



Week of Consecration Daily Devotional

May 22nd-28th 2022

Week of Consecration

Hope Church 2022

We are about to enter a new season of kingdom living and kingdom building as we seek to embrace the vision God has given us as Hope Church. It is therefore essential that we prepare ourselves, mind, body and spirit, through a week of consecration.

Consecration can be described as a way to purify or sanctify something, to set something apart for God or make it holy. As Christians we believe that there is only One who is holy and that is God himself – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, through his amazing love, forgiveness, grace and mercy we too are being transformed into becoming like him, through Jesus, His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

This week provides us with the opportunity to answer God's call to consecrate ourselves, to allow him to search us and to reveal if there are any parts of our lives that need to change. This means making a conscious, willing decision to dedicate our heart, soul, mind and body to him. This decision must be one of will, intelligence and affection. Throughout the week we will be using the image of the body to help us in our reflections.

In 1 Peter 2:9, Peter writes

'But you... are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.'

Each of us, as God's chosen people, can show others the goodness of God. What a privilege and what a responsibility! In Latin the word for Priest is 'pontifex' which literally means 'bridge-builder'. As together we build bridges into our community, let's begin by being the best me/us that we can be.

Although this is primarily a personal journey, it may be helpful to find a fellow traveller – a friend, spouse or family member- to share with for some intentional accountability. Jeremiah 17:9 warns us that 'the heart is deceitful above all things' and it is easy to leave some stones unturned as we convince ourselves that something is ok when it is not. This is one of the enemy's greatest ploys, so be on your guard and keep your heart and mind fully open to God.

Over the next seven days there is a daily devotional leading up to our first gathering as Hope Church in the new building on Sunday 29th May.

We invite you to join us on this journey of choosing to dedicate ourselves afresh, to set ourselves apart to God and for him and his kingdom purposes in Dawlish, Devon and beyond!

