

Friday – Miscommunication

A diagram in a textbook about communication has stuck with me since college – that there is no success in communicating a message if the recipient will not or cannot receive it. Anything broadcast, spoken, shouted in protest, emailed, published, or preached is dependent on the recipient receiving it. Read Genesis 11:5-9. In confusing the communication, God effectively stopped their work and their trajectory toward destruction. Work didn't work when communication stopped. What about you and me? In our communication with one another, we frequently suffer from misunderstanding and confusion. I know that my willful speech, headstrong opinions, and hard heartedness stops communication very quickly. What is the solution? Read Psalm 141 and Colossians 4:1-6. Pray for insights about how to speak words seasoned with grace and how to desire understanding and unity above being "right." Rejoice that God has communicated His great love for us through Jesus!

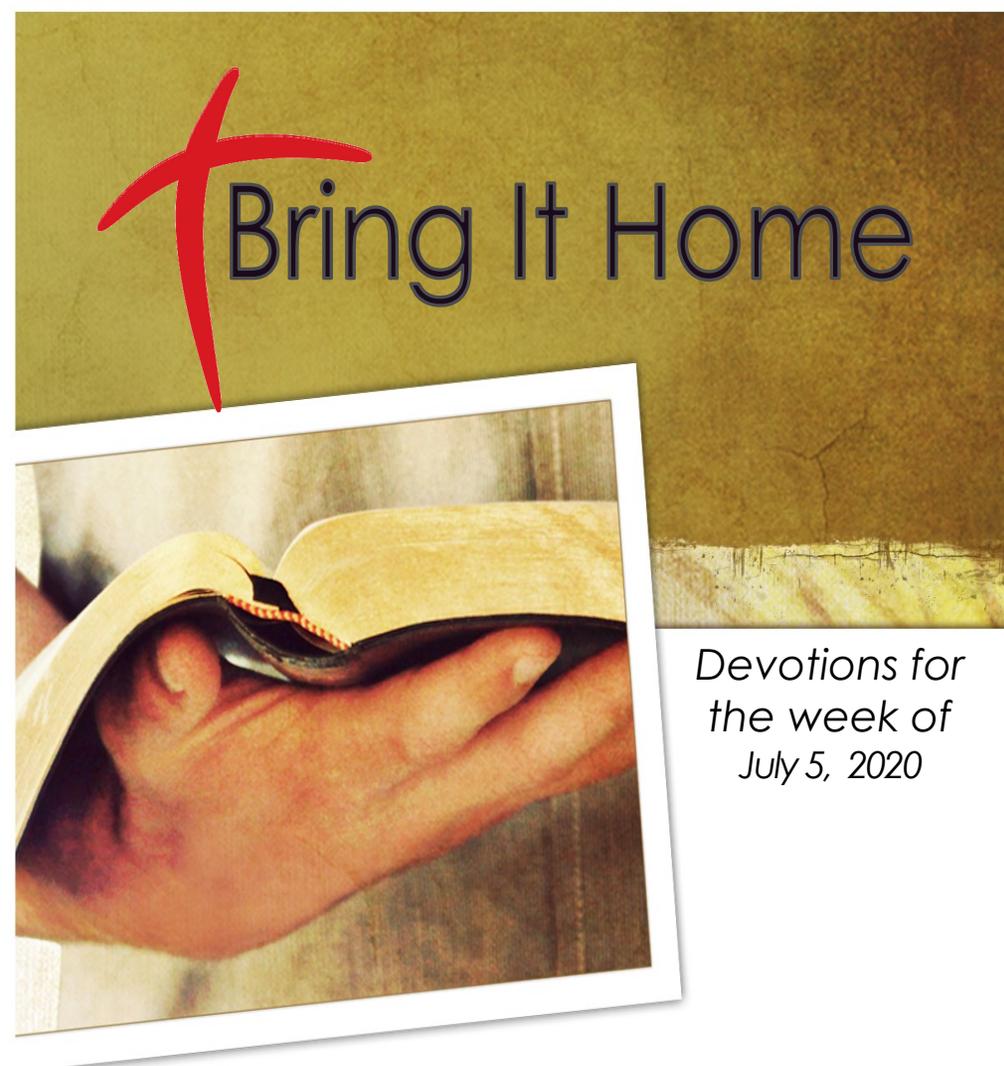
Saturday – My All In All

The command of God that the people fill the earth is something to consider. Read Isaiah 6:1-8. God spreads His people out so that they may carry Him to every corner of the earth. He desires to fill the whole world with His Glory. The Almighty doesn't want to be just one of many gods, or one of many attractions in life. He desires to be all in all – to bring life, restoration, and joy to all. He sent Jesus as Redeemer to be the remedy for sin's separating result. What about you and me? Read Ephesians 4:1-16 and Colossians 3:9-17. As children of God, we're also called to live lives which display Christ as all in all – lives which prioritize mercy, love, and righteousness.

