about Jesus' resurrection and it is about our resurrection. Christians will be resurrected from the dead and we will spend all eternity with Jesus. Look at what Paul wrote in verses 54-55, **When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"** When we are alive forever with Jesus the fact that we once died will be swallowed up in victory!

The last two verses say, **But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.** We should be thankful and we should keep living for Jesus no matter what we face. There is a time coming when we will be rewarded with eternal life!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for all that You are teaching me from the Word. I want to keep seeking You and Your ways all of my life. I am also thankful that I know that You overcame death and I will do the same thing because of what You have done for me. Help me to live like I should and help me to know that being with You for all eternity is going to be so wonderful that I will forget any problems I am facing now. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday September 8

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 13-14
1 Corinthians 16

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:158 says, **I look on the faithless with loathing, for they do not obey Your Word.** This might seem harsh, but there are some people who are faithless and they don't even want to get on track. They keep going from worse to worse and I think that is the kind of people David was talking about here.

1 Corinthians 16 is the last chapter of the book and Paul is concluding his comments to them. Look at what he said in verse 13, **Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.** I could talk about each of these things, but let me make a quick point. Language like: be on your guard, stand firm, be men of courage and be strong are all ways of telling us that there may be some hard things but we need to never quit. When a person quits they give the devil what he wants and we don't ever want to do that.

The next verse says, **Do everything in love.** I just looked up the word "everything" and it means everything! Love should govern everything we do. Think about the things that Paul just listed in verse 13. If a person did those things without love they could be harsh and cold but that would leave out the truth of this verse. When we do everything in love (including our being strong) there will be a kindness and gentleness to our lives. We will be those still standing in the end and we will be loving God and people just like Jesus did. You see, He was a man of great strength AND great love. He always stood for what was right and yet He didn't lash out at people and we need to live the same way.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for all the things You are speaking to me from the Word. I do want to know all that You are speaking to me AND I want to obey You! Help me to be strong and never quit and help my life to be a life of love. I want to love You and people more and I know that I need Your help and strength. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday September 9

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 15-16
2 Corinthians 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:159 says, **See how I love Your precepts; preserve my life, O LORD, according to Your love.** David was asking God to see how he loved God's precepts and I think it would have been alright for people to see the same thing. David wasn't doing it for people to see, but I think he would have wanted his life to be a good example anyway. We should live the same way. Pleasing God is the most important thing and we will be good witnesses to others as they watch our lives.

2 Corinthians 1:20 says, **For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.** This is such a wonderful verse. All the promises of God are yours because you are in Christ Jesus. This is important because a lot of people ask questions like, "Is this promise really for me?" The answer is YES in Christ! Now, this verse also tells us that we need to add our "Amen" to the promises. You see, we need to believe the promises and we need to release our faith for them. We do that with the words we speak. So, when you read a promise in the Word, know it is for you, believe it and speak what you believe.

The next couple of verses say, **Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.** God is the One who will make us stand and He has given us the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of even more blessings.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful that I have life in You and I know that Your Word is teaching me even more about that life. Please help me to really believe Your Word and help me to speak my "Amen" to Your promises. I don't ever want to miss out on anything You have for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday September 10

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 17-18
2 Corinthians 2

Praise the Lord! Look at what David said about the Word in Psalms 119:160, **All Your words are true; all Your righteous laws are eternal.** The Word is true, righteous and eternal! 2 Timothy 3:16 says, **All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.** Praise the Lord that we can study His Word like we are doing here. Let God speak anything He wants to you from His Word.

God has always wanted to use His people in the work of the ministry, but many people don't know what that really means. We see some people preaching in Church and call that ministry. Others sing in Church and that seems to be ministry. Now, those things are ministry, but if that is all there is we are going to get pretty crowded on the stage each Sunday.

