

Nudges of the Spirit



Meditations for December 8th to December 14th

Nudges of the Spirit is currently a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell and Denise Bersos.
This week's selections have been written by Carolyn.

Sunday, December 8th Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4 / Canticale 4 or 16 / Philippians 1:3-11 / Luke 3:1-6 (*written by Carolyn*)

Luke 3:1-2 *In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.*

Calling. Luke is very specific about **when** John (later to be known as the Baptizer) received his calling. Now, think about the first verse of the Gospel of John (different John): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That would imply that the Word (Jesus) came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness and said, "It's time." It was time for John to do the things that had been spoken of by the prophets years earlier. This was God's timing – not man's. The same is true for each of us whenever God calls us for ministry. At a specific point in time, He whispers in our ears and says, "It's time." What is He calling you to do today? Could be it's simple, like calling a friend to chat.

Guide us Lord, for we are unsure of ourselves. Amen.

Monday, December 9th Isaiah 5:8-12, 18-23 / Psalm 25 / 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 / Luke 21:20-28 (*written by Carolyn*)

Psalm 25:15 *My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.*

When Peter stepped out of the boat, what did Jesus tell him? He told Peter to keep his eyes focused on him (Jesus). As long as Peter did that, he could walk on water. But recall what happened as soon as Peter took his eyes off of the Lord – he sank like a rock. There are

times in our lives today when the very best we can do is to keep our eyes on Jesus. When it seems like the world is a mess – keep your eyes on Christ. When a loved one is in the hospital – ask Jesus to be there with them. When you're feeling overwhelmed – breathe and ask the Spirit to come and be with you. I know it's easier said than done, and very often when we ask the Lord to take care of something we turn around and try and tell Him how to do it. But the Lord has a LOT more experience than we do. So, trust Him.

Abba, thank you for the reminders to keep our eyes on you. Amen.

Tuesday, December 10th Isaiah 5:13-17, 24-25 / Psalm 26, 28 / 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 / Luke 21:29-38 *(written by Carolyn)*

1 Thessalonians 5:19 *Do not quench the Spirit.*

What would it look like to quench the Spirit? I suspect I am as guilty of doing this as anyone. If it means saying, "I will pray for you," and then forgetting to – yep, I've done that. Knowing that about myself, I try and stop and pray right there when the request is made. Would it be quenching the Spirit when I don't raise my hands in praise when a particular song is being sung because I don't want people around me to feel uncomfortable? Humm, been there too. I suppose one way to not quench the Spirit is to keep an ear open to the little nudges and shoves we get. The only way I know to do that is to be aware of His presence in our daily life. May you feel Him walking with you this day.

Lord, open my eyes that I may see and my ears that I may hear. Amen.

Wednesday, December 11th Isaiah 6:1-13 / Psalm 38 / 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 / John 7:53–8:11 *(written by Carolyn)*

Isaiah 6:8 *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"*

Just prior to this verse, the prophet found himself in the throne room of the Lord and proclaimed himself to be a sinner who lives among unclean people. One of the seraphs took a live coal from the altar and touched the prophet's mouth and proclaimed that the

guilt had been blotted out. So, how very natural it would have been for the prophet to immediately volunteer on a mission for the Lord – it was a response to the cleansing he had just received. When someone attends special renewal weekends (like Cursillo or healing weekends) and are deeply touched by the Spirit of the Lord, they too find themselves wanting to be ambassadors for Christ – they want to “do” for Him. If we read the gospels carefully, one thing we can do for Him is to love our neighbors as ourselves – regardless of what they look like. Who does the Lord want you to show special love to today?

Lord, open my eyes that I may see you. Amen.

Thursday, December 12th Isaiah 7:1-9 / Psalm 37:1-18 /
2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 / Luke 22:1-13 *(written by Carolyn)*

Luke 22:10-11 (Jesus said) “Listen,” he said to them, “when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, ‘The teacher asks you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”’”

First there was the owner of the colt (see Luke 19:33-34), now the owner of the house where Jesus will spend his last meal. I can’t help but wonder if Jesus had an underground support system for His last week in Jerusalem. After all, the city would have been very crowded due to the festival and for one person to happen to have a room available for 13+ people without prior arrangements would be nothing short of – a miracle. Consider this though, this person, whoever they are, had a witness to share in the coming weeks. Can you hear it? “Jesus, himself, you know the one who rose from the dead, had the Passover meal at my house!” While we don’t know the homeowner’s name, we do know about his generosity to the Son of Man in His last hours. Perhaps, we also are called to be generous.

Abba, guide my actions this day and always. Amen.

Friday, December 13th Isaiah 7:10-25 / Psalm 31 /
2 Thessalonians 2:13–3:5 / Luke 22:14-30 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 30:14 *But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God."*

The reading for this past Monday touched on trusting God, and here we are again with the same message. I suppose that means we really are to do just that – trust God. Granted, this is easier said than done sometimes and, as I said before, often our version of trusting God involves us telling God how we think He should handle something. But that's not really how trusting Him works. Most of the time, God comes up with a solution that I never considered – and it's a much better one than what I had in mind. A sign of spiritual maturity is acknowledging that He is in charge, I'm not. If I pray for His will to be done, then I must accept that His will is far more perfect than mine can ever be. After all, He has the big picture in mind.

Lord may your will be done in my life this day. Amen.

Saturday, December 14th Isaiah 8:1-15 / Psalm 30, 32 /
2 Thessalonians 3:6-18 / Luke 22:31-38 *(written by Carolyn)*

2 Thessalonians 3:10-11 *For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work.*

In every church I have been a member of, there have always been groups of people who volunteer to be on committees, help clean up the ground, work the rummage sales and be hosts/hostesses for coffee hour. There have always been groups of people who do none of those things for various reasons (health, work schedules, etc.). Then there are those who are willing to help but have never been asked. They typically don't see themselves as someone who has an outgoing personality and therefore are a bit shy about sticking their necks out when it comes to strangers. To the people who are always volunteering, I would ask them to be aware of those in the congregation who may be willing to help out but just need a kind word and invitation. It doesn't hurt to ask, the worst that can happen is they will decline. You may be welcoming a new friend you haven't met yet.

Lord, who would you have me speak to today? Amen.

