

## **LARGE-PRINT**

**Devotions for the Week of November 26, 2017**

**North East United Methodist Church**

**Rev. Dr. Drew M. Christian**

I know many have enjoyed the devotions in the bulletin each week. I appreciate the many members of the congregation who have shared with me over the years as to how these devotions have impacted them.

This week, I wanted to share with you excerpts from three classic devotionals. I pray these words bless you and impact your faith. I pray that many of you order one of these devotionals and begin, if you are not already, building a daily habit of going deeper with God. The three devotionals are:

### **My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers**

*Oswald Chambers, a Scotsman who converted to Christianity in his teens under the ministry of Charles Spurgeon, has been affecting Christians with his devotional words since My Utmost for His Highest was first published in 1935. This acknowledged classic contains 365 daily readings that take heady doctrine and make it practical, realistic, and intensely personal. With humor and humility, Chambers speaks plainly to the common man struggling with devotion to Christ in daily living. Worldly cares and self-serving desires begin to lose their appeal as Chambers aides the reader in transforming his mind by viewing life through the instruction of God's Word.*

### **Streams In The Desert by L.B. Cowman**

*In a barren wilderness, L. B. Cowman long ago discovered a fountain that sustained her, and she shared it with the world, Streams in the Desert -- her collection of prayerful meditations, Christian writings, and God's written promises--has become one*

*of the most dearly loved, best-selling devotionals of all time since its first publication in 1925. Filled with insight into the richness of God's provision and the purpose of His plan, this enduring classic has encouraged and inspired generations of Christians.*

### **Morning And Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon**

*For over one hundred years, Christians have gotten up and gone to bed with Charles Spurgeon's devotional Morning and Evening as a companion. With a reading to begin and end each day throughout the year, you will come to appreciate Spurgeon's emphasis on the importance of abiding in Christ and meditating on God's Word. His wisdom and counsel provide a timeless guide through the trials and triumphs of the year.*

I pray each of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that together we will journey, beginning next Sunday, through the season of Advent and Christmas. May this be a season of great intimacy with God. May we experience Him more fully and, unlike the Inn that first Christmas night, when God comes to us may He find “room” in our hearts that He might fill us more with His grace and love! God Bless!

Pastor Drew

### **Sunday, November 26, 2017**

**From Charles Spurgeon's Devotional, Morning and Evening.**

#### **MORNING**

*“And David enquired of the Lord.” -2 Samuel 5:23*

When David made this enquiry he had just fought the Philistines, and gained a signal victory. The Philistines came up in great hosts, but, by the help of God, David had easily put them to flight. Note, however, that when they came a second time, David

did not go up to fight them without enquiring of the Lord. Once he had been victorious, and he might have said, as many have in other cases, "*I shall be victorious again; I may rest quite sure that if I have conquered once I shall triumph yet again. Wherefore should I tarry to seek at the Lord's hands?*" Not so, David. He had gained one battle by the strength of the Lord; he would not venture upon another until he had ensured the same. He enquired, "*Shall I go up against them?*" He waited until God's sign was given. Learn from David to take no step without God. Christian, if thou wouldst know the path of duty, take God for thy compass; if thou wouldst steer thy ship through the dark billows, put the tiller into the hand of the Almighty. Many a rock might be escaped, if we would let our Father take the helm; many a shoal or quicksand we might well avoid, if we would leave to his sovereign will to choose and to command. The Puritan said, "*As sure as ever a Christian carves for himself, he'll cut his own fingers;*" this is a great truth. Said another old divine, "*He that goes before the cloud of God's providence goes on a fool's errand;*" and so he does. We must mark God's providence leading us; and if providence tarries, tarry till providence comes. He who goes before providence, will be very glad to run back again. "*I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go,*" is God's promise to his people. Let us, then, take all our perplexities to him, and say, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" Leave not thy chamber this morning without enquiring of the Lord.

## **EVENING**

*"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [or, the evil one]."* -Luke 11:4

What we are taught to seek or shun in prayer, we should equally pursue or avoid in action. Very earnestly, therefore, should we avoid temptation, seeking to walk so guardedly in the path of obedience, that we may never tempt the devil to tempt us.