Well, part of ministry is being a good witness for God. Sometimes that means telling people about Him and it always means living a good life for others to see. 2 Corinthians 2:14 says, **But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him.**

This is talking about living our lives in a way that people will know that we are Christians and be drawn to Him, and more often than not this is done outside the Church service and on days other than Sunday. So, love God and live for Him. Let people see your good life and hopefully they will be drawn to Him. That is part of your calling to the ministry. Do a good job.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I love Your Word. Please help me to accept ALL of Your Word and help me to live like You want. I want to be a good witness for You all the time and I know that living like You want is how I can do that and I know I need to do these things every day, including today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday September 11

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 19-20
2 Corinthians 3

Praise the Lord! (I mean that – really praise Him right now.) Psalms 119:161 says, **Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at Your word.** Many people would tremble if they knew some ruler was mad at them but that wasn't what impressed David the most. He was more impressed with the Word and what God was saying in it.

One of the points I make quite a bit is the fact that God's work in our lives is a process. The process started when we gave our lives to God and it continues for the rest of our lives. Our reading talks about this process in verse 18, **And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.**

Did you see God's process in those verses? We are being transformed (changed). Another version says it this way, **And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.** We are being changed from one degree of glory to another.

Now, here's my point for today. We are growing and changing and we need to let that process happen and welcome it in our lives. When you sense God is working on something in your life, welcome His work and do what you can to help it along. Here's something you can do to help. Dig into God's Word and find out what He says about what God is dealing with and actively renew Your mind.

Prayer: Lord, I love Your Word and I want it to have an even greater place in my life. Help me to make good choices about studying it and really believing what it says. I also am so thankful for the good work You are doing in my life. I know that every time I change and live more like You want it is a good decision. Help me to yield to You more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday September 12

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 21-22
2 Corinthians 4

Praise the Lord! Psalms 118:24 says, **This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.** Would you like something to rejoice about today? Psalms 119:162 says, **I rejoice in Your promise like one who finds great spoil.** We can rejoice in God's promises to us! The more you actively do this, the more you will be positioned to have God speak even more to you and then you will have more to rejoice about.

There is a very important thing we need to keep in mind when we think about Christianity and here it is, "It is all about Jesus!" This might seem like a strange point for me to make but we live in a time when way too many people think everything is all about them.

Look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:7, **But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.**

There you have it. It is all about Jesus and His work in our lives. All of us know our weaknesses and limitations and yet God has placed His power and authority right inside us to help us remember Who really is most important. It might bother some people that Paul calls us "jars of clay" but it is a reminder that some people need.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You are my Lord and Savior. Please help me to rejoice more when You speak to me from Your Word. I know that Your truths really are special. I am also thankful for the reminder today that "it is all about You!" Help me to really remember this and help me to represent You well today and every day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday September 13

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 23-24
2 Corinthians 5

Praise the Lord! David makes an interesting comparison in Psalms 119:163, **I hate and abhor falsehood but I love Your law.** Here's what I mean. The Word is always true, and when you reject falsehood you will never reject the Word. So, love the right thing (the Word) and you will always be on the right track.

Look at the last verse of our reading for today, **God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.** This is a wonderful verse! God made Jesus to be sin for us so we could be made the righteousness of God! I have preached and written about this verse many times. So, let me quickly remind you that we are righteous because we have been MADE righteous. It is all about Jesus and His work.

How can this happen? Look back to verse 17, **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!** We can be made righteous because we have been born-again as new creations. When we gave our lives to Jesus we were unrighteous and He made us new creations that are righteous. Why would He make us new creations that are still unrighteous? He wanted us to be totally new with a brand new start on life and that is exactly what He gave us.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I love Your Word. I am thankful that You have opened the way up for me to be Your child. Please teach me more of what it means to be a new creation in You. I know that I am righteous because the Word says so and I accept that. Help me to live like a righteous, new creation should live. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday September 14

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 25-27
2 Corinthians 6

Praise the Lord! When I write “Praise the Lord” at the beginning of these devotions, I am really encouraging you to praise Him. Look at Psalms 119:164, **Seven times a day I praise You for Your righteous laws.** Praising Him seven times a day would be a good start. So, praise Him at the beginning of each of these devotions and you will be on your way.

Since I have been making the point that “It is all about Jesus” look at the first two verse of our reading for today, **As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For He says, "In the time of My favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.** Can you see that it is all about Jesus in these verses?

