

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting
November 7th

Daily Devotional #38

We Are in the Season of DEDICATION

As We Ask, “What Is GOD Preparing Us/for Us to Do?”

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

²In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

⁴You know the way to the place where I am going.”

John 14:1–4 (NIV84)

As I consider and pray over and for our Season of Dedication, I find myself smiling – with alligator tears. As a “manly man” (no comments, please), I fight back those pesky alligator tears, but my chest swells with pride over why I am battling them at this moment: how John 14:1-4 became a cornerstone of my joy and dedication to GOD, and how – for us, Jesus’ brothers and sisters – we can absolutely count on the fact that Jesus is most definitely coming back to take us Home.

In the Fall of 1995, back in the days of graduate studies at ACU, I had the privilege of playing Mr. Mom in the mornings (sort of, anyhow... Twyla did most of the prep-work, I just made toast and drove the taxi to school). One particular morning, I was a bit stressed finishing a paper for Systematic Theology about the importance of the spiritual, communal Family and how as “professional theologians” (my brother-in-law, Terry, says “paid Christian” is a better term) need to be careful to treasure and learn from all in the Family. The point being, as we believe GOD’s presence and work in and among us, we trust Him more today and in the days to come. In that trust we know – we absolutely know – that He mysteriously with us in this moment and is absolutely and most definitely coming back for us! In one another, we see and experience His promise and presence... today and forever!

Here’s the conclusion to that paper...

As I write this conclusion, tears fall from my face. This principle (learning from one another) has come to life for me today.

This morning my eight year old daughter (Lauren) had a bad morning. She did not get enough sleep and was cranky and fussy. She got in trouble and many tears were shed.

To top it off, she forgot her homework on the kitchen table. This was discovered as I was preparing my breakfast after I returned from taking her to school. Her eyes were still very red and puffy as I drove away. As Twyla (my wife) and I discussed the relative lack of importance of this piece of homework, our hearts went out to her because of her “tough” morning.

I decided to take it too her, basically out of fear that she might “go ballistic” when she discovered it missing. Slightly miffed at the need to finish my breakfast in the car, I set out, homework in hand.

As I peered into the classroom, worried about causing a disturbance to the teacher, I scanned the room for Lauren. The teacher saw me and called Lauren’s name as she pointed her out. I turned just in time to see my daughters eyes look up and see me. She instantly and eagerly stood up - a smile, big and powerful, beaming on her face.

She quickly made her way to me and with arms reaching up - not for the homework, for my hug - she said through that gorgeously joyful smile, “I knew you would come!” She hugged me tight.

I melted.

Time stopped.

It was pure heaven.

Two hours later (trying to finish the paper) I am still crying! Why? Because God used this precious little girl to remind me of His joy when I reach up and thank Him for coming through - like He always does - for me and for all of His people.

Imagine, God reacting to me (to us) like I reacted to that hug from my daughter.

“I knew you would come.” I cannot wait to say that to my Savior when He returns. I cannot wait to say that to Him today, and everyday, for the many ways He comes to (and) rescue me (us).

May we never forget the love God has for each of us - all of us. May we never forget the profound things we experience through and with one another. May we never forget to be in awe of what God can and does teach us through one another. We are a (marvelously treasured, highly favored, deeply blessed) community, a body, (His Family!). Each member is significant and important....

... All are valuable to God. All are tools in His hands. Even, and most likely, a precious little girl.