Words of Encouragement Week of November 28, 2022

“Advent Blessings”

November 28

Greetings, DGCC Family.

This week, our daily devotionals come from our intern from Northern Seminary, Sharay Thomas. I hope you are as blessed by them as I was when I read them.

More Martha’s

Passage: Luke 10: 41-42

Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

How many times have we found ourselves so busy serving at a church event or even entertaining guest at our home that we miss out on the fun? In this passage Jesus highlights the importance of cherishing the moment. In this account we see Jesus visits the home of his dear friends. We are presented with two personalities that are preparing for Jesus as their guest. Martha is one consumed by the duties of being a host and the other, Mary, is in a posture of worship and endearment. Martha expresses her frustration and tell Jesus to tell Mary to help her out. Jesus replies by telling Martha that Mary has chosen the better thing to occupy herself with, the presence of Jesus. I urge every reader to slow down and enjoy the moments of love and communion with God during the day or times when people you value gather.

Let us pray, Father, thank you for the gift and presence of your Holy Spirit. Give me the mind to chase after you in my daily encounters with you and your people. Father, help me to pause and cherish this holiday season with my family and friends, in Jesus’ name, Amen.
November 29

Submission is Key

Passage: Genesis 16:9-10

Then the angel of the Lord told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

Have ever experienced or worked for a horrible boss? Every leader whether it be a pastor, CEO or coach, they all have a certain amount of authority to rule the way they see fit. Whether it be microaggression, harassment or long hours, some bosses are more challenging to work for than others. The biggest lesson you can learn from leaders in the Bible is, “if you are too big for submission then you’re too small for authority”. In this story a servant is treated harshly by her mistress, and she runs away. The angel of the Lord visits the servant and tells her to go back to her mistress because she is pregnant, and the mistress has authority over her. The angel also gives her a promise that she will be the mother of many children in the future. As Christians, submission is key for our daily lives. We must submit first to the Lord, followed by other authority figures God has placed in our lives from parents, spouses, supervisors and government. On the other side of submission there is a reward just as the servant was rewarded on her submission to the message delivered by the angel. Don’t let a bad leader be an excuse to run from submission - it is the key to elevation.

Let us pray:

Heavenly father let me not get weary in well doing. Give me a heart of submission. Help me to see the value of submission. Help me to see areas that can be strengthen as I led others. Let me be mindful in the way I led your people and how I follow those appointed over me in Jesus’ name, amen.
November 30

Pray Works!

Passage: Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

Have you ever gone a day without your phone? I can be honest and say I have not. Prayer is our daily communication with the Father on how to maneuver our day or to present to Him the hardships and complexities of life. Prayer is a lifeline; it should be our first response to stress. The day without prayer is like day without communication with the Word, that is how vital prayer is. Before you roll over and grab your phone, challenge yourself to give a few minutes to God and pray for yourself and then for your loved ones. Let God take the rightful seat on your mind and heart, let’s always remember to pray.

Let us Pray:

Dear God, I pray for grace that my communication with you is never broken. Help me to be a bridge for those who can’t communicate with you because of their own limitations. I know that my sinful nature blocks communication to flow from a place of love to the people that matter to me the most. God, I know that only you can heal the parts of me that are broken by sin, and I ask that you restore me in Jesus’ name Amen.
December 1

In God’s Image

Passage: Genesis 1:27

So, God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

I watched a documentary on a real-life day-to-day training of Santa Clause bootcamp. The camp was created for Santa Clauses to come together and learn how to be trained to be great Santas, as well as share their experiences. The dilemma was as the world is changing children wanted to see Santas in all shapes, shades, and walks of life. The new generation yearns for diversity and proper representation of the world. The head Santa had a saying through the series, he would say “God don’t make no junk”, and he is biblically correct. All humans are created in the image of God and God makes no mistake. When you look at a man or woman, no matter their origin, they too are made in the image of God. When we see others we should see them as children of God, creating more love, more compassion, and more empathy within us. Take time to look in the mirror and admire what you see knowing it is God that you reflect.

Let us Pray:

Father, I thank you for making all mankind in your image. Help me to see the beauty in myself and others. Let me be like you and have no preference or respect for one person more than the other. Help me to be a beacon of light that shines through me into the world. God help me to embrace my weakness as well as my strengths in Jesus’ name, Amen.
December 2

Purified by Fire

Passage: Daniel 3: 27

Then the high officers, officials, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn’t even smell of smoke!

I have learned in the past two and a half years or so, that a crucible (a situation of severe trial, or in which different elements interact leading to the creation of something new), is not an effortless process. However, it is worth the results it produces. Just as the three Hebrew boys were thrown in the fire right before God and went against societal norm. We as believers must endure trials to grow in our faith. Furthermore, Hebrews 12:11 informs us that in its maturation, we learn the fruit of righteousness and peace as it is by product.

Let us Pray: Dear God, I thank you that you’re with me, as you were with the three Hebrew boys when they went through their refinery process. Let my process be used for your glory, so that I may walk around like gold. Let it be the gold that He uses to show others who He is. Lord, may I be strong and courageous, for you are doing a new thing, in me. It is in Jesus Christ's name, I pray and say thank You, Father. Amen.