



## *Daily Devotions* *for the whole family!*

### **Week 2: Embracing a Commitment to God's Word**

Monday: Let your Gospel Light Shine!  
Tuesday: Faith Empowers God's Stewards  
Wednesday: The Power of the Word  
Thursday: The Steward's Joyful Duty  
Friday: Jesus Has Been There, Done That  
Saturday: Expressing Your Love  
Sunday: What's the Good News?

By Ron and Phyllis Chewning

### **Week 2 – Monday – Let Your Gospel Light Shine!**

**Scripture:** *"We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard"*  
(Acts 4:20).

During a sermon, a pastor told of a man who had taken his unchurched, unbelieving neighbor to Easter service with him. What a glorious morning! The sermon was profound, the music was heavenly, and the whole atmosphere was absolutely charged. On the way home, the man turned to his neighbor and asked, "Well, what did you think?" After a pause, the neighbor replied, "I think that if I believed everything I heard this morning, I wouldn't be able to talk about anything but that."



Does that remark convict you as a Christian? We're willing to talk about last Sunday's football game, going over it play by play. We'll even spend long minutes talking about the weather to complete strangers. But when do we talk about the Gospel?

1 Peter 3:15 reads, *"But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you."* There's nothing wrong with talking about the weather or sports, but, as Christians who have been given the treasure of the Gospel message, don't we have a more important topic of conversation? Are we lukewarm about the message of the Cross? Are we grateful for what God in Christ has accomplished for us? Are we so thankful that we can't help but speak about it? Our attitude should be like that of Peter and John, who, when commanded to stop speaking of Christ, said, *"We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:20).

God has given us the message of salvation and He, through His Word and Sacraments, works right thoughts, attitudes, and actions in us. As we avail ourselves of these gifts, we will sincerely say with Paul, *"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!"* (2 Corinthians 9:15), and those words will be accompanied by speech that proclaims the Savior and speaks the Gospel message to those around us.

Lord, fill my heart and mind with Your Words and thoughts so that I am able and eager to *"make a defense to anyone who asks."* In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

## **Week 2 – Tuesday – Faith Empowers God's Stewards**

**Scripture:** *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith enables us to be God-pleasing stewards. *"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him"* (Hebrews 11:6). The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is known as the "Faith Chapter." From Abel down through the ages, the writer names the heroes of faith, listing their accomplishments, preceding each one with *"by faith."*

*Have  
Faith  
in  
GOD*

By faith, we understand that our stewardship is God working in and through us. It is not what we do, not what we give, not how we serve – but what God does, what God gives, how God serves, and our response to His love and gifts to us. God has shown us His plan for our lives. *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"* (Ephesians 2:10). This is the definition of stewardship: doing the good works which God has prepared for us to do. God empowers and equips us to be faithful stewards. God has chosen us to carry out His work on earth. *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide"* (John 15:16).

It is by faith that our pastor confidently enters the pulpit to speak forth the Word of the Lord. It is God's message, God's gift, and he is only the channel through which it flows. By faith, the servant humbly steps forward to serve. His only motive is that God may receive the glory as he offers his hands, feet, lips, his whole body, soul, and mind in service. By faith, the teacher diligently prepares her lessons, seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit, studying the Word of God, and looking into the hearts of her students. God creates the learning; His Spirit creates the faith. As stewards, we are the faithful vessels that God uses. By faith, God can make us into His faithful stewards.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness to me. Keep me steadfast. Amen.

## Week 2 – Wednesday – The Power of the Word

**Scripture:** *“Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord”* (Deuteronomy 8:3b).



The Word of God has been described in many ways, but each description carries the connotation of worth and value and power. The Word, we read in Hebrews 4:12, is *“living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* God, through the prophet Isaiah declared that the Word that goes out of His mouth *“shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it”* (Isaiah 55:11). By the word of His mouth, God created the heavens and the earth. God Himself called His word a fire and a hammer (Jeremiah 23:29). In Ephesians, Paul wrote about the Armor of God, topping off all the defensive weapons God gives us an offensive weapon, *“the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God”* (Ephesians 6:17).

In his letter to the church in Corinth, Paul wrote, *“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us”* (2 Corinthians 4:7). This great treasure is God’s Word. It lives inside us; it strengthens us; it encourages us; it gives us hope; it never fades away; it enables us to persevere. It gives us life and salvation. Indeed this is a treasure!

Many don’t know that this treasure exists. They may have it beautifully leather-bound and on a shelf in their homes, but they don’t realize they have a priceless treasure in their possession. It is up to us who have this treasure to share it, for it can never be used up, never decrease in value, and never lose its newness and vitality.

Lord, thank You for Your Word. Help me to thirst for it and to be obedient to it. Amen.

## Week 2 – Thursday – The Steward’s Joyful Duty

**Scripture:** *“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy”* (1 Corinthians 4:2).



The Christian steward has been entrusted by God with gifts to be used in responsible and joyful service for the building up of the Body of Christ. The Apostle Peter commanded, *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”* Why is it important for us to use our gifts? Peter answers, *“In order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ”* (1 Peter 4:10, 11b). How wonderful is God Who has so created and endowed us with varying gifts put things together in such a way that we become interdependent! This was God’s plan for the church. Collectively we form the Body of Christ where each part functions as part of the greater whole. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, Paul the Apostle, expounds on this whole

idea. He reminds us that just as each physical organ or body part has its own importance and offers a unique contribution to the whole body, so does each disciple have gifts that are different, yet equal, and indispensable to the functioning of the Body of Christ, the Church.