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

4650 Sunview Drive, Loveland, Colorado 80538

This week's *Bring it Home* devotions were written by Gail Hein.
This publication may be reproduced and shared.



*Devotions for
the week of
July 5, 2020*

What Now?

- Give thanks for God's Word given to you in a language and a translation you can read, hear, and take to heart. Then spend some time in it each day.
- Look for one simple way to translate God's love in Jesus to someone in your life.

Monday – Blessed

Read Genesis 9:1-3. God withheld no blessing from Noah and his family as they began life again after the flood's destruction. However, before we see the destructive path they pursued, consider what they could have listed if they would have taken the suggestion of the Gospel hymn – "Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord has done." They could have seen the hand of God providing them with protection and provision. They could have seen the incredible variety of animal life created by God. They could have thanked God for the blessing of family. They could have noted the covenant promise, literally delivered with a (rain) bow! What about you and me? What blessings would fill your list and mine? Read Psalm 103 for a list of the spiritual blessings which the psalmist recorded. Enjoy the blessed life God has given and give Him thanks and praise!

Tuesday – Building My Own Kingdom

Read Genesis 11:1-4. This sounds like a great, industrious plan. Let's make bricks – since the plain of Shinar lacked rocks for building. What could be wrong with making bricks? Obviously, in and of themselves, bricks are not sinful. However, the people's words reveal the heart of the matter – their plan was a plan which rebelled against the plan and direction of God in Genesis 9:1-7 to fill the earth. They designed a life of their own imagining – safety, security, prosperity, self-sufficiency. In contrast, God desired to be their security, to hold them in the palm of His hand, to provide for them richly as they relied on Him. He wanted to be their Father, but they wanted to achieve independence. Perhaps the devastation of the flood plagued their memory and they wanted to protect against the next one. Perhaps they had developed a pecking order which could be managed by walls and districts. Perhaps they felt they could not trust God or each other. What about you and me? Is there a chance that we plan and build our own security? Could the security we build actually keep us from fulfilling the commands of God to love Him most and generously love those around us? In and of themselves, our homes, investments, jobs, and projects aren't evil – but when we focus on building our own kingdom rather than building the life-giving Kingdom of God, our industry becomes our tragedy. Read Jesus' words in Matthew 6:19-34, and pray that you may live your life relying on God more fully!

Wednesday – Making a Name for Myself

I recently listened to a talk on Genesis 11 by a Pastor named Chad Bird. He pointed out that while the desire of the people was to make a name for themselves, the only name that they had succeeded in maintaining was the name, "Sinner." That is probably not the label or brand which the people had in mind in Genesis 11. Today, for many reasons, we live in a culture of celebrity. The ambition of many children is to "be famous" – to be esteemed in the eyes of others. While we long to be known for our accomplishments and achievements, God has already given us an identity. In our baptism, He has given us the name, "Child of God." He has taken away all of sin's stain and changed our name to, "Beloved." Read Isaiah 62:1-5. Many years ago I learned a chorus which God brings to mind often to remind me of the gift I have through faith in Jesus – "I will change your name You shall no longer be called Wounded, Outcast, Lonely, or Afraid. I will change your name Your new name shall be Confidence, Joyfulness, Overcoming one. Faithfulness, Friend of God /One who seeks my face. You can listen to it here – <https://youtu.be/liOzd21u5MY>

Thursday – I Can Do Anything

Read Genesis 11:5-7. God saw that the determination of the people was great – but He also knew the intent of their hearts. We have experienced the great power of people working together, seen the glory of unified efforts for good. However, we have also seen the tremendous evil of unified forces for destruction. Read Proverbs 16. What about you and me? I grew up being told, "You can do anything you put your mind to." Girls, especially, in the 70's and 80's, were told, "You can have it all!" There is much truth to these affirmations of the power of hard work and teamwork! But, however much I might gain or achieve, it is useless without the blessing and leading of God. I fail to receive the blessing of peacefulness when I am striving to "have it all." Read Psalm 127:1-2 and rest in the goodness and love of God! Pray the words of the hymn, "Take My Life and Let it Be." "Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise." You can hear the hymn here – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9speOjVQ3ZA>