



LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2010

Week 27
July 4—10

I. Adoration

1. Invocation Prayer

“Lord, I am now not mine, but Thine. Therefore claim me as Thy right, keep me as Thy charge, and love me as Thy child. Fight for me when I am assaulted, heal me when I am wounded, and revive me when I am destroyed. Amen. (*John Cosin, Bishop of Durham, 1594-1672*)

2. Adoration through Psalm 27

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

- Read slowly this passage at least three times and each day gather one thought about this psalm that points to God's character that should be reflected in our lives and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

II. Confession

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

III. Thanksgiving

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

IV. Scriptural Reflection:

We shall be finish reading II Peter this week and begin with the Gospel of Mark as we embark on the theme of imitating Jesus. Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

July 4

2 Peter 3: 14-18

- (1) Peter ends his last letter, knowing that his readers were looking forward to the new heaven and the new earth. Honestly, do you? Are you any different from these first century believers?
- (2) Peter admonishes us to make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace when we see Jesus. Reflect on your life, and see what effort is needed in order that you can face Jesus in peace.
- (3) Peter appeals to Paul's writing as well to affirm that "our Lord's patience means salvation". How then shall you live in view of the Lord's patience?
- (4) Peter finishes his letter with this benediction: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." Reflect on the word "but", and see if you can gain a deeper understanding into what it is meant by growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus.
- (5) Reflect on this last letter of Peter. What might be the most important message you get from it? What have you learned about God's love and loving God?

July 5

Mark 1: 1-8

The reason we have chosen the Gospel of Mark for the theme is that in this briefest of the four gospels, Mark focuses on the deeds, rather than the teachings of Jesus, putting the emphasis on Jesus being the "servant" of the Lord. You may want to consult your study Bible or many of the fine commentaries. It suffices to say here that Mark possibly writes from Rome to the persecuted Italian new believers, giving them perhaps the earliest written account of the gospel with many vivid words (like immediately) that engage the readers with the emotion and tension of the gospel account.

- (1) Imagine this as the first ever written account of the gospel. If you were a non-believer, especially in Rome, what impact might the first line of this gospel have on you?
- (2) Mark does not begin with the birth of Jesus, but with the beginning of his ministry. What does this tell you about the purpose of his writing, as inspired by the Holy Spirit?
- (3) Mark appeals to Isaiah 40:3 to portray John the Baptist as the one foretold to prepare the way for Jesus. What was the significance of John's ministry? Why was it so necessary? What if there were not John's ministry preceding Jesus' own ministry?
- (4) What do John testify about Jesus in concrete terms?
- (5) What have you learned about obedience today?

July 6 Mark 1:9-20

- (1) Mark gives only a summary of Jesus' baptism, but in a summary, Mark purposely highlights several important truths about Jesus. What are they?
- (2) Consult John 1:32-34. For whom was this baptism meant, at least in part?
- (3) Again, Mark gives a summary account of Jesus' temptation in the desert. What is he trying to highlight and what are their significance?
- (4) Mark then jumps to the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee after John the Baptist was jailed. Again, he gives an extremely brief summary of the message of Jesus, highlighting the essence of Jesus' message. What is he trying to highlight and what are their significance?
- (5) What follows is the account of calling of the first disciples. Can you catch some of the special words Mark uses to give a vivid account of what happened? What is Mark trying to tell us?
- (6) What have you learned about obedience today?

July 7 Mark 1: 21-28

- (1) Where did Jesus meet the man possessed by an evil spirit? What does it say about the spiritual condition of the time?

- (2) As this marks the early period of Jesus' ministry, why would Jesus stop the evil spirit who appeared to be testifying for him, calling him "the Holy One of God"?
- (3) Read a similar account in Acts 16:16-18 where Paul also refused to be associated with the demon and would not accept their testimony. What can you learn from both accounts? (Refer to II Corinthians 6: 14-18)
- (4) The people hearing his preaching and witnessing the driving out of the demon said, "A new teaching". In what sense was it a "new" teaching? Is it "new" also to today's generation?
- (5) What have you learned about Jesus today?

