

May 1, 2020

Seeking

Psalm 9:10

And they that know your name will put their trust in you; for you, Lord, have not forsaken them that seek you.

The devotions for the month of May will focus on God's wisdom for women and mothers. Wisdom comes first from knowing the presence of the Lord in our lives. Seeking the Lord is vivid action via prayer, worship and scripture. Seeking the Lord is both solitude and listening for the heartbeat and words of the Lord. A wise mother once said, "My job is to take care of the possible and trust God with the impossible." The psalmist says, "Seek the Lord while he may be found." Spend the best part of your day seeking knowing the Lord will not forsake.

Prayer: Lord, bless women and mothers with the conscious wisdom to seek you in all their endeavors. Amen.

May 2, 2020

Faithfulness

Proverbs 3:3

Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablets of your heart.

When Mother Teresa received her Nobel Prize, she was asked, "What can we do to promote world peace? She replied, "Go home and love your family. Love and faithfulness start at home with the family. They become engrained in our daily actions and attitudes. We are to wear them like a necklace so that they are next to our hearts and move up and down every time we breathe. What is on the tablet of your heart? Write love and faithfulness in your heart etched in the blood of Jesus.

Prayer: Jesus, you faithfully loved and cared for your mother and family to the very end. Call us the same discipleship. Amen.

May 3, 2020

Humility

James 4:10

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

The old saying speaks volumes of truth: "You are never so high as when you are on your knees." From your knees we sense a different perspective that forms an attitude of humility. Humility was fleshed out for us through Jesus. Godly women and mothers are on their knees cleaning and helping their loved ones. Humility provides the spirit of gratitude and gratefulness. From our knees one sense the awesome love and grace of God and then rises to live out the humility with family.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for humbling yourself on the cross. Kneel beside us and give us a different perspective of your world. Amen.

May 4, 2020

Troubles

Psalms 121:3

He will not allow your foot to slip; he who keeps you will not slumber.

Do family troubles and concerns keep you up at night? The sheep on the TV commercial suggest a new mattress. The psalmist promises more. On my parent's refrigerator was this saying: "Give your troubles to God: God will be up all night anyway." Although my mother spent hours walking the hallways at night, she knew how to give her troubles to the Lord. The best wisdom is that staying up all night only leaves you grumpy and grouchy. Turn your troubles over to the Lord and slip into bed for a good night's sleep. For you are God's sheep!

Prayer: Lord, we turn our troubles over to you. Give us a restful sleep so that we may wake to praise you. Amen.

May 5, 2020

Encouragement

Proverbs 15:23

A person has joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season, how good it is.

How wonderfully the Lord produces oxygen via the plants around us. We rarely are conscious of the turning of carbon dioxide into oxygen. Yet, when we run out of oxygen, we stop. "We should seize every opportunity to give encouragement. Encouragement is the oxygen of the soul." When our family skins the knees or the world damages or breaks off part of our egos, we need encouragement to place the bandage in the right place and lift up the person. Children living in the environment of encouragement learn to know how good it is to live.

Prayer: Lord, bless our family with the oxygen that encourages us not to give up. Amen.

May 6, 2020

Love

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

This familiar passage is affirmed in the home and family as well as in society. "You may give without loving, but you cannot love without giving." Isolation is the hallmark today. We isolate ourselves behind computer, iPod, coronavirus and iPad. We sit next to each other and don't talk. Loving means giving and giving embraces loving. Mother can easily be very sacrificial via the many chores in family life. Stop and interact with your family and smell the roses of the love and giving that flows from you to them. Let it flow to you.

Prayer: Jesus, you gave you all and loved us beyond words. Bless us with love that gives as you first loved us. Amen.

May 7, 2020

Rope

Hebrews 13:5

For he said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

How many times have you come to the end of your rope? You are ready to throw up your hands and walk out the front door. As you view the world from that position you hopefully realize that your exit may just be one way of hanging yourself. Stop and realize: "When I come to the end of my rope, God is there to take over." When you are trying to be mother, savior, chef and more; stop and remember that Jesus is the only Savior. Embrace Jesus for he will not leave you but carry you through.

Prayer: Lord, stop me and give me wisdom into the circumstances so that I don't hang myself and the family. Amen.

May 8, 2020

Wisdom

James 1:5-6

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. ⁶But when you ask, you must

believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

The bookstores are lined with volumes of self-help books to make living easier and less expensive. The contents of these books overlook the gift of wisdom. Wisdom comes from the Lord alone. Why do we not first ask the Lord for wisdom? For the Lord promises to give generously to us. With the whims and wiles of this society taunting and tempting us, making the wise choice is even more important. For we can easily be blown and tossed by the wind unless we ask the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, give us the wisdom to come to you first and not doubt your love and embrace your wisdom. Amen!

