

## THURSDAY JANUARY 27

Read: Matthew 25: 14-30

Sometimes in the parable of Martha and Jesus, Martha gets short shrift. We must be like Martha too!

When I became an engineer, I received an “iron ring” that was to be placed on the pinky finger of my working hand. Why an iron ring? I’m glad you asked. Legend has it that the first iron rings, conferred on engineers in 1925, came from the steel of a collapsed bridge in Quebec. The ring was to be worn as a solemn reminder that engineers must design and build with the highest of standards for the benefit and safety of the public. Most believe that story to be legend—at least the collapsed bridge part—not the duty for public service.

Well, at the “Iron Ring” ceremony, when I received the ring, this at the University of Waterloo, a thoroughly secular school, the presiding engineer read Luke 10:38-42. “Engineers,” he went on to say, “are society’s ‘Martha’s.’ They diligently work behind the scenes serving others.”

All that to say, we also need Marthas. We must serve like Martha did—without the finger pointing at self or others—for being with Jesus requires both doing and devotion.

The Master in Matthew’s parable cares deeply about how we use the gifts He entrusts.

**PRAY:** Thank the Lord for “Marthas”. Can you name and pray for those with service gifts?

## FRIDAY JANUARY 28

Read: 2 Cor. 3: 17-18

In his book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis asserts that God’s call to discipleship in our lives is different than any other way we can imagine. He writes, “The Christian way is different: harder and easier. Christ says ‘Give me All.’ I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You.... Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself; my own will shall become yours.”

Being with Jesus requires all; doing and devotion, service and seeking, *ora et labora*, pray and work, Mary and Martha.

**PRAY:** Sing: “I surrender all. I surrender all. All to Thee my blessed Saviour. I surrender all.”

## SATURDAY JANUARY 29

Read: Tomorrow’s sermon text, Romans 8: 31-39.

Consider coming to morning prayer today in the sanctuary at 6:00AM.

# WEEKLY DEVOTIONS GUIDE

JANUARY 23-29, 2011

BY: PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

NEW WEST CRC

**SERIES: A 'TANGIBLE DISPLAY' PEOPLE: JOURNEYING WITH JESUS IN LUKE**

SERMON NOTES: “THE BASICS OF DISCIPLESHIP: DEVOTION TO JESUS AND HIS WORD”

LUKE 10:38-42

PASTOR DAVE GROEN

SUNDAY JANUARY 23

**KEY THEME OR TAKE-AWAY:**

## MONDAY JANUARY 24

Read: Revelation 7: 9-10; Luke 19:38

It is good for us to be reminded how God answers prayer. We are encouraged, and as we give thanks, God is blessed. A little less than a year ago, in a devotion I wrote for the day of the closing ceremony of the Olympics (you may recall the 40-day Prayer Guide), this is what we reflected on and what we prayed for:

“Today, many of us will watch the Olympic closing ceremony. Perhaps it will be with wonder and amazement. No doubt music, performers, fireworks will try to capture the attention of the world to celebrate the spirit of sport. And of course, the nations of the earth will be in attendance.

“John draws our attention to another all nations gathering. If the closing ceremony were a grain of sand, this gathering would be a beach! Multitudes. That is the Church of Jesus Christ! No one could number.

“The nations are not simply at our doorstep for two weeks, we live amongst the nations. Our neighbours are Asian, Indo-Asian, African, Native Canadian, East European. We are being blessed by God to see that diversity in our own church family.

“Pray that increasingly our church will become a foretaste of that great vision of John; tribes, peoples and languages from all nations, gathered before the Living Christ declaring, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Pray for wisdom for our ministry staff and leadership as we seek to discern how God may be moving us towards greater ethnic diversity in our congregation.

“Pray that we will be a people of hospitality and embrace. “

That’s what we read and prayed for less than a year ago, and many times in between.

Last week Wednesday night the elders had the privilege of listening to the faith stories of three Chinese women and welcoming them (and a son) as new members of our church. Just before she left our meeting one of the women said to me through tears, “I thank God so much for bringing me to this church. This is my family.” The Lord is answering prayer!

**PRAY:** Praise God for answering prayer! And pray again the words above that we offered up almost a year ago.

## TUESDAY JANUARY 25

Read: Psalm 27: 7-14; Psalm 105:1-4

When seeking the face of the Lord, that is, coming before him in worship and prayer, I often find that my default posture is one of asking and receiving. Perhaps you can relate. “Lord, be with \_\_\_\_\_, Lord, bless \_\_\_\_\_, you

know the prayer. Perhaps the story of Martha and Mary with Jesus invites us to come to Him with a different posture.

Stuart Sacks tells this story, “While I was serving in Paraguay, a Maka Indian named Rafael came to sit on my porch. I was eating and went out to see what he wanted. He responded, “Ham, henek met.” Again I asked what I could do for him, but the answer was the same. I understood what he was saying but not its significance: “I don’t want anything; I have just come near.”

“I later shared the incident with a local veteran missionary. He explained that it was Rafael’s way of honouring me. He really didn’t want anything; he just wanted to sit on my porch. He found satisfaction and pleasure just being near me.”

There is a lesson in that simple story for us I think.

What brings you here, my child?” the Lord asks. “Ham, henek met.”

**PRAY:** Spend time simply being near Jesus, seeking his face, finding satisfaction and pleasure in Him.

## WEDNESDAY JANUARY 26

Read: Psalm 119: 105-112

The June 18, 2001 issue of *Time* magazine tells the story of Erik Weihenmayer. Erik is blind, yet on May 25, 2001 (Nepal time), he reached the peak of Mt. Everest. Suffering from a degenerative eye disease, he lost his sight when he was 13, but that didn’t stop him. On a mountain where 90 percent of climbers never make it to the top—and 165 have died trying since 1953—Erik succeeded, in large measure because he listened well.

He listened to the little bell tied to the back of the climber in front of him, so he would know what direction to go.

He listened to the voice of teammates who would shout back to him, “Death fall two feet to your right!” so he would know what direction not to go.

He listened to the sound of his pick jabbing the ice, so he would know whether the ice was safe to cross.

Listening. Sitting at the feet of Jesus. Seeking His lamp, following His light. My personal experience has taught me that when I neglect my daily quiet time with the Lord for extended periods of time, things unravel, stress rises, tempers grow shorter, patience thinner; something changes.

Jesus invites us to sit at His feet.

*Listening* makes all the difference in our journey of life.

**PRAY:** Thank the Lord for the gift of quiet time with Him. Jesus is always available and waits patiently when we don’t “show up.” Recommit yourself to *listening at His feet*.