

## Online Devotionals

**November 1, 2009: Jesus Matthew 8:1-4**

"A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.' "

What catches my attention in this passage is how quickly Jesus responds to the request of this man. He answers his request immediately and without hesitation. Jesus is willing to answer what we ask of Him. How often when we make a petition to Jesus do we merely ask for what we want instead of considering what He may want for us? Jesus is willing to heal us and to answer our prayers immediately and without hesitation or it may take longer but we need to have faith that our prayers will be answered. I think that most of us have experienced the immediate answer to a prayer, such as for safety in a threatening situation, or a near-miss car accident. On the other hand, we have also known of answers to come in God's time, such as healing. Healing may take long months of physical therapy and rehabilitation before a prayer is answered. Prayer is answered in His time and His way. Prayer can be answered in many ways. I have experienced both kinds of healing. I had a car accident and was healed of a herniated disc during a church service with a friend in Georgia. I was also able to receive healing for the other injuries caused in the same accident through months of physical therapy. God is good and He answered my prayer for His healing touch.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, I thank you for using your Son to help us understand that you willingly and immediately can answer our prayers. Help us to be patient until the answer comes. Thank you for all the prayers you have answered and those that you will answer. Amen.

**November 2, 2009: JESUS    Read Matthew 8: 5-13**

"Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."

A young child was asking her Daddy if he could touch the moon. After several times of saying 'no', she still said that, 'maybe you could if you held me up on your shoulders!' What child-like faith! We see the centurion's faith in Jesus' healing ability, even from afar. He believed in the power of Christ, even though he was a Roman soldier. His concern for his servant led him by faith, to approach Jesus. Jesus replied, "I have not found such great faith even in Israel." (v.10b)

When we consider who Jesus is and what He can do, we must remember the parting of the Red Sea, the Exodus of His people, and Abraham's having a son at age 100! Jesus gives us faith to believe Him, and to ask for His help in all things. How strong is your faith? Do you turn to God only after you feel there is nothing else you can do, when the times are tough? Go to our Father daily, talking with Him, and seeking His Will for your problem. Ask Him to strengthen your faith, and watch and see what God can do!

**Prayer:** Abba, Father, we love you and trust in you for all our needs. Please strengthen our faith today. Make me trust you completely in all things.    Amen

**November 3, 2009: JESUS MATTHEW 8: 23-27**

"Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping."

Are you one of those people who can sleep through a storm, or during a loud turmoil? Most people are anxious and afraid when disasters appear imminent, just like the disciples. Jesus had

peace during the storm because He knew that He was safe, even though His disciples were afraid, Jesus commanded the winds and the waves to be still. He did it not do it for His safety, but to show the men who He was, and faith in him would sustain them.

Jesus is not only in control of our lives, but Matthew tells us of His power to control all creation. He says, "O, you of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Giving our very lives to Jesus means letting go of our fears, doubts, and worries, trusting Him completely. We can ask Him daily, to strengthen our faith so that we can have the kind of Peace that lets us sleep through life's storms. We can know that God is providing for all our needs. Will you trust Him in all things, big and little, so that you may rest securely in Him?

**PRAYER:** Heavenly Father, you are wonderful. We want to have the Peace that only You can give, and we ask You to pour out Your love and Holy Spirit on us. AMEN

#### **November 4: Jesus Matthew 8:28-34**

"And the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Jesus, they begged him to depart from the region."

When we moved into our first parsonage in Nebraska, the west wind provided an unfamiliar scent. Yes, the farm west of us was blessed with a herd of swine. We commented the owners that we didn't need air fresheners. Raymond and Bernice said the smell was the smell of money. With that thought in mind we partly sense why the people "begged Jesus to depart from their region." Yes, they were mystified with the healing of the two demon possessed men and the loss of their livelihood. Lodi, California is considering asking Jesus to leave. Yes, their governing board will vote on not permitting the name of Jesus in prayers. That smells BAD!

**November 5, 2009: Jesus      Matthew 9:1-9**

"Some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This man speaks as if he were God. That is blasphemy!"

