



DAILY DEVOTIONS

A thought to comfort and encourage you



Light Lutheran Church

July 2026
Sunday 5th -Sunday 12th

This week's Devotions are by Tania Nelson

Tania is the ministry lead at Mawson Lakes Community Church in suburban Adelaide and is a pastoral ministry student at Australian Lutheran College. Tania loves taking beach walks with her husband, David, spending time with her family and friends, and reading. Sometimes she is blessed to experience all three of these joys at her family shack on South Australia's Yorke Peninsula.

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THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU

SHARING JESUS – WELCOMING THE FATHER

By Tania Nelson



Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me (Matthew 10:40).

Read [Matthew 10:40–42](#)

Today's reading comes immediately after Jesus' sending out of the Twelve in mission to preach, heal and bless. The disciples were instructed to 'Go ... to the lost sheep of Israel' to proclaim that 'The kingdom of heaven has come near' (Matthew 10:6,7b).

We, too, are sent to tell our friends, family, neighbours and colleagues of the wonderful deeds of the one who has sent us. How do we do this? We certainly don't need to get the whole gospel out in one conversation. Neither do we need to get into a debate about creation and evolution or something like that. That's not the way to go, at least not initially.

The late US theologian, Pastor Timothy Keller, spoke of keeping it simple. He suggested to:

- Let people know you go to church.
- Let people know you're a Christian and that it means something to you.

So, when you let four people know you're going to church this coming weekend, perhaps one will come back to you and ask about why you go. When you share those things – that you go to church and that your faith is meaningful to you – with the people you meet along the way, it may organically lead to more extensive, in-depth kinds of discussions.

You may be welcomed, because you shared the reason for the hope you have in Jesus, with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15). And when you are welcomed, your Father in heaven is welcomed too.

Lord, you sent the Twelve to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is near. Help me to share the hope I have in you with my friends, family and neighbours, for I know that you died for me and have given me eternal life. Amen.

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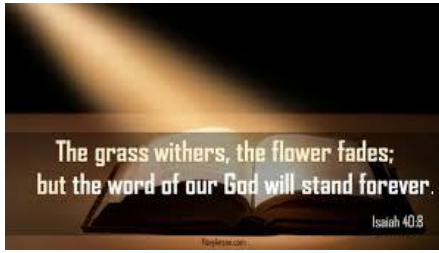
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A THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU

REFLECTING THE LOVE OF A GENEROUS AND MERCIFUL GOD

By Tania Nelson



Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me (Mark 9:37a).

Read [Mark 9:37–41](#)

I recall hearing the phrase 'Children should be seen and not heard' in my childhood. Perhaps the saying was directed to me, as I certainly had a tendency to talk a lot in school ... and possibly haven't outgrown that tendency! Praise God that we have a Saviour who loves children, welcomes them with open arms, listens to them and blesses them.

I love imagining Jesus with a child in his arms or a child on his lap. I picture a smile on Jesus' face and love in his eyes as he takes the time to talk to the child. I imagine that the child is smiling too, perhaps laughing and feeling secure in the love and attention generously given.

The Bible has numerous stories and commands across both the Old and New Testaments to care for vulnerable people, including children. God's people are to care for the poor, the homeless, the widows, the sick, victims of injustice, migrants and refugees. The LCA's document *God's Love – Our Care*, which outlines the theology underpinning the practice of Lutheran care, reminds us, 'It is natural to show special care to one's relatives, friends and fellow believers, but Christlike compassion reaches out beyond all ethnic, social and religious barriers, even includes enemies, and expects nothing in return.'

Our Lord said that when we welcome children in Jesus' name, we are welcoming our Heavenly Father. May we be welcoming to children – and vulnerable people too – and may we reflect the love of our generous and merciful God.

Heavenly Father, I desire that you be known throughout the world. Help me to make you known as I show kindness and mercy in Jesus' name to the people around me, including children, the vulnerable and the marginalised in society. May I reflect your love in my words and actions. Amen

A THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

By Tania Nelson



Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet (John 13:14).

Read [John 13:12–20](#)

Many books, journal articles and leadership development programs have been written about leadership styles. These authors often propose certain leadership traits or styles for particular situations. Does the company or team need a transformational leader, a strategic leader, an authentic or moral leader, or perhaps even a sustainable leader? We're quick to discredit authoritarian leaders, as well as those with poor managerial skills. We love permission-giving leaders – if they permit the right things, that is, what I want!

