

Weekly Devotional Guide – April 19th – April 24th

Monday, April 19: *Mark 9:2-13* -- Where have you grasped a bit of the glory of Jesus in a special way?

God, You are omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, holy, and glorious. The magnificence and splendor displayed in the heavens and the earth point to Your glory, simply from the works of Your hands. Your glory isn't dependent on anyone or anything else. Your glory reflects Your essential nature. You gave a glimpse of that physical glory to reinforce the disciples' faith after they learned about Your pending death. After Your resurrection, You actually shared Your glory with us when You sent Your Holy Spirit to dwell in our heart. This means Your strength, wisdom, love, peace, joy is present inside of each of us. When Your presence shows up, it makes You real and personal. You are no longer just the God who exists in the heavens, but You are the God who comes down wanting to dwell among us. You want to be with me. As I yield more to the Holy Spirit, I experience more of Your glory flowing in my life. There is no greater place than to be in Your presence, sensing the warmth of Your love and the joy of Your Spirit. When it shows up, all pride, ego, and boasting simply go out the window. Your glory is just too great. I experience how wonderful, majestic, and holy You are and how sinful and unworthy I am. I kneel before Your presence in honor and praise. As I surrender more to Your Holy Spirit the evidence of Your glory within me radiates to those around me. Today, I pray that Your glory invades my heart, my home, my church, my country, and the world. I boldly pray for a revival so that Your glory is visible for the whole world to see and experience. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Tuesday, April 20: *Mark 9:14-32* -- How can you live with the full reality of evil and yet with the strong awareness of God's transforming power?

Evil is real. The biggest power of evil is fear. The devil has used fear as his weapon to control and manipulate. What we tolerate is going to grow and as a result, fear has grown in our society today. In 2 Timothy it says God has not given you a spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind. Fear is not an emotion, it is a demonic spirit. The spirit of fear is the enemy of power, a sound mind, and Your love. Any demonic fear makes me a powerless Christian. Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear is the number one enemy of Your love. When I give fear any place in my heart, I will not be able to feel Your love or operate with a sound mind. Your transforming power is crippled by my fear. But Your Word teaches me how to fight fear. 1 John 4:18 tells me that there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. There is no fear in love. You have not given me a spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind. Help me to replace fear and negative what if's with faith in Your transforming love. You died for my sins and there are many stories in Your Word that prove how Your love transforms people and situations. I have seen Your transforming power in my life. Help me to remember these things and to trust that Your power is transforming the situation today. Peace comes through trusting in Your sovereign control and submitting to You in the midst of circumstances and believing that You will work it out for our good and Your glory. I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief! You are a mighty and loving God. Everything is possible for one who believes. Your Word tells me that You are my refuge and strength, a very help in trouble! Lord, I receive Your love. I am a child of God. Your love is a transforming power. Let me boldly live in love and share Your love with others. Transform the fear in this world with Your powerful love for all people. Let Your great love spread like wildfire and burn out the demon of fear. You are sovereign over every situation and will bring about Your good purposes through Your love. Let me not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with Your good and perfect love. Amen

Wednesday, April 21: *Mark 9:33-41* -- What does it mean to do something 'in Jesus' name'?

Lord, it is in you that I have my being! Every day you are my portion and my strength. You know when I go in and when I go out. I cannot hide from your Holy Spirit and your love is everlasting. Lord, there is nothing I can do apart from you and I am humbled that you have allowed me to access your great power and love to minister to those whom you love. You oh Lord are truly for me and with your strength, I shall not be afraid. May I always be prepared to serve anyone you would send my way. May your name be glorified forever! Amen

Thursday, April 22: *Mark 9:42-50* -- Short of amputating body parts, what do you need to cut out of your life in order to avoid sin?

Holy Father, thank You for Your grace and Your gift of salvation through the cross. There is nothing that I can do to make You love me less and nothing I need to do to make You love me more. But there are many stumbling blocks in life that can hinder my faith in You. It could be events, practices, attitudes, pet causes, habits, a relationship, or a career. It could be belonging to an unreligious group, reading books or watching programs that promote sin, attending an unbelieving school, or having close friends who are unbelievers. If I am tolerating sin, tolerating relative prayerlessness, tolerating a lack of urgency over lost souls, it is an indicator that something is wrong. If I notice a diminishing of my healthy fear of You or the loss of a sense of Your holiness, it is the time to take action. Lord, I plead with You to restore my heart. It is better to believe in You by having cut out things that detract from my faith than to keep those things that separate me from You. I ask You to prune faithless behaviors off of me and replace them with eyes that see those in need of help, hands willing to serve, and feet to run and tell someone the good news of Your salvation. Amen

Friday, April 23: *Psalms 42* -- What causes God to feel far away at times?

Lord, I love You. I trust You. When life is going well, I go to church and soak up Your Word and sing your praises and feel content. But life is not always comfortable. Sometimes there are health problems, relationship challenges, financial struggles, or personal conflicts. There are daunting situations that shake me to my very core. There are times I am puzzled about what You are up to and wonder if You haven't forgotten me because nothing seems to be happening in the way I expect. My first response is to pray to You and believe that You hear my prayers. But as time goes on and I have to wait for answers, my trust falters, my strength weakens and my hope begins to crack. I cry out and beg for Your intervention but You are quiet. I need to wait. Waiting is the most difficult time, it is unsettling. Even if You would tell me, no, at least I know what I am dealing with and can move on. But when I wait I feel alone. It feels like You have left me. I know that Your plan is best and Your timing is perfect but the waiting time is crippling. I become restless and discouraged. Though it feels that You have forgotten me, I know the reality that You are the greatest security on which I can stand. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on You and keep trusting and obeying You through all the struggles, trials, and temptation. I hold fast to my hope in You and continue to praise You even when You seem far away. I need to remain in Your Word and cling to You in my times of waiting. Give me the patience. Open my eyes to see what You are doing in my life as I wait. Thank you that even when I doubt Your goodness, You direct your love towards me. Help me to keep trusting and obeying you in good times and in bad times and in all times. I rejoice in what you are doing, whether I like it, and understand it or not as an act of obedience and a sacrifice of praise. You are my Savior and my God. Amen

Saturday, April 24: *Ecclesiastes 3:1-15* -- How do you differentiate enjoying yourself from going too far?

Everything in the world and in life is subject to change. There are 4 different seasons in each year where I see how changes in nature transform around me right before my eyes. The same is true in life. There are multiple seasons of transformation between birth and death. Each season has its own character, benefits, and challenges. You have appointed the times and seasons, the events of my life, the happy and the sad, the easy and the difficult. Change has helped me to learn to adapt to new situations and to grow inside. Change stretches me. It challenges me by causing me to grow through the trials and tribulations of life. Some changes are out of my control and I feel helpless. Health issues, crime, national debt, abortion, murder, and hate are on the rise, and changes in the country and the world seem to be spinning out of control. It can be pretty discouraging. Some changes are not from You and I need to reject them. Help me to know the difference in what changes I need to accept from those that I need to reject. You have set eternity in my heart as my guide. Help me to remember that at all times You are in control. You have a purpose in what You do even if I have a hard time understanding what that purpose is. Help me to trust that You are not surprised by the changes I experience. They may be new to me, but they are not new to You. You know the beginning and the end and I am where You want me to be right now. You will provide all of my needs in every season because You love me so much. I thank You, God, that You are unchangeable. I can count on You to always be there. You won't change Your mind about me. You have made everything beautiful in Your time. Thank You, Lord. Amen