These verses also point out that we need to work together. People sometimes have a hard time doing that and it is usually because of selfishness. Oh, that sounded harsh but it is true. When we remember that it is all about Jesus and not us, it is easier to lay down our own self-interests and serve like He wants. Remember that the way to being great in His Kingdom is to be a servant and it is also the way to be more like Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, I know that You always deserve my praise and I want to give it to You more consistently. In fact, I praise You right now and I think that praising You seven times a day is a good starting place for me. I also want to keep You at the center of everything I do. Help me to be a servant and to eradicate selfishness from my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday September 15

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 28-29
2 Corinthians 7

Praise the Lord! (Did you do it?) I love Psalms 119 and verse 165 is one of my favorite verses. It says, **Great peace have they who love Your law, and nothing can make them stumble.** I want great peace and I don't want to stumble in life. So, I love His Word and I base my life on it. It worked for David, it works for me and it will work for you too!

As I was getting ready to write this devotion, I was thinking about how blessed I am and I think I know part of the reason. I think that writing these devotions and blessing all of you is one of the reasons I am blessed. You see, I am serving all of you and I am sowing good things. So, I am reaping good things in my life. I am sharing this to encourage you to serve others too. You really will be blessed because of it.

Look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 7:4, **I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.** I feel the same way about you.

I have confidence in you because I know that you are growing in the Lord and I am greatly encouraged by you. Even when I go through something hard, I know that I have brothers and sisters, like you, who love me and who receive my ministry.

Prayer: Lord, I do love Your Word and I want to love it even more. Please help me to have all the peace You have for me and help me to never stumble. I also thank You for the people You have brought into my life to teach me the Word. Bless them and help them to know that they are loved. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday September 16

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 30-31
2 Corinthians 8

Praise the Lord! Have you ever had to wait for something from the Lord and you didn't know what to do while you were waiting? Well, Psalms 119:166 says, **I wait for Your salvation, O LORD, and I follow Your commands.** As you wait, keep on following His commands and you will be living like He wants.

In 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, Paul is going to write about giving. Actually, he is going to write about giving and receiving. You see, we need to be good at both of these things. When we give, we need to believe that we are going to receive a harvest so we can give even more. We don't give to receive to waste what we get. We give and expect to receive a harvest so we can bless others even more.

Look at what 2 Corinthians 8:9 says, **For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.** God willingly gave His Son on the cross and He received a harvest of many children.

Now, we need to be givers and we need to be receivers. When we receive, we need to be willing to use what we receive any way God wants. Many times He will want us to give even more and then the process continues and increases.

Prayer: Thank You Lord for speaking to me about waiting on You today. While I wait, I am going to continue to do what You have spoken to me from the Word. I also ask You to teach me more about giving and receiving. I want both my giving and my receiving to increase this year. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday September 17

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 1-3
2 Corinthians 9

Praise the Lord! (Yea, right now on Monday – Praise Him!) Psalms 119:167 says, **I obey Your statutes, for I love them greatly.** When you love the Word it will help you to obey it and when you obey the Word it will help you to love it. There is no trick here. God just loves you so much and He wants to bless you. So, He is helping you to see and understand these things.

Look at what 2 Corinthians 9:6 says, **Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.** See, Paul really is talking about sowing AND reaping.

Verses 10-11 say, **Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.**

Here is what Paul is pointing out. We should sow generously so we can reap generously AND that will make it so we can sow even more generously. I think every Christian wishes they could give more money to their Church and missions. Well then, sow generously now, believe God for a generous harvest, and then go ahead and give even more.

Prayer: Lord, help me to love Your Word more and help me to obey it more. I also ask You to help me to know that giving should be a life-style for me and help me to really do it. Also, when I receive harvest on my giving, help me to pray and see if I should use some or all of it as more seed to sow. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday September 18

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 4-6
2 Corinthians 10

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:168 says, **I obey Your precepts and Your statutes, for all my ways are known to You.** You may not think you know all of God's ways yet but keep obeying Him and He will teach you more. When we obey what we do know, we position ourselves to have Him teach us more.

