

FIRST things FIRST

Daily Devotionals

September 8-14, 2025

Devotions prepared for you to use in your Quiet Time with the Lord and are designed to prepare you for the sermon next Sunday.

Monday, Sept. 8 **God Seeks the Lost**

Read Scripture: Ezekiel 34:11-16

When we wander, we may feel forgotten or too far gone for God to care. But Scripture reminds us that God doesn't just sit back and wait. He is the One who seeks. Like a shepherd leaving the ninety-nine to find the one, He comes after us with relentless love. His seeking is personal. He knows our name and what has been right and wrong in our lives. And when He finds us, He doesn't come with anger, He comes with care and love, lifting us onto His shoulders and carrying us home. If you feel lost today, know you are not overlooked. God is already searching for you.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for never giving up on me.

Tuesday, Sept. 9 **Rejoicing in Repentance**

Read Scripture: Isaiah 55:6-7

Repentance is not about shame but about return. When we turn back to God, He does not meet us with anger but with mercy and joy. Jesus describes heaven's celebration over even one sinner who repents, reminding us that God's forgiveness isn't held back. Too often, we fear confessing our failures because we expect punishment. But God is eager to forgive, ready to embrace, and delighted when we take even the smallest step toward Him. Imagine God rejoicing over you. What a wonderful thought that the creator of the world celebrates with you.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank You for welcoming me home with joy and mercy.

Wednesday, Sept. 10 **Each One Matters**

Read Scripture: Matthew 18:12-24

The world often values people by wealth, power, or popularity. But Jesus teaches us that each person, no matter how small, fragile, or overlooked, matters deeply to God. No one is disposable in His eyes. This truth also challenges us: if God values every single soul, then we too must treat people with dignity and love, especially

those the world ignores. To God, every person is worth seeking, saving, and celebrating.

Prayer: Help me to see others through Your eyes, treating each person as precious in Your kingdom.

Thursday Sept. 11 **God's Patient Love**

Read Scripture: 2 Peter 3:8-9

Patience is not always our strength—but it is one of God's greatest gifts. He is not in a hurry to push us away when we fall short. Instead, He waits, giving us time to respond, time to return, time to be restored. Think of how many times you've resisted, doubted, or failed, and yet God has still held on to you. His patience is not weakness; it's mercy. He waits because He wants us all to find Him.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your patient love. Teach me to be patient with myself and with others.

Friday, Sept. 12 **Restored with Joy**

Read Scripture: Psalm 51:10-12

Sin weighs us down with guilt, shame, and separation from God. But forgiveness restores what was lost. David, after his failure, prayed for restoration, not only of salvation but of joy. That's what God offers when He finds us. When we are restored, we don't just return to life as usual; we return lighter, freer, renewed in spirit. God doesn't just forgive—He rejoices, and He invites us to live in that joy. Being found means more than being rescued—it means being restored to the life God intends for us.

Prayer: God of mercy, restore my joy in You today.

Saturday, Sept. 13 **Joining God's Celebration**

Read Scripture: Philippians 4:4-7

In heaven, there is joy every time someone turns to God. That joy is contagious—we are invited to join in the celebration. Sometimes we are tempted to judge those who are just coming to faith, comparing their past to our own. But Jesus makes it clear: repentance is cause for rejoicing, not resentment. The church is called to reflect heaven's heart by celebrating when the lost are found. That means welcoming with open arms, cheering for every story of redemption, and letting joy mark our life together as God's people. Rejoicing is not optional.

Prayer: Lord, fill me with Your joy. Teach me to celebrate the work You are doing in others' lives.

Sunday, Sept. 14 **Seeking People**

Worship at 10:00am

Luke 15:1-10

by Pastor Clint Phillips