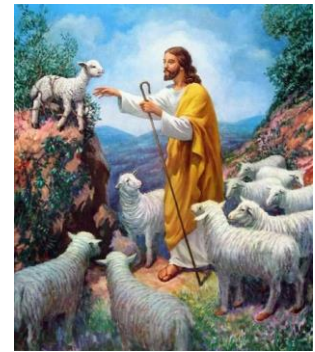
Scripture exhorts us as stewards to use our gifts according to how we have been blessed. *“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness”* (Rom. 12:6-8). By God’s grace, we are empowered to use our gifts to help teach, encourage, serve, and lead others.

What a gracious God we have Who so bountifully blesses us and enables us to be faithful caretakers of His gifts!

Dear Heavenly Father, You have called me to be Your steward for which I give You thanks. Help me to be a faithful steward. In Jesus’ holy and precious name I pray. Amen.

## **Week 2 – Friday – Jesus Has Been There, Done That**

**Scripture:** *“Let Your steadfast love comfort me according to Your promise to Your servant”* (Psalm 119:76).



An elderly person lies on a bed in a nursing home. There have been no visitors for some weeks. Her best friends are the nurses and aides who tenderly care for her needs. A father of young children gets the diagnosis: inoperable, incurable cancer. Get your affairs in order, he’s told, and a bewildered family tries to plan for a future without him. Proud parents respond to the doorbell and get the message: We regret to inform you your son was killed in action. Pride turns to anguish, courage is replaced by uncertainty, and hope almost turns to despair.

Were it not for our Savior, in any of these situations, our hope would turn to despair. The Christian, though, knows He’s never abandoned because Jesus was. The Christian knows that there is life beyond the grave because Jesus has conquered death by His suffering, death, and resurrection. The Christian, although enduring grief that seems endless, knows that Jesus understands their anguish because He has been there, done that.

Don’t you wonder about the individuals and families who have no such hope? Who have no anchor in this life and no confidence in the next? Maybe you have friends or neighbors carrying burdens too heavy for them. How can you help? You can be the visitor to the sick and helpless and dying. You can prepare the meal and watch over the children and pick up the slack for the family who feels the earth has dropped out from under them. You can lend the listening ear to the sorrowing. You can give a little extra to help the needy. All in the name of Jesus. In the midst of such pain, people need to hear about the Risen Savior. They need to learn that He has plans for each of them (Jeremiah 29:11). They need to know that He yearns to comfort them, to strengthen them, to bring them to Himself. They need to know that Jesus, like no one else, understands them for He has been there, done that for us.



Dear Heavenly Father, we live in a fast-changing and challenging world that is filled with many griefs. Thank You for Your promise that You will not change and thank You for promise that will not leave nor forsake me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## **Week 2 – Saturday – Expressing Your Love**

**Scripture:** *"Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth"* (1 John 3:18).

The three words "I love you" are very powerful. Love is expressed not only in words but also in action. In fact, it has been said, "Talk is cheap." To tell someone that you love him is certainly not cheap, but love also needs to be expressed by what we do and how we act. As God's people, we convey love through our giving and serving.



In God's Word, He tells us how much He loves each of us and then proves it by giving His Son to die for us. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). Jesus gave His life for us and He keeps on giving. We can demonstrate our love for Him through our giving. When we give faithfully of our time, talents, and treasures, we show our love for Jesus.

God takes love seriously. He loves us, and He expects us to love one another. Jesus said, *"Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another"* (John 13:34). We express our love to Jesus when we serve those around us. Serving communicates love. *"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many"* (Mark 10:45).

The love that Jesus places in our hearts can be the fuel to make a difference not only in our lives, but in the lives of those around us. It is important to express our love as we thank God for His abundant grace, mercy, and blessing, but our words must be supported through the greater expression of our love as seen through our giving and serving as God gives us grace to do.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us so much that You would send Your Son, Jesus, to suffer and die so we could live as forgiven people. Help me to live a life worthy of that tremendous sacrifice. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## **Week 2 – Sunday – What's the Good News?**

**Scripture:** Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6).

What a tender time Christmas is! Everyone adores the Baby in the manger. Families gather together to sing "Away in the Manger" and wish each other peace on earth. Too often, however, after the season has



passed, many go back to empty lives. They rush from one task to another, from one activity to another. They try to do good things, and, when doubts nag at them, they comfort themselves by arguing that they are "good people," after all. As Christians, all of us must know someone who measures himself by the yardstick of good deeds. When we hear that sentiment expressed, we cannot stand silent. We must proclaim the real message of Christmas. Yes, the Baby was born in a manger, but He didn't remain a helpless creature. Yes, we should adore the newborn Christ Child, but we should also worship Him as our Redeemer, the One Who did for us what our good deeds could not. *"For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh"* (Romans 8:3). The helpless Baby grew up, suffered in our places, took the sin of the whole world in His body on the Cross, and brought us salvation. *"And there is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). This is the freeing message of Christmas. Without Christ, there is no peace on earth. Without Christ, there is no goodness in us. Without Christ, there is no purpose in life. Without Christ, there is no life at all.

Dear Jesus, thank You for love me so much that You were willing to face humiliation and death. Help me to show my gratitude through my faithful serving and giving. Amen.