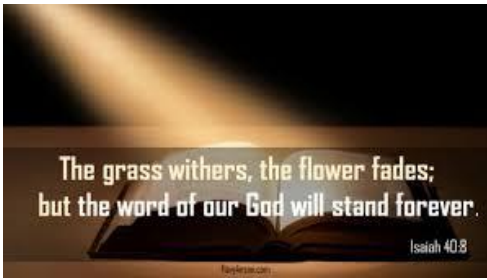
The way of Jesus is different. Jesus' leadership is countercultural. It is the way of foot washing, of servanthood, of shepherding. Jesus set us an example, not only when he washed the disciples' feet, but throughout his ministry on Earth. Jesus was the true servant leader.

What could our servant leadership look like, sound like and feel like as followers of Jesus? Perhaps it looks like helping, without expectation of reward or even anyone's notice. Perhaps it sounds like the stacking of chairs and the washing of dishes in a community centre. Perhaps it feels like kind and gentle encouragement to a harassed parent.

The servant leader's core values determine their attitudes and actions. What the servant leader truly believes and holds in their heart often manifests itself in their behaviour. The Christian servant leader is a follower of Jesus. We love because Jesus first loved us. Jesus has given us his Spirit, who helps us to love and serve. And as we serve, we find that we are abundantly blessed, too!

Dear Jesus, I praise you for saving me. Fill me with your Spirit so that I can serve others as you serve me. Amen

A THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU



ACT KINDLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLY

By Tania Nelson

Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity (1 Timothy 5:1b,2).

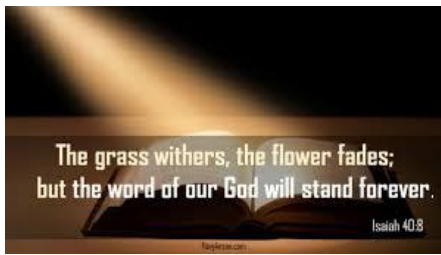
Read [1 Timothy 5:1–22](#)

St Paul gives quite the list of dos and don'ts to Timothy in today's reading. I wonder what particular issues Paul was compelled to correct. We are given a general clue to the situation in verses 1 and 2: 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.' The passage speaks of acting mercifully, kindly, with compassion and integrity. Paul exhorts us, too, to recognise those 'who are really in need' (1 Timothy 5:3), to provide for our relatives (1 Timothy 5:8), to show hospitality (1 Timothy 5:10) and to honour spiritual leaders and teachers (1 Timothy 5:17). We are to keep ourselves pure and thereby act toward others with integrity.

Unfortunately, we don't always act how we should. Acting kindly, loving mercy, walking humbly (Micah 6:8) – well, that's quite the challenge! How blessed are we that we have a Saviour who forgives us when we have acted badly and forgives us when we have failed to act justly. Jesus died and rose for us, for me, and he sees me as his holy child. I am a sinner and, at the same time, through Jesus, I am a saint. Thank you, Jesus.

Father in heaven, it's not easy to act kindly, love mercy and walk humbly as I journey through life. Help me treat others as you treat me – with kindness, compassion and love. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

A THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU



ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDLY

By Tania Nelson

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth (1 John 3:18).

Read [1 John 3:11–18](#)

St John's plea for the children of God to show God's love through 'actions and in truth' reminds me of the words of St Teresa of Avila, who said, 'We must all try to be preachers by our deeds.' It also reminds me of the quote, which some have attributed to St Francis of Assisi: 'Preach the gospel at all times and, when necessary, use words.' Today's Bible reading is a helpful reminder that our actions may speak louder than our words.

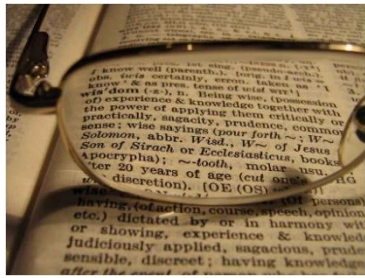
How do we preach the good news – God's incredible love for all – by our actions? I think the fruit of the Spirit is a good place to start. When we display love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22,23), our actions speak loudly.

A friend of mine once said that Christians make the best friends. I pray that this is truly the case! What he meant, I gather, is that Christians can be honest, loyal, trustworthy and accepting of others in their friendships. A challenge for all of us is to love our enemies as we love our friends!

Thanks be to God that he has the final word when I don't always display the kind of actions and love that I wish to. St John summed up the good news of God's love for us when he wrote, 'This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.' Amen to that!

