

Rooted in the Word weekly readings for: March 3-9, 2014

Theme: Outreach...Christian Witness

Begin each daily devotional reading with prayer. Ask that God would speak to you through His Word and through the Holy Spirit.



March 3: Matthew 22:34-40. Love is an action verb, it cannot be done passively. What does it mean to love the Lord? How do I actively love the Lord? How do I love my neighbor?

March 4: Luke 10:25-32. Jesus teaches this lesson by exaggeration and far-fetched details. We don't usually find our neighbor lying naked in a ditch. But I wonder if we are more willing to help in times of deep crisis. Sometimes it's harder to walk alongside someone day after day after day especially if they don't look, act or believe like I do. Perhaps it means being kind to that person who gets on your nerves, truly listening even when you disagree, or ... you finish the sentence with what loving your neighbor means for you today.

March 5: John 11:28-36. Vs. 35 is the shortest verse in the Bible and also one of the most powerful. Jesus empathized with Mary's loss. His heart ached with her pain. He didn't deny it or minimize it. To empathize is to acknowledge what another person is going through. It says "you are not alone." Empathy loves without condemning or judging. Both parties become vulnerable and share a connection. Love and acceptance are extended.

March 6: Matthew 9:35-36, 14:13-14, Luke 13:10-13. Jesus took the time to see the needs around him. How often am I so focused on my to-do list that I fail to recognize the silent cries in the eyes of those I rush past?

March 7: Philemon 8-22. Paul steps in as a mediator for someone who was clearly in the wrong. He puts his credibility on the line. By all rights Onesimus did not deserve grace and forgiveness. Am I willing to advocate for grace even for those who don't deserve it? Do I extend love and acceptance to those that have hurt me or my community?

March 8: Matthew 5:1-9. What does it mean to be meek in a world clamoring for recognition? How do I extend mercy in a world bent on justice and revenge? What does it look like to be a peacemaker in a broken world?

March 9: Mark 5:22-34. Jesus was on his way to Jarius' house when he was waylaid by this woman. Am I understanding when my schedule is thrown off by another's need? Do I show grace to those who don't act, look or believe like I do? How do I respond when love is inconvenient?