May 9, 2020

Mindset

Isaiah 26:3-4

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.

With the many diversions and schedule changes in our everyday life our mindset is vital, especially, as you grow older. When we lose focus or stray from our faith and convictions, temptations and trials happen. Mothers with the many agenda items can be tempted to lose their mindset as well as their mind. Initially, every morning set your mind on the Lord and His will for you today. Then, trust that the Lord, the Rock eternal, will bless your day with the perfect peace in a less than peaceful world.

Prayer: Lord, keep us focused on your presence and will in our lives so that we may experience your perfect peace. Amen.

May 10, 2020

Mother's Day

Proverbs 15:13

A happy heart makes the face cheerful.

Julia Ward in 1870 penned the "Mother's Day Proclamation" that moved President Woodrow Wilson to sign the bill setting aside the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity, the faithful mother is to her household. The good that comes from a mother's pathway

hopefully leads the entire family down the pathway to celebrate the love and presence of God along with peace. Take time today to celebrate "Mother's Day" with a contagious cheerful face and make her heart happy to be "mother."

Prayer: Dear Father, bless each mother and woman with a happy heart and a cheerful face. Amen.

May 11, 2020

Unless

Psalm 127:1

Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

Unless is a word we don't use often unless the unless moment becomes the unless of the moment. The psalmist understands the importance of not only building the house but having the presence of the Lord as its foundation. A friend asked me to bless their home because his wife sensed the presence of evil spirit lurking in certain room. One room at a time we prayed for the presence of the Lord in each room. They build their new home on the power of the Spirit dwelling in their house. The unless prayers built a strong house and they live in Christ's peace.

Prayer: Lord, bless us with the wisdom to see the "unless" in our house and build them into the dwelling place for you. Amen.

May 12, 2020

Preference

Proverbs 16:16

How much better to get wisdom than gold, to get insight rather than silver!

During a TV show involving married couples and their preference, the host asked what is your wife's favorite flower? The first husband smiled, looked into his wife's eyes and spouted out with joy: "Pillsbury!" How much better to get wisdom than gold? The "gold" of the family is often knowing the preference of your spouse and the family. This insight triggers smiles and makes hearts grateful for the little things in life. What is your husband's favorite dessert? When did he last taste it? Make your special ones feel special and they we sense how special you are.

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for choosing us. As you make us special, may we choose to show our families how special they are. Amen.

May 13, 2020

Silence

Proverbs 10:19

Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.

Silence at the right time is the crown jewel of words. A wise person once said, "I regret often that I have spoken; never that I have been silent." "Silence is Golden" is one of my favorite songs. It was recorded on the b side of the record by the Four Seasons. "Rag Doll" was a great hit but "Silence is Golden" etched its flavor into our society. We pray for the wisdom to know the right time to speak and the right time to keep silent. For although "silence is golden," we understand that "my eyes still see" that "talking is cheap." Use words prudently.

Prayer: Lord, give us words spoken prudently and silence spoken with wisdom. Amen.

May 14, 2020

Forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Forgiveness is the note of sins of commission and/or omission that is torn in two, burned up and never to be shown again. The center of forgiveness stands at the foot of the cross. Here the women of the Lord watch as he died and heard his last words. Their faithful in the midst of watching his agonizing death emblazoned forgiveness in their lives. God in Christ forgave us and we are called to forgive each other. Forgiveness cancels our debt and gives us the initiative to start over.

Prayer: Lord, as you kindness and compassion flowed from the cross via your words of forgiveness. Teach us to forgive. Amen.

May 15, 2020

Worry

1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

We are blessed with a rocking chair that has somehow stayed together through the 50+ year of our marriage. We used it to rock our boys to sleep as infants as well as to take time to meditate during moments of distress. Worry is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do, but doesn't get you anywhere. Really! Really! Worry doesn't get us anywhere. Has worry lessened the pain or decreased

our anxiety? Has worry open new insights into the solution? Has worry driven us closer to God and our family? Has worry galvanized us for the days ahead? Cast your anxiety on HIM! The HIM cares for you and makes us realize that all things are in HIS hands and we can rest in peace.

Prayer: Lord, gather your faithful people around the rocking chairs and give them insights into "rocking with the Rock of Ages. Amen.

May 16, 2020

Distress

Psalm 120:1

I call on the LORD in my distress, and he answers me.