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why are you thinking evil thoughts? Which is easier to say "Your sins are forgiven," or to tell him, "Stand up and walk"? "But I will prove to you that that the son of Man has the authority to forgive sins."

Although he was neither rude or arrogant, Jesus aggravated the teachers of Law when he used his privileges as Son of god. When he forgave sins, mixed with sinners, raised the dead and healed the sick, the teachers thought his actions were either inappropriate or unexplainable.

The Kingdom of god had come. Jesus used his power over sickness and death to show his compassion for needy humanity. As a true friend he meets the needs we bring him. Do you see Jesus as a close friend or far away? Jesus desires to relate to us as a friend. Talk with him. Tell him all of your needs, but don't forget to give him thanks and praise.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we love you and need in our lives, but sometimes we get so busy you get pushed aside. Please help us to keep you first and foremost in our minds and help us to remember to come to you in daily prayer and devotions.

Amen

**November 6, 2009: Faith      Matthew 9:1-8**

"Jesus got into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town. Some people brought to Jesus a man who as paralyzed and lying on a mat. When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said

to the paralyzed man, "Be encouraged, young man. Your sins are forgiven."

Do you long for God to speak to your lonely heart? Then listen as he speaks to Emmaus-bound disciples. What is God's word to the shameful? Watch as his finger draws in the dirt of the Jerusalem courtyard. He's not just doing it for them. He is doing it for me. He is doing it for you also. I know there used to be a stone in front of a tomb and I also know it was moved. I know that there are stones in your path as well as mine stones that trip and trap ... stones too big for us.

The God who spoke then speaks now. The God who forgave still forgives. The God that came still comes. He comes into our world. He comes into your world. He comes to move the stone you cannot.

Prayer: Father, God, we pray that You will help us strengthen our faith in You so that no matter what happens we will remain strong in our commitment to You. We know as long as we have faith and hope we can, with Your help, handle whatever life brings. Amen.

**November 7, 2009 Faith                      Matthew 6:28-30**

"Will He not much more clothe you, you of little faith."

"Don't judge a book by its cover." Not all of us are born with equal riches and opportunities. But all of us are equally loved by God and are given our own special talents. Those who love and trust in God can rest assured that they will be supplied with answers to all of their needs.

**Prayer:** Benevolent Lord, you supply us with the necessities of life and beyond. We rejoice as you care for the littlest creature and humans, the apple of your eye. Amen.

**November 8, 2009: Faith      Matthew 11:1-6**

"Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see;"

The theme of this passage is faith. While John was in prison he sent disciples to see Christ, to enquire if he was the long awaited Messiah. Christ did not reply "Yes," in fact He gave no definitive or immediate answer. Christ instead told the disciples to report on what they had witnessed. He in essence asked the disciples to have faith and believe in what they witnessed and to report their findings to John. Christ was alive! How many times do we experience this in daily life? How many times do we experience little miracles that tell us Christ is alive? The neighbor that looks after your houseplants while you are on vacation, the friend that gives you a compliment that makes your day special, children's laughter? Instead most times we find ourselves bogged down in details. Some of us start each day with lists of "to-dos," a flat tire, a sick child, a cranky boss. Sometimes we just need to stop, pray and concentrate on the faith in His words, His promise that he will never leave us and appreciate the little "miracles" that happen.

**Prayer:** Faithful Father, you are the living God. Strengthen each of us in our faith. Keep our hearts and minds open to you and the daily miracles you bring to all of us. Forgive us Lord for being bogged down by the worries of daily life. Help us to remember that above all you gave us the greatest gift. AMEN.

**November 9, 2009: Faith      Matthew 13:3-9**

“And some fell among thorns and the thorns sprung up and choked them.”

Prior to exiting for a much needed vacation, I spent hours preparing the garden for the interim. After hours in the hot sun the sense of accomplishment greeted my eyes. No weeds in sight! The early stage of the green garden was reason to smile. Since the summer is hot in Nebraska, the necessity of watering was beyond reason. The water was turned on but soon forgotten and the next morning the garden was flooded. When we returned from vacation, the weeds stood strong and tall. The garden was choked because the weeds thrived with the abundance of moisture. In our faith life God calls us to recognize and remove the weeds in our life and the lives of others. Otherwise, our faith will be choked and the final result thorny.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Planter, we thank you for the faith you have planted in us. We pray for your seeds of faith to fall into rich soil and change the hearts of people. Amen.