We are not to enter the thicket in search of the lion. Dearly might we pay for such presumption. This lion may cross our path or leap upon us from the thicket, but we have nothing to do with hunting him. He that meeteth with him, even though he winneth the day, will find it a stern struggle. Let the Christian pray that he may be spared the encounter. Our Saviour, who had experience of what temptation meant, thus earnestly admonished his disciples - "*Pray that ye enter not into temptation.*"

But let us do as we will, we shall be tempted; hence the prayer "*deliver us from evil.*" God had one Son without sin; but he has no son without temptation. The natural man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, and the Christian man is born to temptation just as certainly. We must be always on our watch against Satan, because, like a thief, he gives no intimation of his approach. Believers who have had experience of the ways of Satan, know that there are certain seasons when he will most probably make an attack, just as at certain seasons bleak winds may be expected; thus the Christian is put on a double guard by fear of danger, and the danger is averted by preparing to meet it. Prevention is better than cure: it is better to be so well armed that the devil will not attack you, than to endure the perils of the fight, even though you come off a conqueror. Pray this evening first that you may not be tempted, and next that if temptation be permitted, you may be delivered from the evil one.

**Monday, November 27, 2017**

**From Oswald Chambers' devotional, My Utmost For His Highest.**

**Read Romans 8:26.**

We realize that we are energized by the Holy Spirit for prayer; we know what it is to pray in the Spirit; but we do not so often realize that the Holy Spirit Himself prays in us prayers which

we cannot utter. When we are born again of God and are indwelt by the Spirit of God, He expresses for us the unutterable.

“He,” the Spirit in you, “*maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God,*” and God searches your heart not to know what your conscious prayers are, but to find out what is the prayer of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God needs the nature of the believer as a shrine in which to offer His intercession. “*Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.*” When Jesus Christ cleansed the temple, He “would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.” The Spirit of God will not allow you to use your body for your own convenience. Jesus ruthlessly cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and said— “*My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*”

Have we recognized that our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? If so, we must be careful to keep it undefiled for Him. We have to remember that our conscious life, though it is only a tiny bit of our personality, is to be regarded by us as a shrine of the Holy Ghost. He will look after the unconscious part that we know nothing of; but we must see that we guard the conscious part for which we are responsible.

**Tuesday, November 28, 2017**

**From Oswald Chambers' devotional, My Utmost For His Highest.**

**Read 2 Peter 1:5.**

You have inherited the Divine nature, says Peter (v.4), now screw your attention down and form habits, give diligence, concentrate. “*Add*” means all that character means. No man is born either naturally or supernaturally with character, he has to make character. Nor are we born with habits; we have to form habits on the basis of the new life God has put into us. We are not

meant to be illuminated versions, but the common stuff of ordinary life exhibiting the marvel of the grace of God. Drudgery is the touchstone of character. The great hindrance in spiritual life is that we will look for big things to do. "*Jesus took a towel...and began to wash the disciples' feet.*"

There are times when there is no illumination and no thrill, but just the daily round, the common task. Routine is God's way of saving us between our times of inspiration. Do not expect God always to give you His thrilling minutes, but learn to live in the domain of drudgery by the power of God.

It is the "*adding*" that is difficult. We say we do not expect God to carry us to heaven on flowery beds of ease, and yet we act as if we did! The tiniest detail in which I obey has all the omnipotent power of the grace of God behind it. If I do my duty, not for duty's sake, but because I believe God is engineering my circumstances, then at the very point of my obedience the whole superb grace of God is mine through the Atonement.

**Wednesday, November 29, 2017**

**From L.B. Cowman's devotional, Streams In The Desert.**

*"He named the second child Ephraim, saying, "Certainly God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering." -Genesis 41:52*

The summer showers are falling. The poet stands by the window watching them. They are beating and buffeting the earth with their fierce downpour. But the poet sees in his imaginings more than the showers which are falling before his eyes. He sees myriads of lovely flowers which shall be soon breaking forth from the watered earth, filling it with matchless beauty and fragrance. And so he sings:

*"It isn't raining rain for me, it's raining daffodils;  
In every dimpling drop I see wild flowers upon the hills.  
A cloud of gray engulfs the day, and overwhelms the town;  
It isn't raining rain for me: it's raining roses down."*

