



LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2011

Week 11

March 14-20, 2011

I. Adoration

(1) Invocation Prayer

“Lord our God, help us to give our minds to you in our worship, so that we may listen to what you have to say to us and know your will. Help us to give our hearts to you in our worship, so that we may really want to do what you require from us. Help us to give our strength to you in our worship, so that through us your will may be done. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” (From *Contemporary Prayers for Church and School*)

(2) Adoration through Psalm 63

(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 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 continue to consider the second mark, Biblical Theology. We have selected passages from the Scripture that tie in with the nuances of each major point of the chapter. (As our reflection coincides with Lent, these selections happen to speak mostly of God's love manifested in Jesus Christ, and can also be used to usher you into your Lent meditation.) Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

A Holy God (Continued...)

March 14

Hebrews 10: 1-18

Theme: The Ultimate Atonement

- (1) The Day of Atonement was perhaps the most important day in the religious life of Israel, as once a year, the sin of the nation was atoned for. But the author of Hebrews said such sacrifices according to the Law of Moses did not really achieve atonement for sin. What are the reasons given in vv.1-4? Do they make sense?
- (2) If so, what would be the use of the Law and its prescribed sacrifices?
- (3) Psalm 40:6-8 are being quoted as the words of Christ to show that God did not desire sacrifices and offerings of the Law, but “the body prepared for me.”
 - a. Why did God “desire” the body of Christ in place of the sacrifices of the Law?
 - b. Was the body of Christ a must? Did God have any alternative?
 - c. What does it say about Christ's coming as a man fully aware of His intended sacrifice?
- (4) Why is Christ's single sacrifice enough? What has it achieved?
- (5) Here is the strongest argument against the Catholic view of the Lord's Supper of “transubstantiation” (insisting on the bread and wine actually turning into the body and blood of Christ at each Holy Communion). Why?
- (6) Jeremiah 31: 33 & 34 are respectively quoted as support of Christ's complete work of atonement versus the Law's.

What does each of these verses show as the difference between the Law's and Christ's sacrifice?

(7) What is the main message for you today?

March 15

James 4: 1-12

Theme: Sinners Saved by Grace

- (1) As you read this passage, does it show a picture of God's people today? Are you surprised? Why or why not?
- (2) What normally do people in the church fight over?
- (3) Vv. 1-3 point out the real causes for church fights. What are they according to these verses? Analyze them one by one.
- (4) James calls them "adulterous people" and gives his reasons in vv.4-5.
 - a. Do you think James' accusation a little too exaggerated?
 - b. What are James' reasons?
- (5) V. 6 describes the core problem of such infightings as "pride".
 - a. How does God deal with the proud?
 - b. Why does James mention (1) submission, and (2) the devil in the context of such quarrels?
 - c. If we are already involved in such quarrels, what are we to do:
 - i. Positively, and
 - ii. Passively?
- (6) What is the main message to you today?

A Faithful God

March 16

Exodus 34: 1-9

Theme: Where Love and Righteousness Meet

- (1) What did the Israelite do that caused Moses to break the two stone tablets in the first place? (See 32: 19)
- (2) In his anger, Moses broke the tablets into pieces, on which were written the Ten Commandments by the hands of God. What does such an action signify?
- (3) Now God told Moses to replace them with two new stone tablets, and this time, God would still write on them the same words Himself. What then does this signify?
- (4) What does God's command in v.3 signify?

(5) In coming down to meet Moses, the Lord "proclaimed His name." Why would he proclaim His name? What is in a name, especially the name of God?

(6) In v. 6-7, the Lord explains the meaning of His name as follows:

- a. Who He is:
 - i. a compassionate and
 - ii. gracious God
- b. How:
 - i. slow to anger,
 - ii. abounding in love,
 - iii. faithful,
 - iv. maintaining love to thousands,
 - v. forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin
- c. Who He also is:
 - i. does not leave the guilty unpunished,
- d. How:
 - i. punishing the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation

Reflect on each of His attributes above.