**November 10, 2009: Faith      Mathew 15:21-28**

“Then Jesus answered, ‘Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.’ ”

In this passage the Canaanite woman was petitioning Jesus to heal her daughter. He decides to grant her request because she continues to show how much she believes that He can do this miracle. I once knew a woman who suffered from cancer and went into remission. When I asked her how she knew Jesus would heal her, she replied that Jesus told her in the Bible that her faith would make her well. The lady in the passage was showing faith not just for herself but also for her daughter. We don’t have the rare privilege of asking Jesus face to face. We need to ask Him

in prayer, believing that He will grant our petitions. The hardest part is having the faith that says I can completely let go and trust God to answer this request. I remember a story I heard at Bible Camp once. A man walked a tightrope across Niagara Falls. When he returned successfully to the crowd's applause, he then went across in an empty wheelbarrow. He made it safely back to the edge again and asked the people in the crowd to raise a hand if they trusted that he could safely make it across again. Every person raised a hand. He then said, "Then which of you will get in to the wheelbarrow and ride?" No one raised a hand. No one trusted him with his or her life. Yet, the highest honor we can show Jesus is to trust Him enough to get in the wheelbarrow and know without a doubt that He not only can get us safely to the other side, but also back again. Now that is proof of faith!

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, I want to have enough faith to get in the wheelbarrow and show complete trust in You. Please help my unbelief. Thank you also for answering my prayers for myself and others. You are faithful and I thank you for loving me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**November 11, 2009      PRAYER      Matthew 6: 5-6**

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men."

How many times have you heard someone who was asked to give a prayer say "I can't do it", or "I don't know how"? These people, and perhaps yourself, are under the impression that prayer must be long, smart, flowery, or uses Christian-ese, and that it be done to impress others.

When I had little children, my prayer-closet was in the bathroom! It worked! This scripture tells us exactly what God

dislikes in prayer: "hypocrites, praying to impress and be seen and heard by men." Often, the Pharisees did this! What God does want is for us to go into our room, close the door, and speak to Him. He's there...He hears you...and the Holy Spirit will help give the words. After all, He knows what is in your heart before you speak. Awesome! Speak in prayer like no one can hear, but the Father. You can talk to God like He was sitting in the room with you, saying, "Tell me about your needs or fears."

**PRAYER:** Father, touch the hearts of those reading this devotional. Strengthen their faith to be completely open to you in prayer, aloud. AMEN

**November 12, 2009: Prayer Matthew 6:9-10**

"This then is how you should pray: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

When I was 9 years old attending the Methodist Church, in Goshen, New York, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Sunday school class each year, we memorized The Lord's Prayer. Our teacher Mrs. Fear taught us this prayer and showed us where to find it in the Bible. She wisely said that we could always find our way in life if we knew where to find this prayer and prayed. We learned one sentence each week until we had all memorized it. If one of my classmates stumbled we would practice until we all knew it. As we practiced together, Mrs. Fear would provide simple verbal "pictures", providing images to help us better understand. She said, that we could pray any place by bowing our heads (giving respect) and saying the words. She also shared with us that "Our Father in Heaven", is everyone's dad. Everybody could talk to HIM at anytime. As an adult today, I have never forgotten Mrs. Fear nor the Lord's Prayer As we pray, Matthew gives us the words when we do not know what to say or how to start. He tells us to start

by addressing our Father (GOD) that name is above all others. We are to go to a quiet place and pray to our Father alone. Then Matthew, tells us "Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you in secret". God's will, will be done not only in Heaven but here on earth.

As an adult living far away from Goshen, New York today and having experienced many of life's lessons, I am thankful for those days so many years ago when our family was given a firm foundation in the ways of our Lord, at that church in my hometown. Life has never been easy, but it has been easier because our Heavenly Father and I have spent time together in prayer. With God all things are possible.