Look around you and be distressed! Who are the leaders? Can you see walls crumbling? Look within you and be depressed! What failures haunt you? What golden opportunities have passed you by? What relationship have you messed up? Look at Jesus and be at rest. Calling upon the Lord when distressed calms us and if we have our ears open to really listen the Lord answers me. The psalmist's word in the midst of distress solidifies his relationship with the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, take the "dis" out of our distress through the knowledge that you answer us from a heart of love. Amen.

May 17, 2020

Never

1 Corinthians 13:8

Love never fails. As for prophecies they will fail, as for tongues, they will cease, as for knowledge, it will pass away.

Never say never! Yet this Scripture points to at least one aspect of God's promises that will never fail: love. There is no greater love than love that holds on where there seems nothing to hold on to. Truly this love is fleshed out in Christ Jesus' final week and stands with the banner of victory on the third day. "Love never fails!" Sure we have failed in love and in loving but after self-examination we realize that part of the failure was ours. God's love does not fail to seek us out, change us, embrace us and give us wholeness.

Prayer: Lord, keep us conscious that your love never fails and we are the recipients of your unconditional love. Amen.

May 18, 2020

Prayers

Psalm 55:17

Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

Sometimes we feel like a "voice" crying in our own personal wilderness. Prayer changes our focus and in prayer we are assured that our voice is heard and God answers our prayers in His time according to His will. The regimentation of daily prayer often keeps us strong in the midst of distress. That daily talk with the Lord solidifies the relationship as we talk through and listen to the Lord. The truth is daily prayers will diminish your cares. Let God hear your voice through prayer and be open to the Spirit strengthening you daily.

Prayer: Spirit, move in our hearts so that we fold our hands in prayer and voice our concerns as a child to our heavenly Father. Amen.

May 19, 2020

Unmovable

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, 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.

Unmovable seeks to fluctuate between positive and negative. Does changing the word to "stand firm" assist in the interpretation? Paul calls us to "be like a postage stamp-stick to one thing till you get there." Here we are called to give of ourselves "fully to do the work of the Lord." Amen! Be unmovable regarding life's distractions and society's bias because unlike any labor, our labor in the Lord is not in vain. Yes, the labor will be blessed for you and the recipients by the Lord and the end product will be the tasty and sweet fruits.

Prayer: Lord, keep us unmovable regarding doing your work and using our time and talents to your glory. Amen

May 20, 2020

Laughter

Proverbs 15:30

Light in a messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.

A good laugh is sunshine in the house. Do you have that "good laugh" at least once a day? Can you make "light" of yourself and laugh with others? A healthy laugh bring health to our bones as you grow older laughter is even more important.

Forgetfulness! Repetition! And other wonderful parts of life creep slowly into our lives. The realization that we have a time to peak and a time to slide downhill may cause anxiety but hopefully, more so - laughter and joy as we acknowledge our humanity.

Prayer: Lord, keep us at the top of our game at our age and give us the gift of laughter. Amen.

May 21, 2020

Beloved

1 John 4:7-8

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Jesus told his disciples near the end of his earthly journey that he no longer called them servants but friends. "Beloved" means "dear friends" and captures our imaginations and causes our hearts to pump. Here "beloved" speaks and says: "Each loving act says loud and clear, "I love you. God loves you. I care. God cares." God's love is born in us for God is love. We are called to "Be love" and be "Beloved!" If you don't understand, open your hearts to the God of love in Christ Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, love flow from your throne to your own and embraces us. Thank you for loving us when we don't love ourselves or each other. Amen.

May 22, 2020

Convinced

2 Timothy 1:12

That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

In life's travels I have held many things in my hands and lost them all; but the things I have placed in God's hands, those I possess. Surely, there is no cause for shame. Shame is dwelling on what we have lost. Paul attempts to convince us that our center is our faith in Christ Jesus. Have you lost possession? Have you lost honor? What we entrust to the Lord is not lost but preserved. Are you convinced that the most precious parts of life are not tangible but spiritual?

Prayer: Lord, convince us daily of the gifts that last throughout eternity. Amen.

May 23, 2020

Reaping

Galatians 6:7-9

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Planting and harvest are important times in rural USA. The many hours spent in the field to both sow and harvest was blessed by the Lord in manifold ways. The truth flows from this test. Reaping is important but first you must plant. In our Christian faith we truly are called to sow to please the Spirit. How pleasing when we sow and watch the reaping in abundance. Even when the harvest is small we must not give up. For by the grace of God there is always next year.

Prayer: Spirit, may we sow courtesy and reap friendship and plant kindness to gather love. Amen.

May 24, 2020

Counsel

Proverbs 31:26

She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

Often hours are spent in counseling! Kind and gentle words at times suffice! At other times, strong counsel is vital to change the attitude and direction of the person and persons. Kind words can be easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless. Good counsel promotes faithful instruction that leads to peace and fruits of the Spirit. So many times we are immersed in our habits that destroy and hurt relationships and end up dead ends. Good counsel echoes throughout our lives and the blessings are multiplied. Pray for and embrace the objective counselor.

