

# Calgary Mission Trip Bible Study - 2016

## Introduction

The purpose of these devotions is to (1) set our mind on the reason we are on this mission trip--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to do that by allowing God's love to flow through us. The intent is for each person to do the day's devotion first thing each morning and then have a group meeting at some point during the day where that day's study is discussed. We cannot emphasize enough the value of making time every day to focus on God's Word and its application to our lives before we go out to serve others. The first year we came to Calgary on a mission trip was the summer of 2013. We were given a similar Bible study that we did individually each morning and as a group each night. This was the most rewarding trip we had ever been on and the reason was that previous mission trips we had been on were so jam-packed with activity that we frequently failed to make time every day to allow God to fill us so that His love that could be poured out to others. However, the mission trip in Calgary included accountability in this personal and group Bible study and it made a tremendous difference in the mission trip because we were allowing God to work through us instead of doing the work ourselves.

The theme for this year's study is being **laser-focused** on the task as spelled out below:

**Love God**

**Allow God's love to flow through us**

**See the field white unto harvest in front of us**

**Experience our part, whether it is sowing, watering or reaping**

**Run our race with perseverance, never giving up**

**FOCUSED** on Jesus, *"the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Hebrews 12:2 ESV)

Before we began writing these devotions, we asked ourselves these questions:

1. How can we pass along to the people of Calgary a desire to know Christ and a desire to plug into Southwinds churches to learn about Him?
2. How do we show that we are different from the generally very courteous people of Calgary who do not know Jesus?
3. How can we exemplify the character of Christ with passion?

In looking at the big picture of why mission teams go to Calgary and trying to view them from the eyes of a typical resident who doesn't know Jesus, we remember the story of one resident who has become a precious friend. After meeting Brett and Kristin and the mission team members during a mission camp and at the Canada Day activities, she told her husband that she was willing to visit Southwinds. She said basically, "They care about us and want to help us; they're not in it for themselves." That leads us to the goal of people there seeing a difference in the Southwinds churches and those on mission teams and the realization of how important it is that

every single one of us displays the love of Christ. That love is the key to making a real impact on the people there.

First John 3:23 says, "*And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.*" Belief in the person of Jesus Christ and love for one another provide the foundation of our study for this week.

We are praying that your group will be a group of forgiven children of God working together with a unified goal of glorifying God and sharing His Son Jesus Christ with the lost people around you, as well as encouraging other Christians to do the same.

We suggest that as you prepare for this mission trip that you ask God for the following:

1. To be filled with His love and compassion for the people you will serve and for your other team members.
2. To keep your mind and heart on glorifying God, to give your group a spirit of unity, and to cleanse you of any selfish thoughts or desires.
3. To faithfully extend God's amazing grace in all circumstances.
4. To follow your group's leader and pray continually for him or her.

Rest assured that we will be praying for you every day you are on the mission trip. We and the leadership of the Southwinds churches appreciate so much your willingness to give of your time, energy and money to help them reach the people of the various Calgary communities for Christ.

## DAY 1 - Belief in Jesus is the Foundation

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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First John 3:23 says, "*And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.*"

What we will focus on today is the first part of the commandment given above--our belief in the name of Jesus Christ and exactly what that means.

The foundation for participating in any Christian mission trip should be the desire of the trip participant to share with others the relationship that they have found in Jesus Christ. Take a few moments to search your heart and make sure you have a relationship with Christ; make sure that you don't just know about Him, but that you have accepted Him as your personal Lord and Savior. If, after examining your heart, you realize you do not have a relationship with Christ, it would be good to talk to either your trip leader or your pastor. Your personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important decision you will ever make.

Consider the difference Jesus has made in your life and name a few things that come to mind.

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Pause right now and spend some time thanking God for all He has done for you and asking Him to prepare your heart for serving Him in Calgary.

Looking at the above verse for today, list the two parts of God's commandment.

