

# Nudges of the Spirit

## Meditations for April 26<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>



*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, April 26<sup>th</sup>** Acts 2:42-47 / Psalm 23 / 1 Peter 2:19-25 / John 10:1-10 (*written by Carolyn*)

John 10:3 *The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*

For years, I read this verse and thought about sheep. Having had both dogs and cats who knew the sound of my voice, it made sense to me to think that way. Then one day, it occurred to me that I was a sheep. In a later verse Jesus identifies himself as the gatekeeper, therefore Jesus knows my name. Not only does He know my name, but the name of everyone whom He draws near to Himself. But it becomes infinitely more intimate when I think of Jesus knowing my name. I, who am but a minute speck in the vast expanse of interstellar space, am known by the creator Himself. That's humbling.

*Lord, so train my hearing that I may answer only your call. Amen.*

**Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>** Exodus 32:1-20 / Psalm 41, 52 / Colossians 3:18—4:6(7-18) / Matthew 5:1-10 (*written by Carolyn*)

Psalm 41:4 *As for me, I said, "O Lord, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you."*

My husband and I are currently participating in a bible study on the book of Romans. Part of our discussions this past week centered on being slaves to sin. Sometimes it's helpful to look at what's motivating us to sin. For example, being dishonest may stem from a desire to control others. Sexual promiscuity may stem from a craving for affirmation or acceptance. The Lord's grace doesn't give us freedom to do those things, instead it gives us freedom from all the bondage that comes with it. When we become more aware of what motivates us, we can walk in the Spirit's greater power over it.

*Lord, open my heart and mind to what is behind the works I do that are not according to your word. Amen*

**Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** Exodus 32:21-34 / Psalm 45 / 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 / Matthew 5:11-16 (*written by Carolyn*)

Matthew 5:15 *No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.*

As I typed the words of this verse, the song "This Little Light of Mine" came to mind. We used to have a music leader at our former parish who would put a lot of energy into singing that song. When she got to the line, "Put it under a bushel - no!" she would hold up her finger and pretend to blow it out. It was a great reminder to all of us that sometimes we can and do hide the light of Christ that shines from us. But why? We all have our own reasons, including things like a lack of confidence in knowing what to say, or maybe thinking the time is just not right. When we have such moments, if we ask the Lord what He would have us do or say I'm pretty sure He will give us an answer. What's He saying to you?

*Lord, let your light shine through me. Amen*

**Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>** Exodus 33:1-23 / Psalm 119:49-72 / 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 / Matthew 5:17-20 (*written by Carolyn*)

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 *As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.*

Earthly fathers come in all shapes and sizes and with a wide variety of temperaments and lifestyles. Some are very loving and present in the lives of their children; then there is the other extreme. So, when Paul says he dealt with the new Christians in Thessalonica like a father with his children, that can have a wide variety of meanings for his readers. I almost want to ask Paul, "OK, what is your definition of urging, encouraging and pleading?" Then we consider that Paul was never married and therefore, he would have only been on the receiving end of a father's love. That is, until he met Jesus. It is to Him that Paul looked for an example. How did Jesus treat others, especially those who wanted to know more about what He had to say? Anytime we wonder how we are to treat someone else - Jesus is our model as well.

*Lord, help me to emulate you. Amen*

**Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** Exodus 34:1-17 / Psalm 50 / 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 / Matthew 5:21-26 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 50:15 (God said) *"Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."*

Back on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February I mentioned the hymn "How Firm a Foundation" written in 1787 by John Rippon. Ever since then I have had snippets of that song floating in and out of my head. If you've never read the words as a poem, I invite you to do so. It can be found on page 637 in the Episcopal Hymnal, or on-line. The Lord has been reminding me that life is not an easy stroll and there are times when we feel as though we're wading through deep waters or experiencing fiery trials. But the reality is that He is here with us in all these things. The Lord is our firm foundation, and He will not desert us. As the final line of the hymn reads, "I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake." That is great news.

*Lord, thank you for speaking to us through words of old. Amen*

**Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>** (St. Philip and St. James) Isaiah 30:18-21 / Psalm 119:33-40 / 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."*

My husband and I used to have a mentor who would have a running conversation with God all day. We he awoke in the morning he would ask the Almighty what he should do that day, what he should have for breakfast, and what routes to drive to wherever he was going. I have no doubt that when he came to a fork in the road, he received directions. The thing is, we knew by being in his presence that this man had a direct connect with the Lord. It was obvious. And, if we asked him for advice he would pause a moment and finally say, "Have you asked God?" That is perhaps the most enduring lesson we learned from him - ask God first.

*Lord, what would you have me do this day? Amen*

**Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>** Exodus 40:18-38 / Psalm 55 / 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 / Matthew 5:38-48 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 5:44 (Jesus said) *But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...*

Does anyone else find this a hard thing to do right away? I admit, I have to go through a period of fussing and fuming before I get around to praying for anyone who has hurt either me or someone I love. Yet the Lord commands that we do just that. Once I get around to praying daily for the other person, usually about the third or fourth day, I will notice I'm not as offended as I was right after the incident. I know intellectually that the hurt I feel is on me - certainly not the other person. In fact, they may not realize the emotions that have risen up in me because of their actions. Therefore, if I learn to begin praying earlier, I will alleviate some of the pain or injury to my own body by giving the situation up to the Lord.

*Lord, help me to forgive as you forgive me. Amen*

