



## LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2010

Week 10:

March 7 – March 13

### I. Adoration

#### 1. Invocation Prayer

“Our Father, we realize our dependence on Thee. When we are weak, then we are strong. Afflictions may be our crosses, but they can become crowns if we will sanctify them as is our privilege. Help us to take the sickness, the burdens, the losses, the calamities and use them as means of grace to centre our affections on our Savior. Give me this kind of courage, this kind of faith. In Jesus Name. Amen.” (Francis Asbury 18<sup>th</sup> c.)

#### 2. Adoration through Psalm 10

(We'll use this Psalm, not for today's Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God)

- Read a different portion of this passage slowly a day at least three times and gather a different thought about God's character or deeds each day and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

### II. Confession

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to your sins and ask for forgiveness.

### III. Thanksgiving

List, one by one, things that you should give thanks for.

### IV. Scriptural Reflection: Based on the Gospel of Luke

Reading slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

#### March 7: 24: 1-12

- (1) Why did the apostles consider the words of the women nonsense? What does this tell you about the frame of mind of the apostles?
- (2) According to the angels, Jesus foretold his death and resurrection way back in Galilee. How did the women and the apostles totally forget or ignore His words at a time like this? When then was the thing that preoccupied the minds of the women and the apostles in the last few days?
- (3) Read Ephesians 1: 18-21 slowly and ask God to open your heart so that you may gain greater understanding of the significance of Christ's resurrection (1) concerning God's plan of salvation from the beginning, (2) with regard to the hope of the world, and (3) for your own eternal destiny. Translate your thoughts in a prayer of adoration.
- (4) *What do you learn about "total surrender" today?*

#### March 8: 24: 13-27

- (1) Why did Jesus choose to appear to these two disciples, even though they were not among the Twelve? (Note v.17)
- (2) From what Cleopas said, (1) jot down from his perspective the key events that happened in Jerusalem in the last few days? (2) Given these events, how did they refer to Jesus? Why?
- (3) What was Jesus' verdict of the two? And, what was the reason for their slowness of heart?
- (4) *What do you learn about "total surrender" today?*

#### March 9: 24: 28-35

- (1) Why were the hearts of the two disciples burning within as Jesus talked to them on the road? When was the last

time you felt your heart burning upon listening to God's word?

- (2) When did they recognize Jesus? Was there any significance in that Jesus used the breaking of bread to open their eyes?
- (3) Why did they return to Jerusalem immediately? Did they expect the apostles to believe them? Why or why not?
- (4) *What do you learn about "total surrender" today?*

**March 10: 24: 36-43**

- (1) Did the apostles believe the report of the two disciples?
- (2) How did Jesus put their fear and doubts to rest? What can you learn about Jesus' resurrected body?
- (3) Read I Corinthians 15: 35-49. Do you look forward to your resurrected body? Why or why not?
- (4) *What do you learn about "total surrender" today?*

**March 11 24: 44-53**

- (1) We often think that in the Old Testament, only the books of the prophets foretold about Jesus, but here Jesus points out that the Book of the Law of Moses and the Psalms in fact talked about him. Can you think of a passage from the Law of Moses (first five books of the Bible) and a passage from Psalms that talk about Jesus\*?
- (2) What was the key to their being able to understand the Scriptures? What does it tell you about how you may understand the Scriptures?
- (3) Read v.47-48 in light of I Corinthians 15:19. What should your focus be in the proclamation of the gospel?
- (4) *As we have finished reading the Gospel of Luke, spend sometime to go over your journals, and write down three major passages or points that you need to take heed in being a totally committed disciple of Jesus Christ.*

(\* examples are: Genesis 3:15 and Psalm 22:18)

**The Gospel of John: On Loving Jesus**

We have used the reading of the Gospel of Luke to reflect on the essence of being a disciple of Christ, which is "total surrender". Now we are embarking on another equally important aspect of being a disciple, and that is we have been called to "love Him." We shall be reflecting on John's Gospel and his epistles, to learn from this disciple "whom Jesus loved."

Note also that the gospel of John was written toward the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, to those who were far removed from the events of Jesus and from most of the first-hand witnesses, except John.

**March 12 1: 1-13**

- (1) John opened his gospel with the same three words that opened the book of Genesis. What is the significance of this, especially concerning the Word? What part did the Word play, according to John, in creation and who is He?
- (2) Apart from being described as the Word, what else did John use to describe Him and what is the significance of each of these descriptions?
- (3) V.12-13 is one of the clearest statements about "saving faith". Can you define "saving faith" according to these two verses?
- (4) What have you learned about the love of God?