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If you have a belief in Jesus Christ and have accepted Him as your Lord and Savior, He has made a tremendous difference in your life. We who have accepted Christ are filled with His Holy Spirit and if we allow Him to reign in our hearts, the result will be love for others that flows from God through us. We should have an intense desire for others to know Him, as well.

Verse 22, the verse before our focal verse says, "*and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.*" Then to be absolutely clear

about God's commandments, John follows that with "*And this is his commandment...*" To sum up all of Jesus' teachings and all the commands God revealed in His Word through all the ages, John said that it all comes down to belief in Jesus Christ and loving one another.

Let's look first at what we're to do with our belief in the name of Jesus Christ.

Read 1 John 1:1-7. According to verse 1, what reasons does John give for his belief in Jesus as the word of life?

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Who is John's fellowship with? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how you have fellowship with God your Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

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Why do you think John added the statement, "*And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete*"?

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From verse 5, correlate your fellowship with God with walking in the light.

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Write verse 7 below.

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Read 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

If we walk in the light, we will do the things God wants us to do in the way He wants us to do them, with pure motives and to His honor and glory alone. Considering the works you have done in your lifetime and the test of fire they will go through, can you identify works that will withstand the test of fire and others that will not? When I answer this question, I realize that the works that will withstand the test of fire are the ones that were done when I was depending on God to do them through me; they were not works done on my own. It is our prayer that what you do on this mission trip, as well as other times, will produce works that will endure the test of fire--that they will be beautiful gems that you will be able to lay at the feet of Jesus. They will be ones that represent your fellowship with God and your service to the honor and glory of God and His Son Jesus Christ.

Spend some time praying that God will help you to have genuine, sweet fellowship with Him this week and will enable you to walk in the light daily as you do what He leads you to do. Pray also that you will have genuine, sweet fellowship with the other members of your team and the people you meet and serve in Calgary as you share the Light of the world.

## DAY 2 - Love One Another As He Commanded Us

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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First John 3:23 says, "*And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.*"

Today we will focus on what it really means to love one another as God has commanded us. The best place to start is to look at the example God set by giving His only Son as the sacrifice for our sins and Jesus' obedience as He suffered indescribable pain carrying out that sacrifice on the cross. There truly is no greater love than is seen here. Yet, why is it that we fall so short in sacrificing our insignificant desires for the good of another? Why is it so difficult to obey God when He asks us to give up our desires to demonstrate His love to a hurting soul?

James 2:26 says, "*For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.*" The good that we do for others demonstrates our relationship with Christ and our desire to follow His example as described in Philippians 2:8, as Jesus "*humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*"

What are some opportunities you have had to demonstrate your obedience to God and your love for others? What did this cost you?

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The people of Calgary whom you will serve will probably not seem like the people you would envision serving on a typical mission trip. It is easier to feel compassion and love toward people who live in poverty and have physical needs that we do not experience. Their physical needs are an outward manifestation of their spiritual needs. However, a lost rich person will experience the same hell as that of a poor person if he doesn't come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Our prayer is that God will give you compassion and love for the people of Calgary so that you can see past their wealth to their spiritual poverty and be filled with the desire to give of yourself, to lay down your life by selflessly loving and serving them.

Read John 15:12-17.

What does Jesus say, as recorded in verse 12, is His commandment? And how is that demonstrated as given in verse 13?

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Consider what it means to "*lay down your life for your friends.*" We are, almost every day, given the opportunity to lay down our life as we want it, our desires or needs, for the needs of others.

Read John 4:5-15.

We read of how very weary Jesus was when he sat down by the well. He could have simply enjoyed the water from the well and a time of rest, but instead, He made the effort to focus on the need of the Samaritan woman for eternal life. Do you allow God to interrupt your personal time and rest with opportunities to share Him and His love with one who may not know Him? Or encourage one who does? This is a test of how much we really love others.

