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Greetings,

I hope you find this devotional helpful in your daily journey.

Blessings, Pastor Dan

A Reflection: Temptations

Greetings Friends:

In the gospel readings this week we heard about Jesus being tempted. How did the gospel writers know what Jesus faced? Did Jesus tell them? What possible reason is there for that story to be in the gospels? These are just some of the questions that I have asked over the years regarding this portion of the text. It is only after I become aware of how the spiritual journey changes throughout one's life that these passages seemed to come into perspective. There are certain kinds of temptations that are common to those who are beginning the journey. However, as one learns to resist those temptations and long for a deeper relationship with God, other things enter into the mix that call or draw us away from the Spirit. I suspect that these passages are included in the text so that the reader will know that they too will experience temptations of different kinds throughout their life. One needs to resist them, to not get discouraged when they come, and to realize that the types of temptations will shift throughout the course of one's journey. In this regard, I have found Ignatius of

Loyola to be particularly helpful in understanding the spiritual journey. Ignatius went through a series of events that led him to awaken to God in his life. He had been highly regarded as a soldier; eventually wounded in battle, he had a long period of time to do introspection. It was during this period that he began to perceive God's presence by paying attention to day-to-day events. He developed a simple process with which he concluded each day. He would ask himself what moments were in his day that he felt a sense of internal joy that uplifted him, and what led to that sensibility. Secondly, he would ask when throughout the day he felt internally downtrodden – those moments that led to his spirit being depleted. Again, he would pay attention to what caused it. Eventually he saw a pattern, and each day he would ask God to help him avoid those things that depleted his spirit, and to embrace those things that brought him greater clarity and joy. This internal awareness helped Ignatius to choose good, and gradually resist the temptations that led him further from God.

It is my prayer that when you face temptations, you will be aware of them, and through prayer and persistence, will come even closer to God. Grace and peace, Pastor Dan

Upcoming Dates

Monday: Bounty Food Bank 9 am to Noon, Volunteers welcome.

Friday: *Bounty Food Bank* needs Volunteers every Friday for food pickup and storage help. Call 253-335-7860.

Next Sunday: Worship Service 11:00

Sat, Jan 26: "Pick Up The Blahs" Activity Day.

"Pick Up The Blahs!" Activity Day is this Saturday, January 26, 11 am to 3pm. This is not just for youth, adults are invited also! Bring your own lunch and a snack to share. We will start eating lunch at 11. (The snack will be for later in the day.) Join us for all sorts of activities including creating: Zombie Snow People, Napkin Roses, Kool Aid Play Dough, Falling Star Globes, and more (like Rock Painting). Adults: There will be a jig saw puzzle to work on also. See you Saturday JUST before 11am!

Feb 16: Administrative Board Meeting

March 10: Congregating with the D.S.

Bounty Food Bank Item of The Week: *Chili*

This week, consider adding this item to your food bank donation. Also - We are always needing plastic bags - So, if you shop where they still give out plastic bags, the food bank would love to take them off your hands.

Please keep in your prayers...

Judy Egan & her family

Mary Egeland

Danielle - and family

Liz Best

Maria Aliaga's son and father (Dad stop drinking so much soda, son to be more harmonious in family).

James & Jenifer Angus

Rev. Barbara Brown

Elaine & Jerry Ramsey

Anderson-Gammel family