How can you reconcile the two apparent contradicting attributes of the Lord?

Why would he purposely show the two contradictions?

- (7) Based on God's self revelation of His attributes, how did Moses respond and why?
- (8) What is the main message to you today and how can you apply it to your life?

March 17

John 1: 1-14

Theme: The Promised Person

- (1) Who is Jesus,
 - a. according to vv.1-2?
 - b. according to v.3?
 - c. according to v.4?
- (2) How important is light to men? What is meant by Jesus being the "light of men"? (See v.9 as well)
- (3) What was Apostle John's remark in v.5, having witnessed the life and ministry of Jesus on earth? The Greek original word

can have two meanings: either the darkness has not “understood” it or has not “overcome” it. Within the context of this passage, which might be more meaning? (Refer also to vv.10-11)

- (4) What was the role of John the Baptist (in vv.6-8)? Why did the Apostle John feel it necessary to make such a clarification?
- (5) How does v.12 explain the meaning of “saving faith”?
 - a. What is the result of such a faith?
 - b. What kind of a birth is it?
- (6) V.14 introduces to us who Jesus is again.
 - a. Who is He?
 - b. What is His purpose of incarnation? (Refer to v.18 as well)
 - c. Did God have any other option besides sending His own Son?
- (7) What is the main message to you today?

March 18

Isaiah 53: 1-12

Theme: The Two Strands of Prophecies Meet in Christ

- (1) Do you echo the sentiment of v.1 today?
- (2) What might be the reason of the prophet’s lament? Is it any different today?
- (3) Vv.2-3 is a vivid depiction of the life of Jesus on earth.
 - a. If you can, try to draw a picture of Christ based on these 2 verses, or
 - b. At least sum up what kind of a “prophet” Jesus chose to show himself to be?
 - c. In either case, why would Jesus choose to reveal himself in such a way that made it hard for the people of His time to believe in Him?
- (4) V.4 speaks of His sufferings (infirmities and sorrows):
 - a. Why would the people consider such as God’s punishment on Him?
 - b. What is meant by him having “carried” or “taken up” our infirmities and sorrows?
- (5) Vv.5-6 speaks of the result of His work of substitution. What does it entail and what is the end result?

- (6) Why does the Bible describe us as “sheep”? In what way is it appropriate?
- (7) But it also describes Jesus as “sheep” or lamb as well. In what way is it appropriate?
- (8) How does v.8 echo the lament of the prophet in v.1?
- (9) V.9 reiterates Christ’s innocence and explains in v.10 the reason for his sufferings. Reflect on God’s will to crush Jesus with His three prayers in the Garden in the gospel (say, Matthew 26: 36-46).
- (10) How were the two strands of prophecies being fulfilled in the person of Christ?
- (11) What is the main message to you today?

March 19

Romans 5: 1-11

Theme: The Gift of Reconciliation

- (1) The Apostle Paul employed the literary feature of “repetition” to give emphasis to the main teachings in this passage. Read carefully and highlight all the words being repeated in this passage.
 - a. Justification: What is the basis of our justification according to v.1 and v.9? What is the meaning of justification?
 - b. Reconciliation: what is the meaning of reconciliation and how is it made possible according to vv.10-11?
 - c. The results of our justification and reconciliation include
 - i. Peace with God (v.1): what is “peace” that we now have?
 - ii. Hope (v.2 & v.5): How do our justification and reconciliation bring hope both in the future and in the present?
 - d. Faith (v.1, v.2): What part does faith play both in our justification and in “standing in grace”?
 - e. Love (v.5 & v.8): How special is God’s love for us and have you been “poured” with the love of God by the Spirit?
 - f. Rejoice (v.3 & v.11): Is your life marked by joy? Why or why not? How do these two verses help you truly have joy?
- (2) What is the main message to you today?