**November 13, 2009      PRAYER      MATTHEW 6: 11-12**  
"Give us today our daily bread."

These two verses of the Lord's Prayer are full of meaning for us. The first three are in order of petitions and they set an example for us in all our prayers as we address God. We start with adoration and praise for God, then we ask for our daily bread and His forgiveness. Jesus was called "The Bread of Life, Bread from Heaven, and the Living Bread." So we are asking for God to provide for our spiritual needs, in addition to all our physical needs.

We must ask forgiveness for all that we do and forgiveness for others, so that our relationship with God is cleared to receive His blessings and grace. In the wonderful movie, "Pay It Forward," the main idea was to pass on to someone new, a good deed that was done for you. So as God forgives our sins, we need to pay it forward by forgiving others.

Daily bread and forgiveness of sins...two items that can change lives. Can you "feed" the lonely, homeless, or hungry? Can you show forgiveness to one that you have been denying?

**PRAYER:** Lord Almighty, we thank You for teaching us how to pray. Now we ask that You lead us to act upon these Scriptures. AMEN

**November 14, 2009 Prayer                      MATTHEW 7: 9-12**

"Do to others as you would have them do to you. This is the meaning of the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets."

Jesus advised us "do to others what you want them to do to you." If you hear and obey Jesus' words, you are like the wise man that built his house on a rock. God saves man through His Sovereign grace through the Atonement of Jesus. He works in us to do his will; but we have to work out that salvation in practical living. It takes a tremendous amount of discipline to live the noble life of a disciple of Jesus in today's times. It is always necessary as a Christian to attempt to be noble.

Are you a champion of the Golden Rule, or are you a rookie? Challenge yourself by applying the rule in every day life with family, neighbors, work, in the car, at the store, and yes even with that someone you really don't care for!!!

**Prayer:** Lord, we only want to please You. Please help us to become true champions of your Golden Rule. Let it shine in us so that others can see and what to be part of it. Thank you for keeping your promise to always be with us. Even though there are times we don't think so, we always need you by our sides. AMEN

**November 15, 2009 Prayer                      Matthew 21:20-22**

"If you believe, you will get anything you ask for in prayer."

I believe there is a great power in prayer. I believe God heals the wounded, and that God can raise the dead. But I do not believe we tell God what to do and when to do it. I believe there is a difference between faith and presumption. There is a difference between believing he is the almighty God and demanding he become our divine servant. God knows we are at times praying for things that are not in our best interest. When we entrust our requests to Him, we trust Him to honor our prayers with holy judgement. At any given time His answer can be yes, no or wait. For me the worse one is the wait! But whatever His answer, we can be sure it is the right one even if it is not the one we want!

Prayer: Father God, we honor and glorify Your name. You truly are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We thank You, worship You, and glorify Your name forever. AMEN.

**November 16, 2009: Obedience          Matthew 1:18-24**

"Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife."

"God with us!" Joseph did what the angel of the Lord commanded of him. Many of us are looking for answers. But many times the answer has been provided, and we are too afraid to follow. Trust and obey. God has a plan for all of us. His will, is our will.

Prayer: Lord, magnify your mission through obedience to the will through me. Amen.

**November 17, 2009: Obedience          Matthew 4:5-7**

"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot

against a stone." Jesus answered him, "It is also written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

The theme in this reading is obedience. The devil tried to tempt Jesus to hurt his self to test the faithfulness of God. The devil essentially said jump and prove you are the son of God. Jesus, strong in faith and obedience to God, defied the devil. He said, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" This is an incredible passage because in this situation would we be like Christ?. Obedience is more than just words and actions it is faith in motion. We must be so enveloped in the love of our God that we respond to every situation in that love. It's funny but when I think of obedience, I think of my adorable dog. When I say "sit" my dog sits. When I command "go to bed," my dog goes and lies down in her bed. If only human decisions were as simple as a pet's life. As Christians we complicate things sometimes because we cannot surrender our will to God's will, or our faith needs to be stronger. In despairing times, times for rejoicing and times of normalcy we need to remain strong in our obedience to God.

**Prayer:** Dear Father, forgive us for our sins, direct us in the paths of righteousness and help us to learn to surrender to your will and obey. AMEN

**November 18, 2009 Obedience** **Matthew 4:8-11**

"Then, the devil left Jesus, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him."

