

# Nudges of the Spirit



## Meditations for April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 4<sup>th</sup>

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

**Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** Psalm 22:24-30 / Acts 8:26-40 / 1 John 4:7-21 / John 15:1-8 (*written by Carolyn*)

Acts 8:26-27 *An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went.*

Just two chapters ago in Acts, the disciples appointed the first deacons of the church. Here Philip, one of those men, is being called by the Lord to do something new. That's the way ministry is. In our diocese, there is one very experienced priest that asks everyone in his parish to sign up for some sort of ministry for a period of one year. If, at the end of the year, the member no longer desires to be a part of that ministry, he simply thanks them for their service and the member is free to either try something new or not. There is freedom in volunteering for only one year. There's also an opportunity for growth; for if all I do is (for example) volunteer to mow the lawn, I will never learn about how the AV booth works or anything about participating in a Vacation Bible School. Is the Lord calling you to something new this year? Pray about it.

*Lord, what would you have me do? Amen.*

**Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>** Psalm 56, 57, (58) / Leviticus 16:1-19 / 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 / Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 (*written by Carolyn*)

Leviticus 16:10 *...but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.*

Have you heard of the term "scapegoat"? Here is the origin of that term. The sins of the people of Israel were "placed" upon the goat, after which the animal was then sent out of the camp and into the wilderness. So, the scapegoat took the sins away from the Israelites, much like Christ took our sins upon himself as he hung upon the cross. The word "took" is important here because we didn't voluntarily give our sins over to Jesus - He took them from us. A visual might be an adult taking a knife away from a toddler because they could easily hurt themselves with it. And, like the adult who will not give the knife back to the toddler no matter how big of a fuss they raise, Jesus will not give us back our sins. Why would we want them back?

*Jesus, thank you for taking my sins from me. Amen.*

**Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** Psalm 61, 62 / Leviticus 16:20-34 / 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 / Matthew 6:7-15 (*written by Carolyn*)

1 Thessalonians 5:11 *Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.*

I once attended one of those paint-by-instruction classes where everyone paints the same picture, and the instructor leads the class step-by-step to the final results. I would say many of us in the class could easily be categorized as unskilled. I happened to be sitting next to someone who would frequently look over to my painting and tell me that I was doing a good job. Her kind words gave me the encouragement I needed to keep trying. We need that same kind of support in our spiritual walks. Let's face it, life can be unkind, and the Christian lifestyle is no exception. We need each other. As the poet John Donne wrote: No Man Is an Island. Today, may we each give thanks for our fellow travelers who walk this road to Christ.

*Lord, thank you for those in my life who have helped me along the way to you. Amen.*

**Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>** (St. Philip and St. James) Psalm 119:33-40 / Isaiah 30:18-21 / 2 Corinthians 4:1-6 / John 14:6-14 *(written by Carolyn)*

Isaiah 30:21 *And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."*

Do you remember the days before GPS when we had to rely on paper maps to help us travel to unfamiliar places? To this day I love maps – they show possibilities. While it's convenient to have an app like MapQuest or Google Maps, sometimes they can take us on some strange back roads, all in the name of saving us a very small amount of time. This was especially true for my husband and me last summer as we wandered around the mountains of western North Carolina. Today we honor two apostles: Philip and James. Jesus was THE map for them and showed them the way to the Father. He can and will do the same for us. Feeling lost? Ask Him and listen for His words, "This is the way; walk in it."

**Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>** Psalm (70), 71 / Leviticus 19:26-37 / 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 / Matthew 6:25-34 *(written by Carolyn)*

2 Thessalonians 1:11a *To this end we always pray for you...*

According to my calendar, today is a National Day of Prayer. The next flip comment might be, "And Lord knows we need it." Well, in truth, we do need it. For me personally, I cannot be in a good relationship with our Lord if I don't speak to him on a regular basis. If I only occasionally spoke with my husband, and only if I needed something, then our relationship would not be strong. The same with God. And, as in any good relationship, communication is a two-way street. If I want to know the sound of His voice, I must quit talking and start listening. So, today, ask the Lord for whom He would have you pray. He will lead you.

*Hi Abba, it's me, your daughter. Can we talk? Amen.*

**Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>** Psalm 106:1-18 / Leviticus 23:1-22 / 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 / Matthew 7:1-12 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 7:7 (Jesus said) *"Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you."*

A friend of ours was the mother of four beautiful daughters who were either in elementary or just beginning middle school. She and her husband wanted very much to be able to enroll them in a local Christian school, but tuition for all four would have been prohibitive. So, she began to think about looking for a part-time job – but she had set guidelines such as hours worked, etc. It seemed to those who knew her that she was using those guidelines as an excuse to not actually apply for any positions. One day she found herself singing the words to Seek Ye First. She told us that when she got to the second verse about knocking at a door, she had an ah-ha moment from God. So, she went over to the school where she wanted her daughters to attend and saw a notice for a part-time office person. She applied, got the job and then received the happy news that her children would receive free tuition. God provides, but sometimes we have to do our part.

*Thank you, Lord, for looking out for us. Amen.*

**Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>** Psalm 75, 76 / Leviticus 23:23-44 / 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18 / Matthew 7:13-21 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 7:15-16 (Jesus said) *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?"*

Through their Master Gardner program, the University of Florida Extension Service has a Florida Friendly program that guides those of who live in the state with different ideas for our landscaping. Their first principle is "right plant right place." The premise is that when we select our foliage for our yards, keep in mind that some plants thrive in shade and others in full sun. Let's face it, if an orange tree needs full sunlight, it simply isn't going

to produce well in the darkest corner of the yard. The same principle applies to us in our spiritual lives. Who do we “hang around” with? What kind of fruit are they producing? Our ideal would be to hang out with Jesus all the time, after all, He is our light. Do you find the path around you illuminated by His word, or are there dark places where you can’t see?

*Guide my steps, Lord. Amen.*