**March 13 1: 14-18**

- (1) How does "the Word became flesh" express the fullness of His grace and His truth? What has "The Word became flesh" meant to you?
- (2) V. 17 might be hard to understand as John was comparing Moses and Jesus. Some would translate, "For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came into being" through Jesus Christ. How does this translation help you understand this statement by John?

- (3) What do you learn about the relationship between Jesus and the Father in these first 18 verses of the gospel of John?
- (4) *What do you learn about “the love of Christ” today?*

## **V. Meditative Reflection**

(This week, we shall continue our meditation based on excerpts of *The Calvary Road* by Roy Hession. Though it is out of print, its messages have transformed many lives over the years.)

### **March 7**

#### *God's Picture of the Human Heart.*

We shall not understand the real wrong of the Pharisee's attitude, nor of our own, unless we view it against the background of what God says about the human heart. Said Jesus Christ, "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness."<sup>2</sup> The same dark picture of the human heart is given us in Paul's letter to the Galatians, "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, divisions, parties, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like."<sup>3</sup> What a picture! Jeremiah adds the same witness, "The heart is deceitful above all things (that is, it deceives the man himself, so that he does not know himself) and desperately wicked, who can know it?"<sup>4</sup> Here then is God's picture of the human heart, the fallen self, "the old man,"<sup>5</sup> as the Scripture calls it, whether it be in the unconverted or in the keenest Christian. It is hard to believe that these things can proceed from the heart of ministers, evangelists and Christian workers, but it is true. The simple truth is that the only beautiful thing about the Christian is Jesus Christ. God wants us to recognise that fact as true in our experience, so that in true brokenness and self-despair we shall allow Jesus Christ to be our righteousness and holiness and all in all — and that is victory.

<sup>2</sup>. Mark 7: 20-23. <sup>3</sup>. Gal. 5: 19-21. <sup>4</sup>. Jer. 17:9. <sup>5</sup>. Eph. 4: 22.

### **March 8**

#### *Making God a Liar!*

Now in face of God's description of the human heart, we can see what it was that the Pharisee did. In saying, "I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers," he was

protesting his innocence of the very things that God says are in every heart. He said in effect, “These things are doubtless true of other men — this Publican is even now confessing them — but, Lord, not of me!” And in so saying, he was making God a liar, for “if we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar,”<sup>6</sup> because He says we have! Yet I feel sure that he was perfectly sincere in what he said. He really *did* believe that he was innocent of these things. Indeed, he is ascribing his imagined innocence to God, saying, “I thank thee . . .” God’s word, however, still stood against him. But he just had not seen it. The “penny had not dropped!” If the Publican is beating upon his breast and confessing his sins, it is not because he has sinned worse than the Pharisee. It is simply that the Publican has seen that what God says is woefully true of him, and the Pharisee has not. The Pharisee still thinks that outward abstinence from certain sins is all that God requires. He has not yet understood that God looks, not on the outward appearance, but on the heart,<sup>7</sup> and accounts the look of lust the equivalent of adultery,<sup>8</sup> the attitude of resentment and hate the same as murder,<sup>9</sup> envy as actual theft, and the petty tyrannies in the home as wicked as the most extortionate dealings in the market.

<sup>6</sup>. I John 1:10    <sup>7</sup>. I Sam. 16: 7.    <sup>8</sup>. Matt, 5: 27-28.

<sup>9</sup>. I John 3: 15.

### **March 9**

How often have not we, too, protested our innocence on the many occasions when God has been convicting others, and when He has wanted to convict us too. We have said in effect, “These things may be true of others, but not of me!” and we may have said so quite sincerely. Perhaps we have heard of others who have humbled themselves and have rather despised them for the confessions they have had to make and the things they had to put right in their lives. Or perhaps we have been genuinely glad that they have been blessed. But, whichever it is, we don’t feel that we have anything to be broken about ourselves. Beloved, if we feel we are innocent and have nothing to be broken about, it is not that these things are not there but that we have not seen them. We have been living in a realm of illusion about ourselves. God must be true in all that He says about us. In one form or another, He sees these things expressing themselves in us (unless we have recognised them and allowed God to deal with them) — unconscious selfishness, pride and self-congratulation; jealousy, resentment and impatience; reserve, fears and shyness; dishonesty and

deception; impurity and lust; if not one thing, then another. But we are blind to it. We are perhaps so occupied with the wrong the other man has done us, that we do not see that we are sinning against Christ in not being willing to take it with His meekness and lowliness. Seeing so clearly how the other man wants his own way and rights, we are blind to the fact that we want ours just as much; and yet we know there is something missing in our lives. Somehow we are not in vital fellowship with God. We are not spiritually crisp. Our service does not “crackle with the supernatural.” Unconscious sin is none the less sin with God and separates us from Him. The sin in question may be quite a small thing, which God will so readily show us, if we are only willing to ask Him.