The devil tempts us with our greatest test concerning our greatest personal needs. "Tempted" means to make proof of. Jesus passed the test. He was obedient and honored God even in the toughest times. Satan was offering a crown to replace

instead of the cross. Jesus has prepared a cross for each one of us. The cross fits perfectly on our shoulder. All the kingdoms in the world are counted as nothing because Jesus offers us citizenship in His kingdom without end. The walk of obedience concluded with angels ministering to the weary Jesus. Jesus embraces us with the same promise of angels when we are steadfast in faith and obedient to the Lord.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, you walked in the wilderness of life and didn't yield to temptation. Provide strength for us to resist the temptations that we tempt our weaknesses. Amen.

**November 19, 2009: Obedience          Mathew 14:28-30**

" 'Come,' Jesus said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus."

I remember being jealous of Peter the first time I heard this story. Why didn't anyone else have the chance to walk on water like Peter did? Did the others onboard the boat ask, "Can I have a turn now, Jesus? Can I? Can I?" Perhaps the other disciples were gun-ho to go until they saw Peter sinking. I think the most interesting part of this is Peter's obedience. He heard his master say, "Come," and he didn't hesitate. He trusted and obeyed. That obedience comes with faith. We can't follow Jesus unless we trust Him to get us where we need to go. Perhaps the action of walking on water can be a metaphor for us stepping out in faith to do what the Lord has planned for us. We start out great but hesitate, our faith wavers and we begin to sink then we must get refocused again. The beautiful part about this is that Jesus will be there to take us by the hand, just as He was there for Peter. Can you imagine how heavy Peter was to pull up? That would have put a double weight on Jesus to stay on top of the water. Scripture doesn't say that Jesus wavered as he pulled Peter up.

Have you ever wished you could be Peter and walk on water to Jesus? Do you think that you would be able to stay focused on Jesus and not sink into the sea? Jesus is telling you to come and to trust Him that He will be there to take your hand. But you have to take that first step. Remember that you won't be taking that step alone. Jesus is waiting for you.

**Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus for being so reliable in our lives. I know I may never walk on water to meet you, but I am so thankful that you are there every step of my life to grab me as I begin to sink. Help me to live my life focused on you. Thank you for Peter's faith and example of obedience. Help us not to hesitate when you say, "Come." Amen.

**November 20, 2009 Obedience Matthew 28:16-20**

"Go and make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and teach them to OBEY all He commanded."

This passage is often labeled, "The Great Commission." Jesus was leaving His disciples before returning to the Father in Heaven. Knowing they needed direction, He gave them these commands: Do you show complete obedience to Jesus in all these things? I don't! Is it up to others to baptize and teach, and evangelize? We are all told to obey and do what we can to spread the Gospel. I realized that I CAN, and Am ABLE to baptize, even though I am not a Pastor. A newborn baby was going on a trip with his mommy, and while bathing him, I baptized Him, setting him apart for God's care, provision and Spirit. I also had a child-relative who wanted to be baptized, but her parents were not Christian and would not let it happen. Obedience to Jesus' commands may not be possible in every case, but, using our heart and Spirit, we can make disciples of all nations. After all, we ARE His disciples.

**PRAYER:** Dear Lord, I believe that there is no greater joy for you than to see some new spirits come to you. Help us to obey.  
AMEN

**November 21, 2009 TESTING MATTHEW 5: 43-48**

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love our neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

How are you at taking tests? Do you freeze up, or take it in stride? As a teacher, I've seen many reactions to having to take a test. There is moaning, nail biting, readiness to fail, and sometimes a smile. The person, who has studied and knows the material, may seem confident while quaking inside.

Today's Scripture tells us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Is this a test? Sure, we find it easy to love those who love us, but what about the evildoers? God sends the sun and the rain on the good and the evil, and He also wants us to love those who are "unlovable." If WE go out of our comfort zone, and walk among strangers, it can be a test of our obedience to be kind.