Read John 4:35, which follows Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman, and write it below:

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Jesus tells us to lift up our eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest. That means wherever we are--whether in Canada, at home or any other place we go--we're to take our eyes off ourselves and focus on the people God has placed directly in front of us.

The first time we went on a mission trip to Calgary, the overwhelming reality God put on both our hearts was the words of Jesus from this passage. We had never been in an area where there was a feeling of such lostness, and yet such an openness to the Gospel. His words, "*Lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest*" was so clear to us. The people were inquisitive as to why we would go to the expense and trouble to go all the way up there to serve them because they didn't see themselves as needy. Yet, they were so excited to be given a Bible. It was something new to them. We know that God has created a place in every person's heart that can only be filled by Jesus, and the people we served seemed to be such a great example of people open and ready to know Jesus. We are excited about the many opportunities you will have in Calgary this week to show God's love to these sweet people and share with them who He is to you. We encourage you to lift up your eyes and see the harvest in front of you.

Do you recall a time when you felt that you were seeing a field white for harvest? If so, explain.

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As you go about serving God and living life, you will be given unexpected opportunities to share Him with others, so you should always be ready to do that. Second Timothy 4:2 says, "*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*" How can you keep yourself prepared for sowing, watering or reaping?

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Our prayer for you this week is that God will give you the eyes to see and the heart to react to the needs of the people of Calgary. Be very sensitive of every opportunity to smile and be a display of God's love to all those with whom you come in contact. This is how God draws people of Calgary to Himself and gives them a desire to see what He is doing at Southwinds.

Spend some time in prayer asking God to help you truly love others the way He loves you and them and to help you demonstrate that love by the power of His Holy Spirit living in you.

### DAY 3 - Love That Abounds More and More

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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John 15:5 says, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."*

What do you think Jesus meant when He said we are to abide in Him?

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How does abiding in Christ help you to produce fruit for His kingdom?

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Read John 4:36-38.

Bearing fruit often involves introducing someone to Jesus. These verses relate the truth that there will sometimes be several people involved in someone coming to a saving knowledge of Christ. One or more will sow, one or more will water, and another will reap, yet each one will have had a part in the labor involved, and each one is as valuable as the one who reaps. This is valuable for you to remember because it may be that many of the people you interact with this week just need to know that Christ loves and cares about them. This may be either a sowing or a watering process, but is invaluable in their quest to know God. Then you may have opportunities to be the one who reaps. We remember how exciting it was during one of the summer camps of 2014 when a young girl accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior, becoming the first convert of Southwinds Mahogany. One of the mission team members was the one who enjoyed the opportunity to pray with this precious girl. Remember, however, that whatever part God calls you to fulfill, whether sowing, watering, or reaping, it is as important as any other.

Matthew 25:40 says, *"And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'"*

As you serve the people of Calgary, list some ways you can share God's love with them.

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As you serve alongside your other team members, list some ways you can show God's love to them.

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Philippians 1:9-11 says, "*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*"

According to this passage, our love should abound more and more with all \_\_\_\_\_ and all \_\_\_\_\_ and that we are to be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through \_\_\_\_\_ and to the glory and praise of \_\_\_\_\_.

Paul said in the above passage that he prayed that the love of the Philippian Christians would "*abound more and more,*" and it was followed with his description of how they were to do this. Do we love others even when we know what things they have done and do we discern the will of God in showing His love? Then our demonstration of love should be pure and we should be blameless, not hypocritical. It is one thing to say we love others, but if we really examined every interaction we have with others and every thought we have toward them, I wonder if we would discover that our thoughts and actions do not line up with our words. The goal is to be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes from Jesus and to the glory and praise of God.

