



Monday, December 29, 2014

**READ-** The Old Testament: Isaiah 60:1-6

The prophet's words foreshadow the coming of the true Light – the Messiah – into the world. God's reign will come to full fruition in the person of Jesus Christ who offers reconciliation and mercy from God and showed us how we are to live. It is a time of great rejoicing!

**REFLECT-**

- We live in a time when there is much darkness and suffering. We must keep focused on that Light who has come and through His Spirit, there will be peace, comfort and enough for all needs to be met. We are to be instruments of that peace and plenty in a hurting world.

**PRAY-**

Lord, help me to be aware of all the ways you bless us and live in a way that shares those blessings with others. Amen.

Tuesday, December 30, 2014

**READ-** The Epistle: Ephesians 3:1-12

Paul writes here of all that was revealed to the world about the nature of God by the life and teachings of Christ and that Christ came for everyone, not just the Jews. And further, he encourages the Ephesians to share that good news with everyone they encounter so that they may believe and receive God's mercy.

**REFLECT-**

- Your words and your actions show your faith to everyone around you. The way you treat people, the love and care you show to others make you a living testimony to what you believe. Keep that in mind as you go about your day. Because He loved, we are also to love.

**PRAY-**

O God, thank you for sending your Son so that we may know you more fully, learn how you want us to live, and be reconciled in loving relationship with you. Amen.

Wednesday, December 31, 2014

**READ-** The Psalm: Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14

This psalm once again affirms the importance to God of care for the poor and the oppressed and God's priority for compassion and justice. The king in this passage is righteous through God's power which he uses to care for the needy and bring justice to those who need it.

**REFLECT-**

- Many in our country are frustrated by the role of government today. Social programs originally intended to help the genuinely poor have become entitlement programs which are widely abused. What is the role of the church and government in helping the poor in our country?

**PRAY-**

Father, thank you for your love and care in my life. Help me to be an instrument of your love and care to those around me. Amen.

Thursday, January 1, 2015

**READ-** The Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

The wise men were astrologers, likely from around Babylon, who were convinced that a new king had been born because of a new bright star that they had been following. God once again intervenes in the events of Christ's birth through a dream which sends them home by another way.

**REFLECT-**

- The wise men were Gentiles, yet they were among the first to see Jesus and worship him. They brought precious gifts of great value to offer which allowed Joseph the means for their little family to escape to Egypt, avoiding Herod's slaughter of infants. When we use the gifts God has given us, we honor Christ. How will you honor Christ through your gifts today?

**PRAY-**

O God, thank you for the gift of your Son. Amen.

Friday, January 2, 2015

**ACT -** Focus Verse: Psalm 72:12-13

**For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy.**

During this Christmas season, opportunities abound for us to help those in need. Working in the food pantry or coat closet here at church, providing gifts for needy children, donating to the Samaritan Fund or Salvation Army or other international agencies for the poor such as Heifer International, Habitat for Humanity or World Vision allow you to offer badly needed help to those for whom God has a special concern. John Wesley believed that caring for the poor is itself a means in which God conveys his grace to us. Giving of your time, your material resources, and your loving presence to someone who is hurting can offer tremendous blessings to all involved. Seek out a way today to help someone in need.

This will be the last posting of this devotional. A new devotional will be available in the coming months.