

# Byfield Parish Church

Devotional Guide  
For the week of October 19, 2014

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## Proper Fear of God

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This devotional guide is designed to help you walk by faith. Faith comes by hearing. Hearing is the key to a living faith. When we come to worship prepared to hear from the Lord and primed to listen to scripture, our faith is strengthened.

Copies of this devotional are available for the asking. If you know someone who could benefit, we would be pleased to send them a copy. Please include a self-addressed envelope with your request.

### Monday

To Read: [Proverbs 9](#)

To Know:

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*“Abraham said, ‘I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife’” (Gen 20:11)*

The Second Continental Congress published the Declaration of Independence on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776. The declaration demonstrated that a unity existed in the thirteen colonies strong enough to unite them into thirteen states. Underlying the union of states was a shared fear of God. The middle years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were times of spiritual awakening. The gospel of Christ that was preached from Georgia to New Hampshire had the effect of turning the colonists away from London and toward each other. It was the fear of God that, in part, made the Americans zealous for personal liberty in conscience and conduct.

The fear of God prospers human life. When Abraham entered the territory ruled by Abimelech, he perceived himself to be in mortal danger since there was no fear of God in the place. Where there is no fear of God human life has no value. There was no fear of God in Adolph Hitler and the Jew paid a hellish price. The Soviet Union outlawed the fear of God and millions of Russians paid with their lives. Our Supreme Court manifests no fear of God and the price is being paid by our own unborn.

To Do:

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The fear of God is the antidote to the fear of men. Pontius Pilate meant to cower Christ by the fear of Rome. The empire had invested the governor of Judea with the authority to crucify the Savior. The prospect of hanging on a tree was intended to turn Jesus away from the will of God to do the bidding of the emperor. Jesus was fearless before Pilate because he revered his Father. Godly fear is reverence and awe. At its heart, the fear of God is the dread that we might displease him.

To Ask:

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Father, thank you that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

### Tuesday

To Read: [Proverbs 10](#)

To Know:

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*“And Joshua said to them, ‘Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, that this may be a sign among you, when your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’... So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial for ever.’” (Josh. 4:5,7)*

Certain American monuments are in Byfield Parish. Some years ago a television program broadcast in Elizabethtown, New Jersey chronicled the story of the Byfield stones. According to the broadcast, the Viking stones in Byfield were carved half way between now and the time of Christ. Around the year 1000 the Vikings became Christians and adopted the Gregorian Calendar. The Rune Stone in Byfield was carved in 1009.

Israel left piles of stones along the way to the Promised Land. These monuments marked their passage from Egyptian bondage to the land of liberty. The New Testament has markers of its own to show us the way into God’s favor. That way is faith. The faith that saves a sinner is not faith in the mere existence of God; this is the faith of the devil himself. James wrote, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe - - and shudder.” (2:19) The sign showing the way to eternal life is a person, not a pillar. Jesus Christ is himself the way. Jesus said, “. . . believe in God, believe also in me.” (Jn. 14:1) The person who follows a God who isn’t Jesus Christ is heading for his or her doom. It is Jesus who was sent to lead us into the life of the age to come.

To Ask:

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Father, thank you for showing us the way to you.

## Wednesday

To Read: [Proverbs 11](#)

To Know:

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*“While Peter was still saying this, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.” (Acts 10:44)*

(Rptd Wed. 2-5-0-6) At Christmas time in 1962 I accepted an invitation to spend the holiday in Virginia with the family of a friend. Driving out of Boston we listened to the broadcast from the Park Street Church. Dr. Harold Ockenga told how the Holy Spirit had transformed his ministry. He narrated his turning away from self-reliance to trust in the presence and power of the Spirit. Ockenga described a profound personal transaction. After that time whenever he opened the Bible God spoke to him in a way he had not spoken before. The Spirit ceased to be words in a creedal statement. Now God the Spirit was doing the will of Christ in Dr. Ockenga. That was four years before God called me to preach, but what the Park Street pastor said that night forty-one years ago awakened my desire for his experience. Before we were out of broadcast range I asked the Lord to do in me what he was doing in Dr. Ockenga. For thirty-five years I have watched while the Holy Spirit has used my own preaching to bring new life to the Byfield Parish Church.

To Do:

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The Holy Spirit is in every believer. “Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.” (Rm. 8:9) Jesus prepared his disciples to live life on a level they had never before experienced. He said, “These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (Jn. 14:25,26) Also Christ said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you in my name.” (16:23) The Holy Spirit is indispensable to doing the will of Christ. For this reason the apostles were not to depart on their world mission until the Spirit had come. “And while staying with them he (Christ) charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise (the Holy Spirit) of the Father...” (Acts 1:4) If you are in Christ, then trust the Holy Spirit to do the will of God through you.

## Thursday

To Read: [Proverbs 12](#)

To Know:

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*“For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal. His praise is not from men but from God.” (Rm. 2:28,29)*

(RPTD Thurs. 2-5-06) What makes the Germans German or the French French? How do nations develop? People around the earth differ from each other according to inherited traits. America is a different story. We are a melting pot. Americans are not one by blood but by a shared belief. We, the people of the United States, are bound together, not by blood, but by words. Our roots reside in a common confession. Lincoln gave us a snapshot of ourselves when he said, “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” Lincoln was right; we are a people bound together by a proposition.

Scripture shaped the men and women who transformed the American wilderness. They thought biblically. The descendants of Abraham became God’s nation at Mount Sinai. At that place God gave to Abraham’s family the ten commandments to be their constitution. Being an Israelite is more than being a Jew. He is a true Israelite who has a love for God’s law in the heart. Faith, not blood, created the people of God.

To Do:

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The men and women at Plymouth in 1620 believed that coming here was God’s will. Those who planted the “American Way” in North America almost 400 years ago obeyed biblical principles. Free speech, the consent of the governed, and the affirmation of individual dignity came from the Bible. Because the scripture shaped our American character we have enjoyed the fruit of liberty. The United States of America may not be the kingdom of God, but we certainly do profit from the most beneficial form of government ever known in human history.

## Friday

To Read: [Proverbs 13](#)

To Know:

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*Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. But there were some of them, the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 11:19-20)*

(rptd Fri. 2-5-06) “Is there any limit to what God will do in the life of a person who does not need the glory? Most of the earliest preachers of the gospel remain unknown to us. We do know that Peter established a beachhead for the good news outside Israel by preaching to Cornelius and that Paul was the first to take the gospel to Europe. Regarding the cadre of believing men and women who told of the cross of Christ wherever they went, we know nearly nothing. These unheralded and unsung heroes of the faith created a civilization. For this the glory rightly goes to God.

Self is a hard taskmaster. Christ came to set us free from the slavery to self. When we are released to love Christ with the love we once lavished on ourselves, then we will tell the world about him. When Christ is exalted and we are abased, then we will be astounded at the fruit that our lives will produce.

To Read:

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1. Saturday: [Proverbs 14](#)
2. Sunday: [Proverbs 15](#)

