

Daily devotions

23 May - 19 June 2022

Guide for using these devotions

These devotions are of the ‘inductive’ kind. That is, there are no notes for you to follow but rather a format to help you grasp for yourself what God’s word is saying. If you haven’t done an inductive devotion before don’t worry, it’s simple to follow. There are four parts to each devotion, grouped into two halves: the first half is reading the passage and choosing a key verse, the second half is ‘meditation’ and prayer. Each half should take no longer than 15 minutes.

Background to these devotions

This particular method of devotions is based on a method for prayer that Martin Luther wrote in a letter to his barber, who had asked him for some practical advice about how to pray. In response, Luther wrote about praying the ten commandments and advises considering each one under the headings of ‘instruction’ (meaning), ‘thanks’, ‘confession’, and ‘prayer’. Tim Keller in his book on prayer, applies this method to our Bible reading more generally. In other words, he says this is a method we can apply not just to the ten commandments but to any portion of the Bible.

The intent with this method is to join our Bible reading with prayer, in such a way that the Holy Spirit can apply God’s word to our hearts. Too often our Bible

reading is separated from prayer. As a result the Bible can become dry and reading it an intellectual exercise rather than a living experience of God’s Spirit applying His word.

A key linking step in this method (says Keller) is ‘meditation’. We shouldn’t be scared off by this word, thinking it means sitting quietly and emptying our minds as in some Eastern religions. Here it simply means thinking about and writing down what the key verse means. Often we read quickly, but this step forces us to slow down and think more deeply. When we do, we often see things we miss at the first reading.

The role of the holy spirit

As mentioned above, the goal in this method is to allow the Holy Spirit to work in us as we pray and read the Bible. The Bible is after all ‘the sword of the Spirit’ (Ephesians 6:17). These two—the Bible and the Holy Spirit—therefore belong together. As we read & think on God’s word and pray in response to it, we can expect God’s Spirit to be at work, convincing us of things (1Thess.1:5), enlightening our spiritual eyes (Ephesians 1:18), convicting us (cutting us to the heart) about our sin (John 16:8), giving us an experience of God’s love (Rom.5:5), working in us new ways of living (Gal.5:22), and much more. The key thing to remember is to keep this work of God’s Spirit closely bound together with God’s word—that way, we know that what we’ve become convinced of is what God has said and not just our own thoughts.

Final tips

Tip No. 1—Bathe this whole method in prayer

Don't just pray in the 'prayer' part. Instead, pray at the start, asking God to open your spiritual eyes; pray in the meditation, asking God to help you understand what the key verse means; and of course, pray in the 'prayer' part, asking God to help you see what you can thank him for, confess, and pray for arising from the key verse.

Tip No.2—Break up the time

I have found it personally helpful to do the two parts of this method at different times of the day—the reading & key verse at one time and the meditation & prayer at another. This makes the whole thing more manageable; I can realistically find 15 minutes twice a day whereas 30 minutes at one time can

seem harder. Also, I'm not a morning person and so trying to do meditation & prayer (which requires effort) in the morning is a disaster! Hence I do that part at night when I'm at my best.

Tip No.3—Do what you can manage

If you can realistically only spend 15 minutes a day on devotions then only spend 15 minutes—the 15 minutes you can manage is better than the 30 minutes you give up doing. In that case, perhaps try doing the Bible reading & key verse one day, and the meditation & prayer the next. It will take four weeks to do two weeks' worth of readings, but that's ok—you'll just have more up your sleeve for later!

I hope you find these devotions helpful, and that as you do them God will be shaping, encouraging, strengthening, and growing you in your faith in Jesus!

This month

This month we're working our way through Colossians and beginning 1 Thessalonians in the New Testament, and reading the prophet Amos in the Old.

Colossians is a wonderful letter for thinking about how amazing our Lord Jesus Christ is, in the big scheme of things. 1 Thessalonians is a very warm, affectionate letter, reminding us of the importance of relationship within Christianity.

Like Joel in last month's devotions, the prophet Amos is not always easy to understand! But some things are clear, like the fact that Amos is preaching to a people who had forgotten God and forgotten that he requires justice to be done by his people. Unfortunately in Amos' time, the rich were getting richer and ignoring the poor. This arises from their idolatry - their worship of false gods.

I trust that God will be at work as you read and pray over these parts of his Word.

Monday 23 May

Read

Colossians 1:1-14



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Tuesday 24 May

Read

Colossians 1:15-23



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

Colossians 1:24-2:5



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? “This verse means...



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Thursday 26 May

Read

Colossians 2:6-23



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Friday - 27 May

Read

Colossians 3:1-17



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Saturday 28 May

Read

Psalm 76:1-12



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read



Read the passage that was read at church today to help you reflect on today's sermon (or, if you're doing this before church, read a passage of your own choice). Write down something that struck you and turn it into prayer, either a prayer thanks, confession, or request (or all three!).

Monday 30 May

Read

Amos 1:1-8



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Tuesday 31 May

Read

Amos 2:4-16



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

Amos 3:1-15



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Thursday 2 June

Read

Amos 4:6-13



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Friday 3 June

Read

Amos 5:1-17



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means...



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

Psalm 77:1-20



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

Read the passage that was read at church today to help you reflect on today's sermon (or, if you're doing this before church, read a passage of your own choice). Write down something that struck you and turn it into prayer, either a prayer thanks, confession, or request (or all three!).

Monday 6 June

Read

Colossians 3:18-4:6



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Tuesday 7 June

Read

Colossians 4:7-18



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Thursday 9 June

Read

1 Thessalonians 2:1-16



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Friday 10 June

Read

1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Saturday 11 June

Read

Psalm 78:1-16



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read



Read the passage that was read at church today to help you reflect on today's sermon (or, if you're doing this before church, read a passage of your own choice). Write down something that struck you and turn it into prayer, either a prayer thanks, confession, or request (or all three!).

Monday 13 June

Read

Amos 5:18-27



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Tuesday 14 June

Read

Amos 6:1-14



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Wednesday 15 June

Read

Amos 7:1-9



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Read

Amos 8:1-14



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Friday 17 June

Read

Amos 9:11-15



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? "This verse means..."



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Saturday 18 June

Read

Psalm 78:17-31



Key verse

A verse that stood out to you

Meditation

What is the meaning of this verse? “This verse means...



Prayer

What is something I can thank God for arising from this verse?

What is something I can confess to God arising from this verse?

What is something I can pray (ask) for arising from this verse?

Sunday 19 June

Read

Read the passage that was read at church today to help you reflect on today's sermon (or, if you're doing this before church, read a passage of your own choice). Write down something that struck you and turn it into prayer, either a prayer thanks, confession, or request (or all three!).