Look at 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, **For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

Most of the spiritual warfare we do has to do with our own thinking and God will help us. One of the weapons He gives us is the Word. When we renew our minds to the Word, we are able to win the spiritual warfare in our minds.

When these verses talk about our demolishing strongholds and taking thoughts captive, whose thoughts do you think you should be taking captive? You should take your own thoughts captive when they don't line up with the Word.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You that You know all about me and still love me! What a wonderful Savior You are! I also know that I need to renew my mind to the Word more and I want to do that more. Please help me to recognize it when my thoughts contradict what the Word says and help me to fight the battle to think like You want. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday September 19

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 7-9
2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:169 says, **May my cry come before You, O LORD; give me understanding according to Your Word.** Ask God for understanding and keep asking Him. Matthew 7:7 says, **Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.** When it says ask here it means to ask and keep on asking!

In our reading for today, Paul writes some warnings about false prophets. You see, Paul was a genuine prophet and he didn't want them to be led astray.

Verse 3 says, **But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.**

Just like always, there are a lot of things I could say about this verse, but notice how Paul said they might be led astray. He said that "their minds" might be led astray. This ties right in with what we talked about yesterday. We need to do spiritual warfare in our minds to make sure we are thinking like God wants. That means we need to fill our minds with the Word! When we do that, we will be thinking and living like God wants.

Prayer: Lord, I ask You to give me more understanding into Your Word and Your ways. Help me to keep asking because I know that I need to keep learning. I also thank You for giving me the Word to study and learn from. Help me to renew my mind to what You are teaching me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday September 20

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 10-12

2 Corinthians 11:16-33

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:170 says, **May my supplication come before You; deliver me according to Your promise.** If we want God to deliver us according to His promises, we will need to know what the promises are. The more time we spend in His Word the more we can know them and then we can believe for them to work in our lives.

In our reading, Paul lists some of the things he had gone through. He had faced all kinds of persecution and many hardships and yet he was still preaching the Gospel. The only way a person can go through this many hard things and still keep going is if they really believe what they are doing is right. Paul was totally convinced that Jesus was the only Way to be saved and so he would not quit.

Look at what Paul said in verse 30, **If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.** Why would Paul boast of his weaknesses? Because he wanted everyone looking to Jesus and not to him. You see, "It is all about Jesus" and Paul lived that out.

We need to be as sold out as Paul was. We probably won't go through as many hard things as he did, but we need to be determined to serve Jesus even if we have to face persecution.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for all the promises You have given me and I want to believe them more. Help me to know that You will always deliver me and help me to learn even more of Your Word. I also want to be like Paul. I want to be sold out to You and Your ways no matter what I have to face in this life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday September 21

Scripture Reading: Song of Solomon 1-3
2 Corinthians 12

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:171 says, **May my lips overflow with praise, for You teach me Your decrees.** God is teaching us many things and our response should be to praise Him more! David said that praise just overflowed from him and I wish that would happen to us more often.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 say, **But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

If we all knew that God would be strong in our lives when we are weak, we might boast in our weaknesses more too. You see, this was one the keys to Paul's life and ministry. He knew that God would back him up when he was dependent on Him and His help.

Look at what Psalms 37:3-4 say, **Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart.** When we put our trust in Him, He will come through for us. What a deal!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I love it when You teach me Your ways. I also want to praise You more all the time. I know that You always deserve it and I want to give it to You more. Help me to know that You are always looking out for those who are trusting in You and help me to live like that. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday September 22

Scripture Reading: Song of Solomon 4-5
2 Corinthians 13

Praise the Lord! Have you ever sung the Word? Look at what David said in Psalms 119:172, **May my tongue sing of Your Word, for all Your commands are righteous.** Now, I am sure we have all sung the Word at Church but I think David was talking about just being so thrilled with the Word that he had to sing it. Try doing this and see how it goes. Don't worry about your tune or your voice. It is all about the Word and not your talent.

Look at some of Paul's concluding comments in 2 Corinthians 13. Verse 5 says, **Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test?** Verse 11 says, **Finally, brothers, good-bye. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.** And verse 14 says, **May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**

If we would do all the things listed in these three verses, we would have enough to keep us busy for quite a while. Take just a little time and read them again right now. See if something stands out to you. If it does, consider that God might be speaking to you about something He wants you to do.