Perchance some one of God's chastened children is even now saying, *"O God, it is raining hard for me tonight. Testings are raining upon me which seem beyond my power to endure. Disappointments are raining fast, to the utter defeat of all my chosen plans. Bereavements are raining into my life which are making my shrinking heart quiver in its intensity of suffering. The rain of affliction is surely beating down upon my soul these days."*

Withal, friend, you are mistaken. It isn't raining rain for you. It's raining blessing. For, if you will but believe your Father's Word, under that beating rain are springing up spiritual flowers of such fragrance and beauty as never before grew in that stormless, unchastened life of yours.

You indeed see the rain. But do you see also the flowers? You are pained by the testings. But God sees the sweet flower of faith which is upspringing in your life under those very trials. You shrink from the suffering. But God sees the tender compassion for other sufferers which is finding birth in your soul. Your heart winces under the sore bereavement. But God sees the deepening and enriching which that sorrow has brought to you.

It isn't raining afflictions for you. It is raining tenderness, love, compassion, patience, and a thousand other flowers and fruits of the blessed Spirit, which are bringing into your life such a spiritual enrichment as all the fullness of worldly prosperity and ease was never able to beget in your innermost soul.

## SONGS ACROSS THE STORM

*“A harp stood in the moveless air,  
Where showers of sunshine washed a thousand fragrant blooms;  
A traveler bowed with loads of care  
Essayed from morning till the dusk of evening glooms  
To thum sweet sounds from the songless strings;  
The pilgrim strives in vain with each unanswering chord,  
Until the tempest’s thunder sings,  
And, moving on the storm, the fingers of the Lord  
A wondrous melody awakes;  
And though the battling winds their soldier deeds perform,  
Their trumpet-sound brave music makes  
While God’s assuring voice sings love across the storm”*

**Thursday, November 30, 2017**

**From Charles Spurgeon's Devotional, Morning and Evening**

### **MORNING**

*"Delight thyself also in the Lord."* -Psalm 37:4

The teaching of these words must seem very surprising to those who are strangers to vital godliness, but to the sincere believer it is only the inculcation of a recognized truth. The life of the believer is here described as a delight in God, and we are thus certified of the great fact that true religion overflows with happiness and joy. Ungodly persons and mere professors never look upon religion as a joyful thing; to them it is service, duty, or necessity, but never pleasure or delight. If they attend to religion at all, it is either that they may gain thereby, or else because they dare not do otherwise. The thought of delight in religion is so strange to most men, that no two words in their language stand further apart than "holiness" and "delight." But believers who know Christ, understand that delight and faith are so blessedly

united, that the gates of hell cannot prevail to separate them. They who love God with all their hearts, find that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Such joys, such brimful delights, such overflowing blessednesses, do the saints discover in their Lord, that so far from serving him from custom, they would follow him though all the world cast out his name as evil. We fear not God because of any compulsion; our faith is no fetter, our profession is no bondage, we are not dragged to holiness, nor driven to duty. No, our piety is our pleasure, our hope is our happiness, our duty is our delight.

Delight and true religion are as allied as root and flower; as indivisible as truth and certainty; they are, in fact, two precious jewels glittering side by side in a setting of gold.

*"Tis when we taste thy love,  
Our joys divinely grow,  
Unspeakable like those above,  
And heaven begins below."*

## **EVENING**

*"O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face ... because we have sinned against thee." -Daniel 9:8*

A deep sense and clear sight of sin, its heinousness, and the punishment which it deserves, should make us lie low before the throne. We have sinned as Christians. Alas! that it should be so. Favoured as we have been, we have yet been ungrateful: privileged beyond most, we have not brought forth fruit in proportion. Who is there, although he may long have been engaged in the Christian warfare, that will not blush when he looks back upon the past? As for our days before we were regenerated, may they be forgiven and forgotten; but since then, though we have not sinned as before, yet we have sinned against light and against love--light which has really penetrated our minds, and love in which we have rejoiced. Oh, the atrocity of the