Spirit of God, fill my heart with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, so that Jesus is known through my actions and in truth. Amen

A THOUGHT TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE YOU



THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

By Tania Nelson

This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: he has given us of his Spirit (1 John 4:13).

Read [1 John 4:7–21](#)

Today's Bible reading is an exhortation to 'love one another, for love comes from God' (1 John 4:7a). I don't know about you, but I don't always feel loving. There are times I avoid people, times when I speak hastily and inappropriately, times when I'm impatient and unkind (actually lots of times when I'm impatient ... yes, something I need to work on!). I suspect you, too, have times when that loving feeling is not at the forefront.

However, while loving may not always come naturally, we know that God has given us the Holy Spirit. We can lean on the Spirit for help.

God sent Christ's Spirit to the disciples at Pentecost, and the crowd heard the disciples preach in their own languages. God gave the Spirit to the 3,000 believers who were baptised that day. God's Spirit came to you and me in our baptism.

Martin Luther said in his explanation of the third article of the Apostles' Creed (the article that begins 'I believe in the Holy Spirit ...'):

I believe that I cannot, by my own understanding or strength, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him; but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Daily in this Christian church the Holy Spirit abundantly forgives all sins – mine and those of all believers. On the Last Day, the Holy Spirit will raise me and all the dead and will give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life.

God's Spirit is still calling, gathering, enlightening and making us holy. Come, Holy Spirit, and help us to love.

Thank you, Heavenly Father, for giving me your Spirit. Thank you, Jesus, for dying and rising to life for me. Thank you, Spirit of God, for calling me, gathering me into your church, instructing me and making me holy. Amen

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GOD'S MAJESTY DISPLAYED

By Tania Nelson

All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might (Psalm 145:10,11).

Read [Psalm 145:8-14](#)

I love being in nature: beach walks and the sound of the waves breaking, recognising birds in the trees as I wander through my neighbourhood and discovering streams and wildlife on bush walks. I'm drawn to impressive mountain views and delicate native wildflowers. When I'm driving, I love seeing a rainbow, and I find sunlight radiating through storm clouds awe-inspiring. I certainly believe that creation speaks of God's glory and might.

Perhaps David, too, was moved by 'the glorious splendour of [God's] majesty' when he wrote this beautiful song of praise. Do yourself a favour and read all of Psalm 145!

Apparently, the psalm is an acrostic poem, with each verse beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. We lose that beauty in our English translation, but we don't lose the joy that is conveyed in this song of praise.

David speaks of God's graciousness, compassion, goodness, might, glory, trustworthiness, nearness, watchfulness and more. David reminds us that the 'Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made' (Psalm 145:9).

When we reflect on the expanse of the universe and the creativity of our God who created such beauty, and then consider that God knows us and God loves us individually, well, that's truly awe-inspiring and worthy of praise.

Lord of power and might, I praise you for you are good! The splendour of creation declares your glory. You are compassionate and gracious. You are faithful and rich in love. Let every creature praise your holy name forever and ever. Amen.

REST

By Greg Fowler



Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28,30).

Read [Matthew 11:16–19,25–30](#)

We live in a culture that glorifies busyness. We often wear our exhaustion like a badge of honour, juggling careers, family obligations and endless digital notifications until our souls feel heavy and frayed.

Into this chaos, Jesus extends a radical, countercultural invitation: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:28,30).

In the ancient world, a yoke was a wooden frame joining two oxen to pull a heavy load. Typically, a young, inexperienced ox was yoked with a mature, stronger one. The older ox bore the majority of the weight and dictated the pace.

When Jesus invites us to take his yoke, he isn't offering a life of zero responsibility. He is offering a divine partnership; he steps into the yoke with us, bearing the crushing weight of our obligations, anxiety, guilt and need for control.

What burden are we carrying? Are we carrying the weight of others' opinions, financial worry or the pressure to be perfect? Tell it to Jesus. Be yoked to him while we uncouple from the world's frantic pace. We do not have to hustle to prove our worth; our value is already securely anchored in Christ.

Let's step into his rhythm. Spend time with Jesus in word and prayer. Speak to him about where we can surrender control and actively ask him to carry that load with us. True rest isn't found in an empty calendar, but in a surrendered heart full of grace.

Lord, I am weary from trying to do it all alone. I surrender my heavy burdens to you today. Teach me your gentle, humble rhythm and give my soul true, lasting rest. Amen.

Pastor Greg lives in beautiful Redland Bay with his wife, Connie, where they enjoy the beaches, weather and outdoor lifestyle of south Brisbane. He serves as the college pastor at Faith Lutheran College, Redlands.