I remember a neighbor who had a reputation for being mean, nosy and quick to accuse others of wrong doings. I took a plate of cookies with a Christmas card to him, and he was overcome! "No one ever did anything like this to me," he exclaimed. He said it was the first Christmas card he'd received in years. He is not my best friend, but he is sociable and certainly not my enemy. The joy that this small act of kindness gave me, made me realize how we can judge others unfairly. Is there someone you know who needs a kind word or deed? Can we pass God's test of obedience?

PRAYER: Dear God, sometimes we fail to seek contact with those who are "hard-to-love." Help us to reach out and show Your love to everyone. AMEN

**November 22, 2009: Testing Mathew 8:18-22**

"But Jesus said to him, 'Follow Me, and let the dead bury the dead.'"

"Actions speak louder than words!" It is easy to talk about following Jesus. It is easy to follow Jesus when times are good. But true discipleship comes from giving praise no matter what mountains you are facing.

Prayer: Guiding Spirit, we experience many testing in life. Give us strength to bury our dead and overcome the temptation to follow no one but you. Amen.

**November 23, 2009 : Tongues Psalm 39:1-3**

"I said , "I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin;"

I love this psalm if you read it to the end it talks about how fleeting life is and how we should ask God to help us live it well. The writer asks for forgiveness and pleads with God for help in living each day the way God had intended us to live. I am not a native of Las Vegas and it took me a while to come to appreciate the harsh landscape. Las Vegas is a very bright and sunny place to live especially during the heat of summer. I love the winter and spring time. My favorite time in the desert is on the rare occasion when it rains. It does not dribble or mist lightly...it pours and the ground trembles, the skies flash brilliant flashes of light and the atmosphere here turns intense and majestic. I especially love the clouds as they form pink, blue, purple and gray figures in the sky, it is beautiful. I think of the frailty of life and the

abundance of the earth and I ask God to forgive us and show us the way to the perfect life he had intended. I think of all the people I loved and who have passed on and sometimes I wonder if I had more wisdom when they were alive what would I have done different. Would I have told them more often that I loved them, shown them through my actions, taken time instead of being dedicated to material things? Then I ask God to give me wisdom to treat each day as a new chance to be the person he intended 'Hear my prayer, O Lord, listen to my cry for help; be not deaf to my weeping. For I dwell with you as an alien.'

Prayer: Dear Father, give us the wisdom to live each day well...Give us the strength to forgive each other and love each other because life is "mere handbreath." We love you Lord.  
AMEN

**November 24, 2009: Tongues Proverbs 10:19-21**

"In the multitude of words sin is not lacking!"

With the advent of computers communication now happens within seconds across the nation and around the world; emails, twitter, facebook, etc. verify the power of the word. The word inflames and enhances, verifies and vilifies, affirms and destroys. The written word can be erased, not so with the spoken word.

Yes, the tongue is still the most potent enemy or friend. The person "who restrains his lips is wise." We cannot take back the spoken word. The tongue reaches the head, then the heart and then the spirit. A friend's mother advised her as a little girl to always carry a stick to ward off the devil and to remind her to pause before she used her tongue. We need to stick with that advise.

**Prayer:** Compassionate Savior, your words affirm the love of God. Cleanse and purify our hearts so that our words reflect you as Lord and Savior. Amen.

**November 25, 2009: Tongues I Corinthians 14:1-2**

“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.”

God gives everyone different gifts. That is as He had planned. I seem to have been given the gift of prophecy. The first incident I can remember of experiencing my gift came when I was a little girl. My dad traveled on the road all over Wyoming selling insurance. One Monday when he was preparing to leave, he came to give me a good-bye kiss. I had an uneasy feeling and did not want him to go. That week on his way home, he was in a bad car accident, which caused him to be flat on his back in the hospital for six weeks with a broken pelvis. Another time, I had bought a new Toyota Camry and I knew instinctively that I would have an accident in that car. Sure enough I was t-boned in the Camry by a pick-up the car was totaled. There have been many more times that the Lord has given me a prophecy, which seems to come quietly in my spirit. I know it is a gift from Him. I am blessed with this gift. Others have been blessed with different gifts. I don't think we are supposed to be embarrassed to share our gifts with others. One doesn't want it to seem like he or she is being boastful when he or she possesses a gift that others don't. On the other hand, I don't think God gives us gifts to hide them either. If God didn't think it was a worthy gift, then why would He give it to one of His children and why would the Bible tell us to “eagerly desire spiritual gifts”?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, please help us to recognize the gifts You have given to us. Help us to share them with the rest of our Christian brothers and sisters, so that those gifts might be a blessing to others. Thank you for those gifts. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**November 26, 2009 Tongues      Romans 14:11**

"For it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'"

This says it all! I am the great "I AM."