The first step toward being filled with God's love is to love Him with a depth that comes from the very core of our heart. This is described by the words of Jesus himself as follows:

*And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' "* (Mark 12:28-30)

Describe what it means to love God with each of these:

Heart \_\_\_\_\_  
Soul \_\_\_\_\_  
Mind \_\_\_\_\_  
Strength \_\_\_\_\_

To love God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength leaves no room for self-centeredness or for putting anyone or anything else before Him. It leaves no room for arrogance or self-sufficiency. It calls for us to give Him all that we are and all that we have. He, in return, fills us with His never-ending love, grace and mercy as He directs our steps and continually fills our heart with joy. All of this is available to every Christian who is willing to trade our pennies for His wealth of what is far more valuable than anything the world has to offer.

Putting together Paul's prayer that our love would abound more and more and Jesus' instruction to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, focus today on what that looks like as you have opportunity to serve those in front of you.

Spend some time thanking God for His tremendous love and ask Him to help you surrender your heart completely to Him. Set your heart on being the manifestation of His love today.

## DAY 4 - Love and Serve, and Never Give Up!

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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Galatians 6:9 says, "*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*"

Rewrite this verse in your own words.

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Note the phrase, "*for in due season.*" We are not promised to reap what we have sown immediately. God is the one with the plan and every person we serve has a free will. Realizing this will give us the patience to do our part and leave the rest up to God.

Read Hebrews 12:1-2. What or who surrounds us as we run our race?

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What two categories of things are we to lay aside as we run our race? \_\_\_\_\_

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We are to run our race with \_\_\_\_\_ as we look to \_\_\_\_\_ who with \_\_\_\_\_ endured the cross and is seated at the right hand of God. This is a great passage to adopt if you haven't adopted a life passage because it is so encouraging to press on with joy as we carry out God's plan for our life without giving up.

The following verse, Hebrews 12:3, says, "*Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*"

It is one thing to understand the great sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the cross, but if we do nothing with it except believe on Him for our salvation, then is our salvation real? Consider the hostility Jesus constantly endured for us compared to what it costs us to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him. These three verses should encourage us to press on and not grow tired of doing the work God has put in front of us as we look to Jesus as our example.

So how do we not "*grow weary of doing good*"? Years ago we heard a representative of the Minirth and Meier Clinic say that there's no such thing as "burn out" in doing God's work if we do it with God's power rather than our own. Too many times we do God's work in our own power

and then grow tired and think we need a break. However, we were not created to do God's work on our own. Also, "*doing good*" includes doing the work of God in the way of God. You probably know the fruit of the Spirit and may be able to list its characteristics. Notice that it's the fruit of the "Spirit," not of us. It is allowing God to fill us so thoroughly with His Holy Spirit that we are a display of His character as we do His work. This is described in the following passage:

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:22-24)*

Spend a few minutes examining your heart as it relates to each of the characteristics listed in this passage and asking God to convict you where there are shortcomings. Ask God also to show you what living out each of these traits really looks like and describe what He reveals.

Love \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Joy \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Peace \_\_\_\_\_  
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Patience \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Kindness \_\_\_\_\_  
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Goodness \_\_\_\_\_  
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Faithfulness \_\_\_\_\_  
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Gentleness \_\_\_\_\_  
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Self-control \_\_\_\_\_  
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Again, it is impossible to manifest these traits in the flesh. However, if we truly love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, we will allow His Holy Spirit to fill every crevice of our being and, therefore, His love will naturally pour out of us in every interaction we have. Then if we are filled with the love of God, we will automatically have joy and peace and we will practice patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Spend some time in prayer asking God to help you truly love others by exemplifying His fruit of righteousness and to give you the strength to continue to love and serve.

## DAY 5 - Carry the Light with Peace and Joy

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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First John 4:16 and 21 says, "*So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him...And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.*"

As we have seen throughout God's Word, to truly love others is to display His love and grace, and, therefore, honor and glorify God. Many of the people in Calgary do not know God and many of them have never even heard the name of Jesus. We could think that to serve them with love just means being kind to them; however, generally speaking, the people of Calgary are very kind people. They can be just as kind as we can be. They need to see something beyond kindness--they need to see The Light shining in us.