Prayer: Lord, I love Your Word and I love spending time meditating on it. Help me to try singing as I fill my mind with it. I know doing this would be a demonstration that it really is about the Word and not me. Also help me to hear the things You are speaking to me and help me to obey You in all things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday September 23

Scripture Reading: Song of Solomon 6-8
Galatians 1

Praise the Lord! (Really go ahead and Praise Him! It will be good for you.) Psalms 119:173 says, **May Your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen Your precepts.** When we live for God (choosing His precepts) He stands ready to help us. The Word tells us to draw near to Him and He will draw near to us.

Paul had preached the Gospel in the region called Galatia and now we are reading the letter he wrote to them later. Look at what He said in Galatians 1:6-7, **I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the One who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel - which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.**

Paul was seriously concerned for them. They were turning to what he called “another Gospel.” Listen, let me be very straight with you today. We are followers of the Gospel as revealed in God’s Word, the Bible! If a person ever starts looking anywhere else, they are off track and missing the mark. Paul said those who were trying to get these people off track were perverting the Gospel of Christ. Everything you ever get here is always based on the Bible so you can know that we won’t get off track. Praise God!

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. I know that You died on the cross for my sins and my only hope is in You and You alone. I am thankful that You have helped me so many times in the past and I know that You will always take care of me. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Monday September 24

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 1-3

Galatians 2

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:174 says, **I long for Your salvation, O LORD, and Your law is my delight.** Don't you long for God to show up and save us all? Well, in the meantime, keep delighting in His Word and you will be ready when He does come.

In John 3:30, John the Baptist said this about Jesus, **He must become greater; I must become less.** He wanted Jesus and His life to become stronger and stronger in his life.

Look at what Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, **I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

Paul went ever further than John the Baptist. Paul said that his old life was all gone and only the life of Jesus was left. Look at the last part of this verse, **I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

We can live by faith in Jesus because He loved us and gave Himself for us. If God hadn't opened the Way of salvation for us, we would be lost. By the way, I capitalized the word Way in that last sentence because we need to remember that Jesus is the Way!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I long for You to move more and more powerfully in my life. Please come and bring all the salvation that You have for me. I will never quit loving You and I delight in Your Word always. I also want You to increase in my life and help me to decrease. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday September 25

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 4-6
Galatians 3

Praise the Lord! Look at what David said in Psalms 119:175, **Let me live that I may praise You, and may Your laws sustain me.** David wanted to live longer so he could praise God more! He also realized that it was the Word that sustained his very life.

In the first part of Galatians 3, Paul started talking about his concern that the believers were falling away again. You see, there were some people who were trying to convince them that it was all right that they had met Jesus, but they also needed to keep the law to be saved.

Paul was telling them that it was "All about Jesus!" Paul went on to use Abraham as an example. Abraham was made righteous because he believed what God had said and not by his works.

Then in verses 13-14 he said, **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.**

Jesus paid the price and took our curse so we can have the blessings!

Prayer: Lord, I want to praise You as long as I am alive and then I want to continue for all of eternity. Help me to really know that You have paid the price for everything I need and help me to never rely on my own good works. I do want to live like You want but I don't want to rely on those things for my salvation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday September 26

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 7-9
Galatians 4

Praise the Lord! The last verse of Psalms 119 says, **I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek Your servant, for I have not forgotten Your commands.** Aren't you glad that God comes seeking us when we stray away? Now, I know we don't ever want to do this, but we do get off track from time to time and He is faithful to come and get us because He loves us so much.

Look at what Paul said in Galatians 4:19, **My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.** First, notice that Paul called them his dear children. He was being pretty straight with them but he still loved them and wanted their best. He loved them like a mother loves her little baby.

Next, notice that he said he was praying for them. He wanted them to grow in the Lord. So, he had preached to them, he was writing to them and he was praying for them. I am sure there have been times when you have wanted to help someone but didn't quite know what to do. Well, pray for them!

