

# Daily Devotions



**Monday, 10/15/2018**

**Genesis 2:18-24**

Before this passage helps us appreciate the profound mysteries of human intimacy, it celebrates the wild companionship of all God's creatures. Any trip to the zoo or afternoon on a farm helps us know God's imaginative creativity in all the critters. It is comical to picture Adam meeting and naming them--from chicken and pig to rhinoceros and aardvark. It is a profound gift to hear God surround human relationships with creatures great and small. When I counsel people before marriage, I speak my concern if couples become isolated from the world around them--expecting too many of their needs to be met solely by each other. If it is not good for humans to be alone, it isn't good for a nuclear family to be alone either. Marriage is rooted in the promises that God is with us--and family is surrounded tangibly by a beautiful, blessed and beloved creation, including friends and fellow couples to call us out of isolation and preoccupation. *God, help us love each other, love our home and love all the gifts that hold your creation together. Amen.*  
Paul Rohde, '82, Campus Pastor, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Tuesday, 10/16/2018**

**Psalms 8**

It is one thing to be surrounded by beauty and gift; it is another to recognize it and speak it. I shall never forget trekking into a deep valley of the Black Hills with my own campus pastor and our leadership team at night. We lay on blankets to watch the Milky Way rise over the ridge. Pastor Dick Borrud rehearsed a list of astonishing statistics about the numbers and distances of stars in the galaxy--and then he closed worship reciting this psalm. When I consider your heavens, who am I that you care for me? One Easter morning in our church, the echoes of the trumpet and tympani in "Jesus Christ Has Risen Today" were barely fading when the voice of a child said, "Wow!" Before we claim dominion--which means responsibility as much as power--in the world, we do well to hear how this psalm humbles us--with the wonders of the heavens, the voices of children and the power of God, who holds us all. *God, humble us that our power be the power of trust, awe and love. Amen.*  
Paul Rohde, '82, Campus Pastor, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Wednesday, 10/17/2018**

**Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12**

When we see Jesus, we see the imprint of God's very being here on earth. We see the power of surrender--Jesus stooping to touch the despised, wash feet and bless children. The mystery of our faith and redemption is hidden in Jesus revealing the power of compassion--suffering with, and raising up not by force, but by trust in God's faithfulness alone. The Bible, start to finish, is a profound discussion--dare I say argument--about power. There is the crumbling of the tower of Babel, the clamor of military might, the cataclysm of mountains shaking, the scream of prophets and the calloused arrogance of the powerful. From the many and various ways we might expect a God of the universe to control, Hebrews turns our focus to a Jesus who sustains with promise and transforms with servant love. Though we don't yet see everything bowing to promise, Jesus turns down force, quiets the volume, calls us sisters and brothers and teaches us to trust. *Jesus--still, small voice of God--help us hear you. Free us from the clamor. Open our imaginations to your astonishing power and enable our hearts to trust. Amen.*

Paul Rohde, '82, Campus Pastor, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Thursday, 10/18/2018**

**Mark 10:2-16**

None of us loves perfectly. The gospel is *not* for the perfect and it is hardest on those who think they are. The most helpful quip I received about becoming a parent was, "I raised several perfect children before I had my own." It is vital to notice that these potent words are not directed at people suffering a broken marriage. They are directed at arrogance ready to turn the law on others. None of us is above this vindictive temptation. Luther--drawing on St. Paul and St. Augustine--taught us to stand truthfully and humbly together, united in brokenness and lifted in mercy. Today's reading does not justify torpedoes directed against divorcees. Its words disarm any who may have forgotten their own imperfections. They help us stand together in vulnerability--as all who love are vulnerable. When Jesus blesses the children, there are no perfect children. There are only beloved and forgiven children. *God, free us from the condemnation of the law--whether we turn it on ourselves or each other. Amen.*

Paul Rohde, '82, Campus Pastor, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Friday, 10/19/2018      Mark 10:2-16**

The gospel promise unites God's intention for creation and the steady, transforming imprint of Jesus' serving, blessing and calling together. From Genesis we learn that God intends for us to live in harmony, peace and love. From Jesus we learn God's faithfulness in gathering us as children. How do we picture the scene? Are these quiet, compliant, beautifully groomed children in clean, perfectly pressed garments? Or are they real children--active, inquisitive, rambunctious, with skinned knees and runny noses and protests about who is getting the biggest cookie? It does not help us to be idealistic or romantic about our children or ourselves. Life is messy and unfair. Self-righteousness is neither helpful nor true. Jesus keeps alive the imagination that Genesis began: God will call God's creation together again. And again. And again. The theologian Krister Stendahl said he awoke each morning to wonder where God is mending the world today. Where do you see God mending the world? How does God call you to serve this mending? *God, help us see you calling us together and calling us to help you mend your world. Amen.*

Paul Rohde, '82, Campus Pastor, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Saturday, 10/20/2018 & Sunday, 10/21/2018      "My Lord, What a Morning!" ELW 438**

*Refrain*

*My Lord, what a morning;  
my Lord, what a morning;  
oh, my Lord, what a morning,  
when the stars begin to fall.*

*1 You will hear the trumpet sound,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. Refrain*

*2 You will hear the sinner cry,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. Refrain*

*3 You will hear the Christian shout,  
to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand,  
when the stars begin to fall. Refrain*

Sometimes when we are not free to speak or do not want certain people to know what we are saying, we find alternative ways to share our message. The spirituals are an example of this. Spirituals were one way African-American slaves communicated with each other--songs sharing plans for escape, tunes providing assurance, melodies uplifting those in the most dire of circumstances. These songs tell the story of God's love and faithfulness. The songs were how so many held onto God's promises during times and conditions so difficult that we can hardly imagine them. The everlasting power of the spirituals is a testament to the faith of those brave individuals, while serving as a bold example of how people, even in the most oppressive situations, under God's providence will not be silenced. *My Lord, what a morning! Each and every morning is a gift from you, and we are thankful. May we shout and praise your love for us, while sharing that love with everyone we meet. Amen.*

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