If we have a relationship with Jesus, His light is in us even if we don't feel it at times. Regardless of our circumstances, we all are loved by God and have very much to be thankful for. We were loved by the God of the universe before we even knew we existed. We were not cut out of a mold, but were created with a unique DNA, unique characteristics, a unique personality, unique gifts, and a unique plan and purpose for our lives. No one else was ever created like us. This should lead us to a greater love for God and a desire to follow His plan for our lives, letting His light shine through us. It should also fill us with God's peace because we don't have to create the plan ourselves; we can relax in the fact that He is in control and will lead us to greater heights than would ever be possible on our own. Then it should also compel us to share His great love with those who do not know Him, those who have not experienced the peace and joy that He offers.

Take a few minutes to think about your uniqueness and the fact that God has a plan just for you. What part of His plan is clear to you at this point in your life?

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One way to share the Light of the World is to live with peace and joy because these traits will be noticeable to others as being different. Yesterday as we were riding our bikes to the beach, we passed a lady on a bike pulling a cart with her small child, probably around two years old, in it. The child was looking up and had the most wonderful, peaceful look on his face that I think I've ever seen. I wish I could have taken a picture, but even though I couldn't take it that quickly, the picture is still very clear in my mind. It portrayed to me what all of us Christians should look like as we go through life loving and following our Heavenly Father who loves us and guides us. Just like the child who had no fear because he had absolute trust in his mom to protect him and

carry him safely where he needed to go, we can do the same as we follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The look of peace on this little boy's face reminded me of how others should see us and know that they are looking into eyes of perfect peace that only comes from God. If we truly lived and revealed that perfect peace, people would be asking us what is different about us and they would want the peace and joy that we have. This is the way God's glory shines through us. We're to be a reflection of His glory.

Has anyone ever asked you what is different about you that gives you the peace you have? If so, what was your response?

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Peace and joy are two attributes of God and of a believer who loves God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. Although they are two attributes, they seem to fit together as one. If you have true peace, you will have joy. Isaiah 26:3 says the following about peace:

*"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."*

Ask God to help you apply this verse to your life and record below what it means.

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Proverbs 12:20 says this about peace and joy:

*"Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy."*

How do we "*plan peace*"? After all, it could seem that because we have a relationship with the God of the universe, our peace should be automatic. The planning, however, comes from making the conscious decision to love God with all of our being and allowing His Holy Spirit to reign over all of our life. The natural outcome, then, is peace and joy.

Do you think that maybe God looks down on earth at His children and sees the stress we are experiencing and the absence of peace and joy in our lives and shakes his head saying, "Why, oh why, don't you understand? You don't have to live this way; I'm here to help you. Why don't you believe Me?" We only have to accept the fact that He is in control, then relinquish our pain, our problems, our stress, and relax in His love and His ability to deliver us. Then His love will be able to flow through us onto those we are around.

Think about how you can "plan peace" as described in Proverbs 12:20 above. Describe where you are in your walk with God as it relates to experiencing His peace and joy.

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If we try to serve others with a heart and mind that's stressed out, the stuff that causes the stress will sidetrack us from the service God has called us to do. However, trusting God and enjoying His peace and joy enables us to serve others with a pure heart and clarity of mind.

Spend some time asking God to help you to live in a way that manifests His love, peace and joy and makes you truly a light reflecting His glory. Ask Him to guide your interactions with others today and give you wisdom and sensitivity as you carry His love to them.

## DAY 6 - Serve God with Passion

Remember the purpose of these devotions: (1) to set our mind on the reason we are here--to serve God by serving the people of Calgary--and (2) to serve them by allowing God's love to flow through us. We have a goal of being laser focused on the task. Fill in the blanks below:

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Romans 12:9-13 says the following: "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.*" (NKJV)

List the commands from the above verses and carefully consider each command.

