

Devotions October 28 - November 3
by, Marsha Schultz
Trinity, Rhinelander, WI

Sunday, October 28

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118: 24

There are days when the last thing we want to do is rejoice. Our mood is down, it is raining outside, our situation is out of hand, and our sorrow or guilt is overwhelming.

When we have something negative going on in our lives and we replay it over and over in our mind, this negative is then our meditation for the day. A meditation is something we focus on and think about and this negative thing is our focus and is bringing us down. We feel bad and we don't know why.

Get these thoughts out of your head! Focus on this bible verse. Talk to God. Be honest with Him.

When you don't feel like rejoicing, tell God how you truly feel. You will find that God will give you a reason to rejoice.

God has given you this day to live and serve Him—be glad and rejoice.

Good and gracious God, lead us on our way rejoicing. Help us to serve you with vigor and zest for life. Amen.

Monday, October 29

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5: 7

How do we cope with those things that are causing us anxiety? We usually can't resolve or get rid of it in a day.

If we have chronic illness; if we are newly divorced; if we have lost our job ... all of these things will take time to resolve. Meanwhile, it is causing anxiety. Just for today put this problem on God. Give it up to Him—take it off your shoulders and on to His, **because he cares for you.**

Jesus loves me this I know, for the bible tells me so, little ones to him belong, we are weak but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Amen.

Tuesday, October 30

The man who has two tunics should share with him who has none,
and one who has food should do the same. Luke 3:11

We live in such a wealthy country. We have so much and yet we want more. It seems the more we get, the more we want. When we buy our first house, it is wonderful. But, soon it becomes too small and we buy a larger one. Soon we find that house doesn't have all the features we really want and if the kitchen was bigger then we could entertain more.

We end up spending most of our paycheck on the big house and all the pretty furniture in it. We spend the rest on eating out and buying our pretty clothes. And yet, we don't seem to have enough money to give an offering when we go to church.

As we become more affluent, greed takes hold of us. We love our clothes and want to buy more. We go to the store where the clothes are cheap and instead of buying one T-shirt, we buy three because they're so cheap.

John the Baptist is saying to us "keep one shirt for yourself and give the other to someone who has none". Share what you have with someone who needs it.

Lord, you have blessed us. Now, let us be a blessing to others. Amen.

Wednesday, October 31

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23,24

Wow! Jesus is telling us to leave church! He's telling us to leave church to go and mend a broken relationship. He wants us all to get rid of our anger and it's SO important that we be reconciled with one another, we are to leave church to do so.

We all have problems and personality conflicts. Here's where it gets sticky for me. Help me understand. I am not angry but it is my brother who is angry with me—and **I** am supposed to go **to him** and be reconciled? Shouldn't it be the other way around? I have people who are angry with me, I am no longer angry (because I have forgiven them) but there is still this split ... this division, this avoidance and **I** am supposed to go to **them** and be reconciled?

Jesus is saying yes, we are to reconcile. It doesn't matter who is angry with whom. It is just that important.

What does it mean to reconcile? It means "to restore to friendship, harmony or communion". Broken relationships can hinder our relationship with God. If we have a problem or grievance with a friend, we should resolve the problem as soon as possible. We are hypocrites if we claim to love God while we hate others. Our attitudes toward others reflects our relationship with God.

O God, help me to heal broken relationships. Give us the words to speak and the wisdom to know when not to speak. We are all connected. We are all one family. We are all your children. How it must pain you to see us divided. Forgive us, Lord. Amen.

Thursday, November 1

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3

We live in a world today that respects wealth and status while we look down our noses at those who do menial jobs or drive a rusty old car. It's all based on how much money we make; what school we graduated from; what degrees we hold; how well our children do in school; where we go on vacation and on and on.

What **we** value is not mentioned in the Beatitudes. Hmmmm.

How could the poor in spirit be blessed? How could someone so poor in spirit inherit the greatness of the kingdom of heaven? What about those of us who have worked so hard and studied so much. Isn't the kingdom of heaven going to be ours?

Those of us who are healthy and have everything we need, who are happy and self-sufficient, who are not "poor in spirit" aren't in need of being blessed. Everything's going good.

No. When things are going great—we don't need God. It's only when we are at our lowest ebb, when we are depressed and things look black that we have a come-to-Jesus moment. It's when we are weeping and asking for forgiveness—when we truly accept Jesus into our hearts and know that we cannot go on without God's help—when we are poor in spirit—do we know how blessed we are.

We don't need money and property to be blessed. With Jesus, we have hope and joy. What a blessing indeed.

Heavenly Father, we are all poor in spirit ... some of us just don't know it yet. Stay with those of us who have yet to fall on our knees in despair. Assist those of us who are strong, to become weak ... to be weak enough to have to depend on you. Amen.

Friday, November 2

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older.

All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

Both young and old can benefit from Peter’s instructions. Pride often keeps older people from trying to understand young people and keeps young people from listening to those who are older. Both young and old need to be humble and serve each other. Young men should follow the leadership of older men who should lead by example. Respect those who are older than you. Listen to those younger than you, and be humble enough to admit that you can learn from each other.

Gracious God, help us all to be humble. Sometimes we get so full of ourselves and we want to do things our own way because our way is the right way. Help us to listen with ears that will hear. Amen.

Saturday, November 3

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

The Holy Spirit's work in our lives is deep and lasting peace. It's hard to describe unless you have felt it yourself. This peace is confident assurance in any circumstance. With Christ's peace, we have no need to fear the present or the future. Jesus says he will give us that peace if we are willing to accept it from him.

Lord Jesus, thank you for the peace I feel in my life. I pray for those who have not yet found your peace. Guard them in their struggles. Amen.