Lastly, look at what Paul was praying. He was praying that Christ would be formed in them. They needed Jesus to increase in their lives and that was what Paul was praying for.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You love me and that You never give up on me. Please help me to grow in You more. I also pray for everyone doing these devotions right now. I pray that they grow in You and that Christ be formed in their lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday September 27

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 10-12

Galatians 5

Praise the Lord! Let's cover Psalms 1 next. Verse 1 says, **Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.** I am sure we all want to be blessed and this verse helps us to know how to be blessed. Please get this. God wants to bless you and so He has revealed how you should live. Believe the things He speaks to you and live like He wants. Then you will have more of His blessings in your life.

Galatians 5:1 says, **It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.** This probably goes without saying, but Jesus paid a huge price to set us free and we should stay free! Any time bondages come, we should reject them as working against what Jesus has done for us.

Galatians 5 ends talking about the fruit of the Spirit. When we stay connected to Jesus, fruit will naturally grow in our lives. In John 15, Jesus talked about our being branches attached to Him. Branches draw strength and life from the vine and that is how we need to be. John 15:4 says, **Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.** Stay connected to Jesus and let your relationship with Him be the source of everything good in your life.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to have all the blessings You have for me. I know that some people miss out on Your blessings because they reject Your ways and I don't want to make that mistake. I want to stay connected to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday September 28

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 13-15

Galatians 6

Praise the Lord! Look at Psalms 1:1 again, **Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.** Yesterday, we talked about the fact that God wants to bless us. Today, look at the things God says to avoid. Look at them and then avoid them. They really are bad for you.

Let's start today by looking at Galatians 6:7, **Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.** Think about the statement "God cannot be mocked." This is really talking about the law of sowing and reaping and it is saying that it works all the time.

The next verse says, **The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.** Since the law of sowing and reaping works all the time, we should make sure we are sowing good things!

Finally, the next two verses say, **Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.** Sow good things and don't ever quit!

Prayer: Lord, I want to live like You want and I can see that is really sowing good things. I want to sow good things and I want to reap good things. Please help me to consistently do these things and help me to never quit. I also ask You to show me some good things I can do for the family of believers. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday September 29

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 16-18

Ephesians 1

Praise the Lord! Psalms 1:2 says, **But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night.** We need to delight in the Word and we need to meditate on it all the time. When we really delight in it, it will be much easier to meditate on it. It is easy to fill your mind with things you really love.

Ephesians 1:3 says, **Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.** Because you are a Christian, God has many blessings for you and He has already provided them for you.

Look at what Paul said in verses 22-23, **And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.**

When Jesus came, lived a perfect life, died on the cross and was raised from the dead, He defeated all the works of the devil. He rules and reigns over everything. These verses tell us that He did all those things “for the Church.” Isn’t that amazing? This ties right in to what we started off with. God has done so much for us and He has already provided everything we need because of Jesus!

Prayer: Lord, I love You Word and I ask You to help me to know how to delight in it more. I also want to learn how to meditate on it day and night. Please bless Church tomorrow. Help us to be there on time, ready and willing to praise and worship You. Please speak to and through my Pastor and help us to learn more about You and Your wonderful work in our lives. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Sunday September 30

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 19-21

Ephesians 2

Praise the Lord! We are working our way through Psalms 1 and verse 3 says, **He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.** When we live like God wants we can come to the place this verse describes and it is wonderful. We don't have to be up one day and down the next. We can be up in the Lord all the time and we can be productive for Him.

Ephesians 2:1 says, **As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.** This is talking about you before you were saved. We were dead because of our sins and transgressions, but thank God it didn't end there. Verses 4-5 say, **But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved.**

We were dead in our sins but God made us alive and He did it because He loves us! Verses 8-9 say, **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.** Our salvation is a gift from God. We did not deserve it and we could have never earned it. God saved us because He loves us!

Prayer: Lord, I want to be like a tree planted by streams of water and I want to yield fruit for You all the time. Please help me to do my part and to always remember that "it is all about Jesus." I am also so thankful for the free gift of my salvation. Help me to accept it and then help me to live like You want. In Jesus' Name, Amen.