July 8 Mark 1: 29-39

- (1) Compare this miracle of healing Peter's mother-in-law with the driving out of the demon. Which is the more spectacular? Which is a greater miracle? Why?
- (2) Of all the disciples, we know at least Peter was married. 1:18 says, he "at once" left his nets and followed Jesus. Refer to Mark 10:28. What really has Peter left behind? What did he think of his decision? What did this "small" miracle mean to his family?
- (3) Mark paints a very human picture of a small working-class town where people all had to work in the daytime, and they all flocked to Jesus that evening in Peter's house with their lanterns or lamps. Read Isaiah 9: 1-2 and soak in what was happening that night.
- (4) 1:35 gives us a picture of Jesus' "devotional life". How does Mark, in a few words, give us Jesus' example of what prayer-life should be?
- (5) When everyone was looking for Jesus, he decided to go somewhere else. Why? And what can learn about the priority of Jesus' ministry?
- (6) What can you learn from Jesus' examples today?

July 9 Mark 1: 40-45

- (1) How did the leper come to ask Jesus for healing? What does this tell you about him?

- (2) Did the leper have faith when he said, “If you are willing?” What should faith in God entail?
- (3) What options can you think of that Jesus could use to heal him? What method did he choose and why?
- (4) As a leper, what kind of a plight would he have gone through in life? What kinds of healing did his touch accomplish?
- (5) Jesus asked the man to comply with Mosaic Law after cleansing. What does such a ceremony aim to accomplish?
- (6) Was it not natural for the man to spread such good news? But did his disobedience accomplish?
- (7) What have you learned about Jesus and following him?

July 10 Mark 2: 1-12

The early fathers told us that Mark was writing this gospel exactly as he heard from Peter. Therefore, it is natural that much of the early accounts centers around Peter’s hometown and his home.

- (1) “Jesus saw their faith” (2:5). Whose faith did He see? How did they demonstrate their faith? How special was it?
- (2) Instead of saying “be healed” like he said to the leper in chapter one, why did he say, “your sins are forgiven?” What is the basis for forgiveness of sin according to the Bible? (I John 1:9)
- (3) Jesus asked, “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’, or to say, “Get up, take your mat and walk?” What do you think the answer should be? Can Jesus say to all the sinners in the world, your sins are forgiven? Why not?
- (4) What does Mark aim to tell us about Jesus in this miracle?
- (5) What have you learned about Jesus today?

V. Meditative Reflection

This week we shall continue reflecting on Celtic spirituality.

July 4

I read Isaiah 53 in the Old Testament and found it to be an absolutely uncanny description of Jesus being crucified — and yet it was written more than 700 years before the fact. In all, there are about five dozen major prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the more I studied them, the more difficulty I had in trying to explain them away.

My first line of defence was that Jesus may have intentionally manoeuvred His life to fulfil the prophecies so that He would be mistaken for the long-awaited Messiah, For instance, Zechariah 9:9 foretold that the Messiah would ride a donkey into Jerusalem. Maybe when Jesus was getting ready to enter the town, He told His disciples, ‘Go fetch me a donkey. I want to fool these people into thinking I’m the Messiah because I’m really anxious to be tortured to death!’

But that argument fell apart when I read prophecies about events that Jesus never could have arranged, such as the place of His birth, which the prophet Micah foretold 700 years in advance, and His ancestry, how He was born, how He was betrayed for a specific amount of money, how He was put to death, how His bones remained unbroken (unlike the two criminals who were crucified with Him), how the soldiers cast lots for His clothing, and on and on.

That was impressive enough. Stoner analysed forty-eight prophecies, His conclusion was that there would be one chance in ten to the 157th power that they would come true in any one person in history. That’s a number with 157 zeros behind it!

I did some research and learned that atoms are so small that it takes a million of them lined up to equal the width of a human hairs. I also interviewed scientists about their estimate of the number of atoms in the entire known universe. I concluded that the odds of forty-eight Old Testament prophecies coming true in any one individual are the same as a person randomly finding a single predetermined atom among all the atoms in a trillion trillion trillion trillion billion universes the size of our universe!