### **March 10**

There is yet another error we fall into, when we are not willing to recognise the truth of what God says of the human heart. Not only do we protest our own innocence, but we often protest the innocence of our loved ones. We hate to see them being convicted and humbled and we hasten to defend them. We do not want them to confess anything. We are not only living in a realm of illusion about ourselves, but about them too, and we fear to have it shattered. But we are only defending them against God — making God a liar on their behalf, as we do on our own, and keeping them from entering into blessing, as we do ourselves.

Only a deep hunger for real fellowship with God will make us willing to cry to God for His all-revealing Light and to obey it when it is given.

### **March 11**

#### *Justifying God.*

That brings us to the Publican. With all that God says about the human heart in our minds, we can see that; his confession of sin was simply a justifying of God, an admission that what God said of him was true. Perhaps like the Pharisee, he used not to believe that what God said about man was really true of him. But the Holy Spirit has shown him things in his life which prove God right, and he is broken. Not only does he justify God in all that he has said, but he doubtless

justifies God in all the chastening judgments God has brought upon him. Nehemiah's prayer might well have been his, "Howbeit Thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for Thou hast done right and we have done wickedly."<sup>10</sup>

This is ever the nature of true confession of sin, true brokenness. It is the confession that my sin is not just a mistake, a slip, a something which is really foreign to my heart ("Not really like me to have such thoughts or do such things!"), but that it is something which reveals the real 'I'; that shows me to be the proud, rotten, unclean thing God says I am; that it really *is* like me to have such thoughts and do such things. It was in these terms that David confessed his sin, when he prayed, "Against , Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight, *that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest and be clear when Thou judgest.*"<sup>11</sup> Let us not fear then, to make such a confession where God convicts us that we must, thinking that it will "let Jesus down." Rather the reverse is true, for out of such confession God gets glory, for we declare Him to be right. This brings us to a new experience of victory in Christ, for it declares afresh, that "in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing,"<sup>12</sup> and brings us to a place where we give up trying to make our incorrigible selves holy and where we, take Jesus to be our holiness and His life to be our life.

<sup>10</sup> Neh. 9: 33. <sup>11</sup> Psalm 51: 4. <sup>12</sup> Rom. 7:18.

## March 12

### *Peace and Cleansing.*

But the Publican did something more than justify God. He pointed to the sacrifice on the altar, and found peace with God and cleansing from sin, as he did so. That comes out in the literal meaning of the words which he uttered, "God be merciful to me, a sinner" In the Greek, the words mean literally, "God be propitiated to me, the sinner." The only way by which a Jew knew that God could be propitiated was by a sacrifice, and, in all probability, at that very hour the lamb for the daily burnt offering was being offered up on the altar in the temple.

With us it is the same. A man never comes to this position of brokenness, but God shows him the Divine Lamb on Calvary's Cross, putting away his sin by the shedding of His Blood. The God who declares beforehand what we are, provides beforehand for our sin.

Jesus was the Lamb slain for our sins from the foundation of the world. In Him, who bore them in meekness, my sins are finished. And as I, in true brokenness, confess them, and put my faith in His Blood, they are cleansed and gone. Peace with God then comes into my heart, fellowship with God is immediately restored, and I walk with Him in white.

## March 13

This simple way of being willing to justify God and see the power of the Blood to cleanse brings within our reach, as never before, a close walk with Jesus, a constant dwelling with Him in the Holy of Holies. As we walk with Him in the Light, He will be showing us all the time the beginnings of things which, if allowed to pass, will grieve Him and check the flow of His life in us — things which are the expression of that old proud self, for which God has nothing but judgment. At no point must we protest our innocence of what He shows us. All along we must be willing to justify Him and say, "Thou art right, Lord; that just shows what I am," and be willing to give it to Him for cleansing. As we do so, we shall find that His precious Blood is continuously cleansing us from sin, and that "the tide is being continuously healed at its beginning," and Jesus is continuously filling us with His Spirit. This demands that we must be men of "a humble and contrite spirit," that is, men who are willing to be shown the smallest thing. But such are the ones, God says, who "dwell with Him in the high and holy place,"<sup>13</sup> and who experience continuous revival.

There then is our choice — to protest our innocence and go down to our house, unblessed, dry of soul and out of touch with God. Or to justify God and to enter into peace, fellowship and victory through the Blood of Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> Is. 57:15.

**VI. A Time for Silence**

You have mediated much today with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

**VII. Supplication**

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wed						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

**VII. Benediction**

“Heavenly Father, open my eyes to your presence; at church, at home in daily life. Help me be fully yours as I follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In Jesus name. Amen.” (Adapted from Upper Room, Oct 26, 2005)