Prayer: Lord, send your Spirit to counsel us in your path so that we may counsel others. Amen.

May 25, 2020

Insight

Proverbs 4:7

The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get insight.

Nothing beats love at first sight except love with insight. The quotes and saying about love abound in the Bible and in literature. Today many use Match.com or Eharmony to find the special one. How wise is it? How creative? First impressions are important! The person attracts the attention of the other person and instantaneous bonding happens. What is the chemistry? Love is blind! Get wisdom first in creating relationship and ascertain the character and integrity of the person. We call it insight. Look inside and you will find the real person God created.

Prayer: Lord, we ask for wisdom in our relationships with others. Bless us with a depth of insight to their personhood for the blessing of all. Amen.

May 26, 2020

V8

Proverbs 15:17

Better a small serving of vegetables with love than a fattened calf with hatred.

The V8 commercial are focused on awareness after the fact. "I could have had a V8!" We smile and move on. The table set before us can easily be decorated lavishly with an incredible array of tasty morsels. Yet the importance is not the type of food but the health of the family. Is your table full of good food and missing the vegetables to keep relationship healthy and sharing love? Is your family meal served with love? Do you need a healthy V8 slap on the head to sense what is missing? Christ's love is a meal of forgiveness and humbleness.

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for the fatted calf eaten with family and friends at your table blessed with love. Amen.

May 27, 2020

Giving

1 Corinthians 7:3

The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.

What are the "marital duties" of the wife? Husband? Jesus emphasizes the importance of "giving" in marriage. First, thanksgiving! The best way to hold on to

your spouse is in your arms. Be thankful! Second is forgiving! Forgiving is the greatest love and discovers love flowing from the cross of Christ. Third is caregiving! Love your spouse by caring and going the second and third mile for her/him. These "marital duties" turn from duties to pleasures as husband wife become bonded in a very precious relationship called love.

Prayer: Lord, bless my marriage and the marriage of others with the three "givings." Amen.

May 28, 2020

Inflection

Proverbs 15:23

A person finds joy in giving an apt reply—and how good is a timely word!

The inflection of our voice is often infectious to relationships. The inflection may cause us to call out the infantry to put out the inferno. An apt reply insinuates that ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice. A timely word with the right inflection heals and bonds. First, trash the past contents of the day and learn to listen. Listening produces understanding and understanding produces insight into the person and the situation. Say the apt word with love and healing and wholeness find a home.

Prayer: Lord, give us wisdom to pause before we talk so that the apt word is appropriate. Amen.

May 29, 2020

Merciful

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful. For they shall obtain mercy.

Mercy is often giving love when there is no reason to give love. Mercy comes from the depth of a person who has experience mercy in their own lives. Jesus fleshed out mercy among the least, lost and lonely. His words from the cross flavored mercy in an awesome way: forgiveness, necessities, love for family, suffering and separation. We easily talk about mercy but talk is cheap and mercy is expensive. Expensive if we don't act and expansive when we do act. The world looks with green eyes when they see and sense a person of mercy has step forward.

Prayer: Lord, send your spirit upon me and move me to mercy as you have been merciful to me. Amen.

May 30, 2020

Gentleness

Psalm 18:35

You make your saving help my shield, and your right hand sustains me; your help has made me great.

Gentleness is a gift of the Spirit! The precious gift is possessed by only a few or shall we say this gift possesses only a few. Nothing is so strong as gentleness. To be immersed in the gentleness of God and sense God's tenderness and strength is a great blessing. This blessing overflows from God to us and moves us to the real strength in life. Nothing is so gentle as real strength. We remember the gentle! The ones who exchanged love for hatred, hope for despair, hugs for swords.

Prayer: Lord, bless us with your gentleness as you forgave the woman caught in adultery and opened the eyes of the man blind from birth. Amen.

May 31, 2020

Perseverance

James 1:4

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Perseverance is like the old blacksmiths forging their kilns with fuel to heat the metal to the highest degree to create a very special work that would endure centuries. Anything short of the best is less. Here we are encouraged as mothers and daughters of the Lord to finish the work so that maturity moves our family to completeness. Sometimes our greatest want is to give them everything and more than we had. The Word states that if we want them to lack nothing, then they are to pass through the fire and know "heat" and then "hope." Don't keep them from the fires but teach them to use the fires to forge their faith.

Prayer: Lord, forge us in the fire of life so that we may persevere and not lack anything. Amen.