Jesus said He came to fulfil the prophecies. He said,

‘Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’

Lee Strobel

July 5

The evidence for the resurrection is that Jesus was killed by crucifixion and was stabbed with a spear; He was wrapped in bandages containing seventy-five pounds of spices; He was placed in a tomb; a huge rock was rolled in front of the entrance (according to one ancient account, so big that twenty men couldn't move it); and the tomb was guarded by highly disciplined soldiers.

Yet, three days later the tomb was discovered empty, and eyewitnesses proclaimed to their death that Jesus had appeared to them.

Who had a motive to steal the body? The disciples weren't about to conceal it so they could be tortured to death for lying about it. The Jewish and Roman leaders would have loved to have paraded the body up and down Main Street in Jerusalem; certainly that would have instantly killed this budding religion that they had spent so much time trying to squelch.

But what happened is that over a period of forty days, Jesus appeared alive twelve different times to more than 512 people: to sceptics like Thomas and James, and sometimes to groups, sometimes to individuals, sometimes indoors, sometimes outdoors in broad daylight. He talked with people and even ate with them. Several years later, when the apostle Paul mentioned that there had been eyewitnesses to the resurrection, he noted that many of them were still alive, as if to say to first-century doubters, ‘Go confirm it with them if you don't believe me.’

In fact, if you were to call to the witness stand every person who actually saw the resurrected Jesus, and if you were to cross-examine each one of them for only fifteen minutes, and if you did this around the clock without any breaks, you would be listening to first-hand testimony for more than live solid days.

Lee Strobel

July 6

There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 18:24

God is my best friend.

He cares about the things I care about,
He loves me even when I'm unlovable.
He is always there to listen and advise;
when I need to talk things over.

God is my heavenly Father.

He holds me in the palm of His Hand.
He watches over me as the apple of His eye.
He wants me to grow up to be like Him.

God is my rock.

He is my refuge when I'm afraid,
my strength when I am weak,
my sure footing when I stumble.

God is my shepherd.

He finds me when I'm lost.
He gives me rest when I'm tired.
He leads me when I don't know
which way to go.

Sally Jo Shelton

July 7

God is my physician.

He mends my heart when it is broken.
He restores my peace of mind when I'm upset,
He heals my body when I'm sick.

God is my Saviour.

He forgives me when I let Him down.
He delivers me when I'm in danger.
He saves me even from
the trouble I bring on myself.

God is my source.

He is my bread when I'm hungry,
my water fountain when I'm thirsty,
my bank when I'm broken

God is my Lord.
He is the Ruler of my thoughts,
the inspiration of my words,
the initiator of my actions.

God is my everything.
Who is He to you?

Sally Jo Shelton

July 8

All God's children got a place in the choir;
some sing low, some sing higher,

Creation in all its fascinating variety, each creature in its uniqueness,
and human souls at prayer: woven in a complex pattern of
interdependence...

Let only Your will be done in me,
as in all Your creatures.

Charles de Foucauld
'Prayer of Abandonment'

July 9

The purpose of living is not to learn to make prayer, but to
become prayer; to live in and for God according to the divine
call, wholly surrendered to the Spirit's activity in the soul for
the glory of God.

Fr Gilbert Shaw

PRAYER
is the turning of our whole mind, :
our whole being,
towards God,

Fr Gilbert Shaw

HEALING PRAYER

At every moment of our existence
You are present to us, Father,
in gentle compassion.
Help us to be present
to one another,
so that our presence

may be a strength
that heals the wounds of time
and gives hope that is for all persons
through Jesus, our Lord and Brother.

Weston Priory; Vermont

July 10

He is my King;
in my heart He's hid.
He is my joy all joys amid.
I am a drop in His ocean lost
His coracle I, on His wide sea tost,
a leaf in His storm.

The book of His praise .
in my wallet slung,
the cloak of His friendship round me flung,
hither and thither about I'm blown,
my way an eddy, my rest a stone,
and He my fire.

My meat His work
and my drink His will,
He is my song, my strength, my skill,
and all men my lovers in good and ill,
through Him my desire.

Marjorie Milne of Glastonbury,
Rhymes from a Lindisfame Monk

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

“May God give to you and to all those whom you love his comfort and his peace, his light and his joy, in this world and the next; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.”
(The Promise of Glory)