

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for May 10th to May 16th



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

Sunday, May 10th Acts 17:22-31 / Psalm 66:7-18 / 1 Peter 3:13-22 / John 14:15-21 *(written by Carolyn)*

Acts 17:23 (Paul said) *For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.*

First of all, to anyone who is a mother, or has ever had a mother, I would like to say, "Happy Mother's Day." Which leads me to a question, "Who is the first person you ever became aware of?" While we may not remember or even realize it, I would say that answer would be the woman who gave birth to you – regardless of whether or not they were the one you later called mom. I say this because when we were in the womb, we became aware of the sound of both her heartbeat and voice. She was an unknown person whom we depended on very much for sustenance. So, to relate to this verse above, I wonder if we sometimes call out to an unknown God. Are there ever days when we say, "God, are you there?" The answer for me is yes – God is here and longing to be our best friend whom we turn to daily. He already knows your name, do you know His?

Lord, during those times when I just don't know where to look for you – please open my eyes to see you. Amen

Monday, May 11th Leviticus 25:35-55 / Psalm 80 / Colossians 1:9-14 / Matthew 13:1-16 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 13:1 *That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.*

When I was in the 2nd grade, my family moved to a house located on the Loxahatchee River. They purchased a boat and built a floating dock so we could get in and out of the boat without having to wade through the water. I used to spend hours on that dock looking down into the water to see what was swimming underneath me. So, I can understand Jesus wanting to leave a house where Pharisees were questioning everything He said and wanting to sit beside water. There's peace about being there. We all need those places where we can go and "just be." Of course, if we read further into today's passage, we find that Jesus wasn't able to keep his seclusion very long. Maybe all He needed was a few minutes of precious alone time with His creation. Maybe that's what we need too.

Lord, help us to remember to take time in your presence. Amen.

Tuesday, May 12th Leviticus 26:1-20 / Psalm 78:1-39 / 1 Timothy 2:1-6 / Matthew 13:18-23 *(written by Carolyn)*

Leviticus 26:2 *You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.*

Mark 2:27-28 reads: "Then He (Jesus) said to them, 'The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so, the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.'" When I put these two verses side by side, I get a slightly different twist on the words from Leviticus. I read that God is saying that people need to intentionally take a break from their everyday lives and spend time with the Him. That comes in worship, but also intentionally resting in His presence. The Lord knows our bodies need to have a break every now and then in order to refuel for the lives we live. Therefore, I see the sabbath as a gift. What about you?

Lord, we get so involved in our busy-ness. Show us how to slow down and simply be with you. Amen

Wednesday, May 13th Leviticus 26:27-42 / Psalm 119:97-120 / Ephesians 1:1-10 / Matthew 22:41-46 *(written by Deacon Bob)*

Psalm 119:114 *You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word.*

I am writing this Nudge a few days after getting good news from my oncological physician – the cancer in my body is completely gone in the one spot and shrunk more than 50 percent in the other. Many people have been praying with Carolyn and I for my recovery over the past few months, and God has answered all of our prayers. The writer of Psalm 119 knew that God cares and blesses each one of us, and I thought I did, too. Now it has become a much more personal understanding for all of us who prayed for this outcome. I do not hope to be blessed, I AM blessed.

Lord, Thank You for being my shield. Amen

Thursday, May 14th (Ascension Day) Acts 1:1-11 / Psalm 47 or 93 / Ephesians 1:15-23 / Luke 24:44-53 *(written by Carolyn)*

Luke 24:45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures...

Sometimes, when I am trying to write a sermon, I dearly wish the Lord would wave a hand and open my mind to the scripture I intend to preach on. It doesn't work that way – at least not for me. I find myself turning to various commentaries and sermons that other people have written in order to gain some insight into what I believe I should put on paper. However, what I find works best is that if I ask Him first what I should focus on, then let Him direct me to the resources I need. I find this works in other areas of my life as well. When I stop and ask the Lord, He directs. Amazing!

Lord, show me the path you would have me take. Amen

Friday, May 15th 1 Samuel 2:1-10 / Psalm 85, 86 / Ephesians 2:1-10 / Matthew 7:22-27 *(written by Carolyn)*

Ephesians 2:10 For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

When my sister and I were young our parents took us to the circus. One of the acts included people riding horses bareback and doing all sorts of acrobatic stunts. I thought that was great and decided I wanted to learn how to do what they did. There were several problems with my idea: 1. I didn't have a horse and 2. My coordination on moving objects is not very good. I never could figure out how to ride a skateboard without falling off. Our parents did go so far as to give us riding lessons, but I never made it to the gallop stage – again, the coordination issue. Obviously, my dream to be an acrobat on horseback was not of the Lord. His plan for me involves other skill sets. He has plans for each of us, according to the gifts He has given us. If you don't know yours, I suggest you first pray, then think about what you enjoy doing and what people complement you for. That may provide a clue.

Lord, thank you for the many gifts you have given me. May I use them to your glory. Amen

Saturday, May 16th Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29 / Psalm 87, 90 / Ephesians 2:11-22 / Matthew 7:28–8:4 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 8:3 He (Jesus) stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I do choose. Be made clean!" Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Two Mosaic laws were broken here. The first is that the man with leprosy (someone who was considered unclean) was within 12 cubits (about 18 feet) of members of the general public. The second is that Jesus touched the man – willingly. Leprosy was considered so contagious that just being within a certain proximity with an infected person was dangerous. I can remember during the height of Covid, people doing things like letting their mail sit on the counter for three days before opening it for fear there were germs either on the envelope or what was inside. The key word there is fear. So little was known about the disease, and how it spread, that fear was abundant. But Jesus chose to ignore all of that because He is greater than leprosy ~ or any other disease. He was interested in restoring

this man physically and socially – in a sense, restoring his very life. He still does the same thing today. Jesus cuts through the fear and social stigma of all conditions and chooses to touch us. Alleluia.

Lord, help me to look not at the illness, but at the person. Amen