sin of a pardoned soul! An unpardoned sinner sins cheaply compared with the sin of one of God's own elect ones, who has had communion with Christ and leaned his head upon Jesus' bosom. Look at David! Many will talk of his sin, but I pray you look at his repentance, and hear his broken bones, as each one of them moans out its dolorous confession! Mark his tears, as they fall upon the ground, and the deep sighs with which he accompanies the softened music of his harp! We have erred: let us, therefore, seek the spirit of penitence. Look, again, at Peter! We speak much of Peter's denying his Master. Remember, it is written, "*He wept bitterly.*" Have we no denials of our Lord to be lamented with tears? Alas! these sins of ours, before and after conversion, would consign us to the place of inextinguishable fire if it were not for the sovereign mercy which has made us to differ, snatching us like brands from the burning. My soul, bow down under a sense of thy natural sinfulness, and worship thy God. Admire the grace which saves thee--the mercy which spares thee--the love which pardons thee!

**Friday, December 1, 2017**

**From Oswald Chambers' devotional, My Utmost For His Highest.**

**Read John 21: 21-22.**

One of our severest lessons comes from the stubborn refusal to see that we must not interfere in other people's lives. It takes a long time to realize the danger of being an amateur providence, that is, interfering with God's order for others. You see a certain person suffering, and you say — "*He shall not suffer, and I will see that he does not.*" You put your hand straight in front of God's permissive will to prevent it, and God says — "*What is that to thee?*" If there is stagnation spiritually, never allow it to go on, but get into God's presence and find out the reason for

it. Possibly you will find it is because you have been interfering in the life of another; proposing things you had no right to propose; advising when you had no right to advise. When you do have to give advice to another, God will advise through you with the direct understanding of His Spirit; your part is to be so rightly related to God that His discernment comes through you all the time for the blessing of another soul.

Most of us live on the borders of consciousness — consciously serving, consciously devoted to God. All this is immature, it is not the real life yet. The mature stage is the life of a child which is never conscious; we become so abandoned to God that the consciousness of being used never enters in. When we are consciously being used as broken bread and poured-out wine, there is another stage to be reached, where all consciousness of ourselves and of what God is doing through us is eliminated. A saint is never consciously a saint; a saint is consciously dependent on God.

***Don't forget to come by the parsonage tomorrow, December 2, between 12-4 PM for our Christmas Open-House and the North East Christmas Parade. Bring some cookies and spend some time in fellowship with our family.***

***-Pastor Drew***

**Saturday, December 2, 2017**

**From L.B. Cowman's devotional, Streams In The Desert.**

*“Thou makest the outgoing of the morning and evening to rejoice.”  
- Psalms 65:8*

Get up early and go to the mountain and watch God make a morning. The dull gray will give way as God pushes the sun towards the horizon, and there will be tints and hues of every

shade, that will blend into one perfect light as the full-orbed sun bursts into view. As the King of day moves forth majestically, flooding the earth and every lowly vale, listen to the music of heaven's choir as it sings of the majesty of God and the glory of the morning.

In the holy hush of the early dawn  
I hear a Voice  
*"I am with you all the day,  
Rejoice! Rejoice!"*

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The clear, pure light of the morning made me long for the truth in my heart, which alone could make me pure and clear as the morning, tune me up to the concert-pitch of the nature around me. And the wind that blew from the sunrise made me hope in the God who had first breathed into my nostrils the breath of life; that He would at length so fill me with His breath, His mind, His Spirit, that I should think only His thoughts, and live His life, finding therein my own life, only glorified infinitely.

What should we poor humans do without our God's nights and mornings?

-George McDonald

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*"In the early morning hours,  
'Twixt the night and day,  
While from earth the darkness passes  
Silently away;  
"Then 'tis sweet to talk with Jesus  
In thy chamber still*

*For the coming day and duties  
Ask to know His will.  
"Then He'll lead the way before you,  
Mountains laying low;  
Making desert places blossom,  
Sweet'ning Marah's flow.  
"Would you know this life of triumph,  
Victory all the way?  
Then put God in the beginning  
Of each coming day."*

**And don't forget to invite someone to church,  
to pick them up and bring them,  
so they may hear the Word of God,  
be part of a family of faith,  
and come to know Jesus!**