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Jesus provided such a great example of loving and serving others. He was not hypocritical; He had a genuine love for everyone. He showed that a servant did not have a spirit of being better than those he served. An example of this was when He washed the feet of the disciples. What an example of humility, as well. After all, if we really love people, we will put our pride aside for the sake of their needs. Sometimes their needs may simply be to know they are loved.

All of these commands are rich, but we will focus today on "*not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*"

Have you been around someone who is passionate about what they are doing? Hopefully, you know someone who is passionate about serving Christ, or maybe you are that someone. Equating passion with diligence and fervor, describe what it looks like to serve God with passion.

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Merriam-Webster defines passion as "a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement for something or about doing something." We Christians have the absolute best reason for being enthusiastic and excited about life and the opportunity to be God's hands and feet to those we are privileged to serve. When we really think about the fact the The God of the Universe really works in us to fulfill His purpose, it should be enough to excite us and fill us with passion for what He wants us to do.

Think about the fruit God has produced in you this week. List some of the things you've been able to do as part of bearing fruit.

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Passion is not something that we can produce on our own; it must come from the Holy Spirit living within us and making Himself known. If you earlier identified a person who serves God with passion, that person was most likely a person who has been successful in representing Christ well and making a difference in the world for Him.

It is our prayer that as you prepare to finish the work God has placed in front of you this week, you will finish strong, finish with a passion that manifests the enthusiasm that you have for God and for doing His work.

Examine where you stack up in the "serving with passion" category. If you feel you do this already, what are you doing that enables that? If you don't feel that you serve with passion, spend some time praying, asking God to show you how to serve Him with passion. Write your thoughts below.

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## DAY 7 - Carry It Forward

As you leave Calgary, take a few minutes to reflect on what God has done in and through you this week. List thoughts that come to mind, including people you've connected with that you will continue to pray for, lessons you've learned, etc.

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Remember our theme for the week, being laser-focused on doing God's work:

### Love God

**Allow** God's love to flow through us

**See** the field white unto harvest in front of us

**Experience** our part, whether it is sowing, watering or reaping

**Run** our race with perseverance, never giving up

**FOCUSED** on Jesus, "*the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*" (Hebrews 12:2)

If you don't already have a lifelong mission statement, this could be one. Re-read it, praying that God will take you back home with a desire to carry out each of these wherever you are and wherever you find yourself in the future.

Notice that it all begins with loving God. We discussed what it means to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Let's consider this one more time. I'm to love God with all my ...

**HEART** - The seat of my emotion, my feelings, where my treasures are. So I'm to love God as my most treasured relationship, desiring to please Him more than anyone else.

**SOUL** - The part of me that will live forever, the part of me that is saved eternally. So I'm to love God to the core of my existence, the root of everything I do and everything I am.

**MIND** - The part of me that makes choices, decisions. So I'm to love God with the determination to listen to Him and obey His commands out of a conscious decision to do so.

**STRENGTH** - The part of me that drives my passion, the strength of my desire to obey God. So I'm to love God with every bit of my strength, loving Him passionately and whole-heartedly and with determination to run the race He has set out for me with all the vigor and determination He will give me.

So my prayer every day should be to **love God with all my heart** as the perfect treasure that He is, with all my **soul** as the eternal love of my life, with all my **mind** as a conscious decision to love and obey Him regardless of the cost, and with all my **strength** as passionately and wholeheartedly as He enables me.

We pray that God has worked in your heart this week in a life-changing way and that you have realized the importance of representing Him well wherever you are. You have a mission field in your neighborhood, at your school, at your job, in all your circles of influence, and God wants to use you to share Him and His Son Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the leadership of the Southwinds churches, thank you so much for giving of yourself--your time, energy and money--to come to Calgary to share in the work God is doing here. They could not do all they do to reach people in these communities without people like you giving of yourselves to help them. We all pray for your safe travels and for God's blessing on your life as you return home.

Spend a few minutes asking God to show you how He wants you to carry forward what He has taught you this week and how He wants to use you on your mission field at home. Following His plan and doing it His way will lead to a life with no regrets.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU!