



ELDORADO FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



MORE THAN A BUILDING

1 PETER 2:5

Devotionals

**Prayer is a vital role in our
relationship to God.**

Join us this week as the Eldorado family calls on God together in prayer. These devotionals are written by our own church family to challenge us each day this week. Read a devotional each day, and pause to pray about what God is calling you to do.



DAY 1

DEVOTIONALS

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and He will make your paths straight.”
—Proverbs 3:5-6.

Church was not a priority in my home when I was growing up. My Dad ran a tavern for a living. However, my grandparents did attend church on a regular basis, and I spent a lot of time with them. Consequently, they exposed me to the Gospel.

I was saved in April of 1950. I was eleven years old. My support for church came from my grandparents, primarily from my grandfather. I attended church as a teenager and as an adult, but I bounced from one church to another. I was a believer, but I did not know how to proceed and grow in my faith.

My religious life was somewhat superficial until I attended an “adult” class of Vacation Bible School my first week back in southern Illinois. The second night of class, the Holy Spirit and I had an encounter. I was told that God loved me. The Holy Spirit within me has made my life complete. I now have direction and meaning. I understand that each day my goal is to live closer to God. I need church and Godly friends to make that happen, and I now have those in my life.

When I think about my journey with God, I am reminded of the book of Proverbs. Proverbs is full of poetry and wisdom which was given to guide God’s children, and I am thankful that I am one of them.

— Don Gossett

PRAYER THOUGHT:

God you are my God! I am leaning on you. Show me the path for my life and how I can serve You.



DAY 2

DEVOTIONALS

"Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy." — Psalm 86:1

In a sermon the pastor said that there were three critical decisions that we make in life. 1. What will we do to provide a living? 2. Who do we choose to marry? 3. What will we do with Jesus Christ?

In Ecclesiastes, we find Solomon had it all.....wisdom, wealth, and world respect. He loved God, and God loved him. Yet part of his life, Solomon spent time in the desert, like many Christians, chasing the wind of worldly pleasures. In the end, he concluded that the only thing that mattered was, "What is your relationship with God"?

Two years after pilot training, I ran into a former classmate. While catching up, he related a situation where he was flying over Maryland near the Atlantic, when his single engine jet failed. He was proud that he recalled the emergency procedures. He then pointed the aircraft away from towns toward the ocean and then ejected. He found himself coming down with his left leg straight up entangled in the chute. Now he was fearful of landing on his back or neck. He focused on getting his left leg free and did not see that he was going to land in the water, so he did not pull the cord to inflate his water wings. SPLASH! Now he frantically flailed to keep his head above water. He glanced to his left and saw two men in a small boat only twelve feet away. He screamed, "HELP". Seconds later he screamed, "WHY CAN'T YOU HELP ME"? Then one of the men leaned over and said, "Sonny, when you get tired and quit flailing about and splashing water, you can stand up." The water was only five feet deep.

Many Christians are flailing away at a situation they are wrestling with, be it financial, health, work or whatever. We get so involved that we focus on the problem and miss opportunities around us. Why not rely on the Holy Spirit? There is an old hymn, "I Need Thee Every Hour". Sing it to the top of your lungs!

— Lee Gholson

PRAYER THOUGHT:

Pray the words to this old hymn. Say the words over and over. Draw closer to God and acknowledge your weaknesses without him.



DAY 3

DEVOTIONALS

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. — Philippians 4:13

This year has had many ups and downs for myself and my family. My replaced hip has been revised three times. It would be easy to sit down and have a pity party. To be truthful, there was one or two of these. At these times a Bible verse would come to my mind, or someone would encourage me. Many prayers, cards, phone calls and visits brought encouragement as they were showing Jesus' love through them. As one problem developed into another, God was building my faith to see me through to the end.

Many times I thought of people in the Bible who suffered much but remained faithful. Paul, for example, endured many trials, including a physical problem of some kind, yet his faith endured. Paul makes it clear his strength came from his faith in the Lord.

In 2 Corinthians 12:8-10, he said, "Therefore I [Paul] will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

So when troubles came my way, God strengthened my faith, and He will do the same for you.

— Esther Bornert

PRAYER THOUGHT:

Thank the Lord for our hardships. It is there that we discover His strength and power. It is there that our faith is made strong. Pray that He will sustain us in our journey to Him.



DAY 4

DEVOTIONALS

God is merciful. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus". — Ephesians 2:4-6

His mercy is shown to me on a daily basis: undeserved love; undeserved blessings; answers to prayers; specially placed people and circumstances; and so much more He gives because of His great love. I pray often for that same kind of love for others –both family and community.

God has been doing so many great things in our church (and in other churches) because of the Meal Ministry that started in March 2020. We prayed for more refrigerator/freezer space. We received a new double-door refrigerator and one used refrigerator, plus one new and three used freezers over the past 2 years! One week we were out of desserts, so we prayed for and received desserts the next week. We prayed for mustard packets for our sandwiches and received 7 cases of mustard packets two weeks later! We knew we needed some more helpers to rotate into the kitchen, so God provided workers from Union Grove, Scott Street, and Shawneetown churches, plus several individuals to help us out. Individuals, churches, and organizations give money regularly. God just knows what we have needed and has made it happen so many more times than we can count.

His mercy works the same way – I cannot pray enough, do enough, or love enough to outdo God. But I CAN: Pray without ceasing, Talk about His mercies daily, Acknowledge my shortcomings and ask Him to help me work on them (scary as that could be!), so that I CAN Be Alive in Christ!

Will you join me?

— Lu Horning

PRAYER THOUGHT:

Pray that God will present you with an opportunity tomorrow to share His mercies with someone else. Then pray that you will be faithful to not walk past that opportunity.



DAY 5

DEVOTIONALS

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." — Philippians 4:12

Recently, my oldest daughter casually mentioned to me that she was content. We happened to be together on an errand without the company of one or more of her grandchildren, which was unusual. She has twelve and one on the way, all under eleven. Since they mostly live nearby, and she and her husband have a welcoming home, our quiet trip without children is memorable.

Several acquaintances had revealed resentments that the expectations as a married wife and mother have "burdened" them. We shared our understanding of how that can be, yet how grateful we both were that the Lord has altered our murmuring into gratefulness. We have been given this precious gift of "contentment". Who knew?

In the past, I have noticed the frequent use of Philippians 4:13, which is certainly an encouraging passage: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." But it is the reason for this victory that should not be overlooked. Paul began with the secret of being content in verse 12. This nugget from Paul's life of sacrifice and service expands our understanding of being content in HIM. For many years, I overlooked the depth of this Scripture. Only when I had real need did I ask what more the Father was offering me that I had not fully accepted? More of the Holy Spirit. Much more of Him! Then, I returned to the "too-familiar" gift of the Spirit listed in Paul's letter to the Galatians which includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, in contrast to the acts of the sinful nature. If one allows, this renews your mind, changes your attitudes, alters your behaviors, revives your relationships, and reveals the secret of being content!

— Darla Partridge

PRAYER THOUGHT:

Rely on the promises of God and trust Him for the contentment you need. Pray for the Lord to reveal to you how to be content in your "burdens."



DAY 6

DEVOTIONALS

“Count it all joy my brothers and sisters when you experience various trials, for you know the testing of your faith produces endurance, let the endurance have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete lacking nothing.” —James 1:2-4

Suffering is normal. Yes, I said suffering is normal—it is part of being human. Nowadays, the culture we live in says that you should be happy all the time. However, in a broken world, this is never the case.

A couple of years ago I started getting really sick and nobody knew why. I finally got diagnosed with Crohn’s disease (a chronic, life-long GI disease). When I heard the diagnosis, I thought to myself, “why me, why did it have to be me.” God, in His kindness, brought me to this passage, which says that instead of letting this bog me down, I should let this disease grow me closer to God. Suffering is not always bad if we choose to use it as an opportunity to grow spiritually. I am not trying to sound super-spiritual and say it is going to be easy, because it is often not going to be. Suffering never feels good, but God is going to be there for you no matter what.

My Grammy was an amazing woman who died from a rare kidney disease at a very young age. Before she died, she suffered great physical pain. In her suffering, she turned to the Lord, and because of that, some who saw or heard about her were impacted and turned to Christ. Even when it might not seem like something good can come from suffering, God has something good planned for His kingdom. It may not be what you think is good, but we often do not have the benefit of seeing the whole story. This is where our faith in the omniscient God comes in. Even now with my Crohn’s disease, I do not know what God has planned for me. But I know that whatever it is, His plan is perfect. God will help me (and you) get through whatever we are going through, and will weaponize our suffering against the enemy for the glory of His name. God is up to something, and we can know that His plan is good.

— Nolan Oldham

PRAYER THOUGHT:

“Lord, may I see You in the midst of everything, even in my struggles and pain. Help me to yield myself to your good plan.”



DAY 7

DEVOTIONALS

“So, he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.” —Luke 15:20

When I was younger, I would blame everything on someone else. My childhood was a mess, so I used it as a crutch. I tried to find what love was, so I went down many wrong avenues looking for love.

So, I thought I had found love with a woman, and I had found a purpose for life. We were both very happy. We would go to church and pray together, and I was very content with life. Then 2 years into our relationship, she was involved in a real bad car accident that left her paralyzed from the neck down. Her mother had decided that they would put her in a nursing facility up North to live out what life she might have. I was mad at the world and God because I had thought that my purpose and contentment was with her.

This led to drinking and searching for answers. During this time, I was looking for that inner peace that only God can provide through the Holy Spirit. I ended my drinking career when I hit 28. I soon found out that my problems were mine, and I needed to rely on God to help me get well. I searched and searched for answers and for that inner peace. I was that lost son looking for my heavenly Father. When I came to EFBC, I was looking for answers and healing. In the back of my mind, I remembered the Prodigal Son story from years ago, where the father welcomed the son, who had many sins, to his table. When I look back at my life, I realize that God our Father was always with me during the good times and bad times. Then last year on September 12, I was welcomed back to the table with open arms during my baptism. I truly felt the Lord our God’s presence. I realized I was finally home.

— Thomas Folder

PRAYER THOUGHT:

Thank God for your church family and the way God uses His people to walk with each other. Thank Him that you are welcome at His table.