A Loving God

March 20

Luke 24: 44-53

Theme: Jesus Christ, the Central Figure of All Scriptures

- (1) Even during this week's devotion, we have already come across O.T. passages that were written about Christ. Can you go back to your notes (or the questions), and find one such passage from the Psalm, and another one from the Prophets?
- (2) Though not part of this week's devotion, can you find one from the Law of Moses? (What about Genesis 3:15?)
- (3) How does the recognition that Jesus is the central figure of the OT help you understand
 - a. God's plan of salvation, and
 - b. Jesus being the only name given to men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)?
- (4) Jesus opened the minds of the disciples so that they could understand the Scriptures. Do we still need Him to open our mind before we could understand the Scripture today? Is that what you rely on to understand His word, even during this devotional time?
- (5) What does Jesus point to, in particular, in v.46 to sum up the gist of the OT prophecies?
 - a. So, what is the gospel in Jesus' word?
 - b. What should we focus on in our proclamation of the gospel?
- (6) What is the command given by Jesus to the disciples in v.48?
- (7) How can we apply this command to ourselves today?
- (8) We often come across acts of blessings (or benedictions). Do they really carry actual meaning? Why or why not?
- (9) What is the main message to you today?

V. Meditative Reflection

This week we shall continue to reflect on the 'Nine Marks of a Healthy Church', continuing with

MARK TWO: Biblical Theology

March 14

Please read page 65, from the second paragraph starting with "You see that especially in....." to the second paragraph on page 66 ending with ".....He forgives our sins."

Question for reflection:

The author says, "It (the Day of Atonement) served as a reminder that all the other regular sin offerings did not completely atone for sin." Do you agree? (Note that this particularly offering also differs from the rest in that it was an atonement for the people (Lev. 16:15, 21).

March 15

Please read the last paragraph of page 65, starting with "Well, what does all this mean....." to the second paragraph of page 66 ending with ".....and justly stand under His condemnation."

Question for reflection:

What do you think of people, including yourself, in the church—basically good people, or sinners? How does this understanding affect how we will "do church"?

March 16

Please read the third paragraph of Page 66, beginning with the section titled "THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS A FAITHFUL GOD" to the end of the first paragraph on page 67 ending with ".....he does not leave the guilty unpunished."

Question for reflection:

In quoting Exodus 34: 6-7, the author says, "(t)he last couples of phrases don't seem really to fit together very well. How could this be?" What is your answer?

March 17

Please read the second paragraph on page 67 starting with "If we want to understand the God of the Bible....." to the end of the third paragraph ending with "..... between the offerer and the

victim.”

Question for reflection:

In solving God’s apparent dilemma of “love” and “righteousness”, why does it have to be a “promised person”? Did God have any other alternative? Why or why not?

March 18

Please read from the second last paragraph of page 67 beginning with “In the time of Christ,.....” and ending with “.....those two strands of prophecy together.”

Question for reflection:

How did Jesus bring “those two strands of prophecy together”?

March 19

Please read from the last paragraph on page 67 beginning with “In fact, both the Old and the New Testaments.....” to the second paragraph on page 68 ending with “.....God is also an amazingly faithful God.”

Question for reflection:

In a nutshell, what did Christ come to do?

March 20

Please read page 68 from the section “THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS A LOVING GOD” to the end of the second last paragraph ending with “.....beginning in Jerusalem” (vv27, 45-47).”

Question for reflection:

The author quotes from Luke 24 in that the post-resurrection Jesus was explaining to the disciples “in all the Scriptures concerning Himself...” What does the knowledge that the entire Old Testament has much to say about Jesus (in fact He is the central figure of OT) affect your understanding of the OT?

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

“Glory to the Father, who has woven garments of glory for the resurrection; worship to the Son, who has clothed in them at His rising; thanksgiving to the Spirit, who keep them for all the saints; one nature in Three, to Him, be praise. Amen! (Syrian Orthodox Church)