Have you ever given much thought about your tongue? I've been noticing a lot of things about it. It is very small. But what power!

The tongue can make others angry, happy, belittled, encouraged and much more. The things that are in your heart will be spoken through your tongue. . . isn't that a scary thought? Another ugly thing about the tongue is that once the words are spoken, they cannot be taken back. How often have you heard someone call a person "stupid" or "clumsy" and then try to erase it? Can't be done. The damage is done. The trick is to ask God to control your tongue before you speak.

The Lord says, "every knee will bow, and every TONGUE confess that Jesus is Lord." We need to use our tongue to confess and not just say, "I am a good person, I'll be saved. Jesus needs to be in your heart and mouth.

**Prayer:** Precious Savior, one day we will hear everyone confess your name as Lord. Until then, strengthen me to guard my tongue and grow in faith and obedience. Amen.

**November 27, 2009      CONFESSIO N      JAMES 5: 16a**

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other”

The confession of sins is important to being forgiven. In this verse James tells us that confessing and praying for one another will bring healing. Is it adequate to ask God to “forgive me my sins,” or does God want us to go further? It seems a little “too easy” to say that we’ve sinned, and then expect to be forgiven. How do you feel when you bring out the specific ways that you’ve sinned today? It makes me aware of different ways that I’ve erred. Confessing helps me realize how often I sin, and how many times I continue to sin in the same old ways! So when I ask forgiveness for the sin of hurting others with the words of my mouth, I am more aware that I should think before I speak! And, often I say things to again realize at once, “I did it again! ” When we pray for others after their confession of sin, it is easier to ask God to lead them in specific ways. “Confession is good for the Soul” is often heard, and it can truly free you to erase bad behaviors and bring a relief to unburden yourself.

**PRAYER:** Father God, bless all of us with the desire to confess our sins to one another, and to pray for the liberating release of sin’s guilt. AMEN

**November 28, 2009 Confession Psalm 32:5**

“I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.”

“I am clean, I have been redeemed, and I am truly set free”

Confession and forgiveness lead to a joyous heart.”

**Prayer:** Spirit of truth, make us aware of how transparent we need to be in our relationship with you and how confession relieves us to live fully in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**November 29, 2009          Absolution          James 5:15**

“And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord, will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”

A prayer offered to the Lord in faith can make a sick person well. Heart disease is a leading cause of death and in many studies it has been proven that stress, anger, and negativity contributes to the progress of the disease. Absolution...God's way of releasing us from guilt arisen from anger can heal the body.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we live in financially perilous and morally deficient times and we ask that you give us wisdom, love and patience to see it through. AMEN

**November 30, 2009          Absolution          Matthew 18:21-22**

“Then Peter came to Jesus and said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’”

We live in a society of numbers. How many children do you have? What's the final number on my tax form? God deals with our sins in volumes. In Bruce Almighty God took Bruce to a small filing cabinet when Bruce claimed to be righteous. His smile at the sight of the size of the cabinet brought a self righteous smile to Bruce's face. When he opened the file door, the door propelled him endless away from the cabinet. Forgiving seven times is generous until you realize how many times Jesus has forgiven us. What are our questions concerning absolution? Is our filing cabinet of confessed sins forgiven? Absolutely! Does forgiveness really mean erased and forgotten? Absolutely! Is our filing cabinet of sins empty because of Jesus' blood flowing from the cross? Absolutely? Does seven times no longer seem generous? Absolutely!

**Prayer:** Forgiving Lord, from the cross you asked for absolution of those below. Today, we stand beneath the cross asking and receiving absolution through your love and sacrifice. Amen.