Date	Sunday 22 May
<p style="text-align: center;">‘Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.” Joshua 3:5</p>	
Devotional	<p>As they were about to enter the Promised Land, Joshua called the people to consecrate themselves as a preparation for what God was about to do. That consecration involved the washing of clothes and bodies (see Exodus 19:10-11) to purify themselves on the outside. According to Old Testament law, people could become unclean for many reasons: such as eating certain foods (Leviticus 11), through disease (Leviticus 13) or by touching a dead person (Numbers 19:11-22). God used these outward signs of being unclean to illustrate being unclean on the inside as a result of sin.</p> <p>We worship a holy and awesome God and are called to be holy ourselves (1Peter 1:15-16), to set ourselves apart for God, dedicating our whole bodies and lives to him. Psalm 24:4 asks who may ascend the hill of the Lord? The answer is the one with clean hands and a pure heart – clean both on the outside and the inside. So as we begin this week of consecration, how ‘clean’ are you? Let's begin by thanking God for His work in our lives through His amazing love and grace. Having done this, may we then begin our journey of consecration together by inviting God to come and search us mind, body, heart and soul, and show us ‘any offensive way’ in us (Psalm 139:23-24), so that we can confess it to him today (I John 1:8-9).</p> <p>Where do you need to ‘set yourself apart’ for God? Our humility is key. What steps do you need to take today to dedicate or rededicate yourself to him?</p>
Further reading	Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2; Isaiah 6:1-4; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 1:4;
Prayer	<p>Prayer of Consecration</p> <p>O Lord, may nothing dwell in my soul but your pure love alone. Till every thought, word and act be love. Yes Lord, may your love possess me whole; you’re my joy, my treasure, my crown!</p> <p>John Wesley paraphrased by Bill Gaultiere</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Monday 23 May
<p>Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 Peter 1:13-16 (NIV, 1984 version)</p>	
Devotional The Mind	<p>Controlling our minds can be a challenge. There are so many 'voices' speaking to us each day that can distract us from choosing to live in obedience to God. The voices we listen to encourage the thoughts that develop our beliefs, values and attitudes, and ultimately our actions. What we do is as a result of what we are thinking. Paul reminds us that to live a life set apart for God we need to be self-controlled and that self-control begins in our thoughts.</p> <p>What 'voices' are you listening to? Who or what are the biggest influences in your life right now? Where might you be saying 'I can't' or 'I won't' because your beliefs have been shaped by them? Romans 12:2 reminds us that if we offer our lives to him, God will come and work within us by his Spirit, to transform our thinking. He can replace lies with the truth, fear with peace; we become a new creation under the loving guidance of the Holy Spirit, set apart to become kingdom builders for God. Where might you need to invite him in, to help with the 'renewing of your mind?' (Romans 12:1-2)</p> <p>For some of us, choosing to escape into a fantasy world when life becomes tough can distance us from God. Where might this be a challenge for you and what needs to be done to choose to face reality?</p>
Further reading	Mark 12:30; Romans 7:22-25; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Timothy 1:18-19
Prayer	<p>Use this Psalm today as a reminder of God's grace and love and commitment to all those who turn to him:</p> <p>The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. Psalm 103:8-12</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Tuesday 24 May
<p style="text-align: center;">Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matthew 16:23</p>	
<p>Devotional</p> <p>The Eyes</p>	<p>Today we turn to consecrating our eyes. A few years ago a film was released called ‘Vantage Point’. It followed a particular incident that many people experienced simultaneously. The same incident was then replayed through the eyes of each character in turn, seeing different perspectives of the same thing. The problem is that when we don’t have the full picture we can make assumptions and those assumptions can bring us to the wrong conclusion, just as the characters in the film did.</p> <p>When Jesus tells his disciples about how he must suffer and die, Peter begins to reprimand him. He does not see things as Jesus does. He doesn’t understand the full picture. Notice Jesus’ strong response. Peter’s assumption that Jesus was wrong, was like Satan saying to Eve in the Garden of Eden ‘did God really say...?’ creating an opportunity for doubting God, undermining his character, authority and word. To be a holy people we must try not to make assumptions but learn to see things through God’s eyes rather than our own. We need soft spiritual eyes that see further and wider.</p> <p>As we seek to consecrate ourselves this week, let’s examine ourselves and ask God to show us where we have been seeing things from the wrong perspective. Ask him to show you where you have been making assumptions. Perhaps this has caused a relationship to break down or become distant and maybe now is the time to do something about it - to find out the other side of the story, to start a conversation, ask for forgiveness, to forgive...</p> <p>As well as perspective, there can also be things we chose to look at which, put quite simply, are unholy! Keeping a short account with God in this area is essential for us all and we encourage you to be honest with yourself (and possibly another) in this matter. For some this can become an addictive behaviour, so further help may also be necessary in overcoming this challenge. Let’s consecrate our physical and spiritual eyes to God today.</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>2 Samuel 11: 1-5; Proverbs 4:25; Luke 6:41; Hebrews 12:1-2</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Lord, open the eyes of my heart that I may see things as you do; that I may be enlightened in order to know the hope to which I have been called by you, the riches of your glorious inheritance in us, your holy people, and your incomparably great power for us who believe. Amen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Adapted from Ephesians 1:16-19</i></p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Wednesday 25 May
<p>Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">James 3:5</p>	
<p>Devotional</p> <p>The Tongue</p>	<p>Today we think about our mouths and how we communicate with one another - not just with our spoken words but also with our written ones - texts, emails, notes and letters. James reminds us that our words have great power - power to build up as well as to tear down.</p> <p>If Hope Church is to be known as a grace-filled community our communication needs to be full of grace, hope and light. We need to remember to THINK before we speak or write a word. Is what I am about to say</p> <p>True Helpful Inspiring Necessary Kind</p> <p>How healthy is your tongue? Do your words, both spoken and written, tend to be encouraging or critical? Are you easily given to hearsay and gossip?</p> <p>Invite the Holy Spirit to come and cleanse your mouth and take control of your tongue (Isaiah 6:1-7) so that we love each other well.</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>Proverbs 16:28; Proverbs 18:8; Matthew 5:33-37; Ephesians 4:29; James 3:1-12;</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Lord, I know my tongue often gets ahead of my mind and heart. I am quick to speak and I repent of the many thoughtless things I have spoken. I am sorry for words I have spoken in anger or in gossip. Please help me to see when I am about to speak without thinking and to check my heart. Help me be slow to speak. Help me Lord to be a person full of loving words, full of your Spirit, overflowing with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness and self control. Amen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">A prayer from 'A Prayer to guard your tongue' by Debbie Przybylski</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Thursday 26 May
<p style="text-align: center;">Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proverbs 4:23</p>	
<p>Devotional The Heart</p>	<p>Solomon is believed to have written these words near the beginning of his reign, nearly 1000 years before Jesus was born. He knew that the heart is where our feelings and desires live and that what we desire most of all will shape the way we live. One of the most incredible doctrines or foundational beliefs of the Christian faith is that when we invite him in, Jesus Christ will by his Spirit enter our hearts and make his home there (John 14:23). From there he will reveal the truth to us and empower us to live as Jesus did, transforming us from the inside out.</p> <p>From a physiological perspective, the human heart serves to bring life to the whole body. In a similar way, our spiritual heart provides spiritual health and so needs to be healthy at all times. It is so easy to allow jealousy, bitterness and resentment to change our hearts from being flesh-like to become hard. So, what condition is your heart in today? Is it healthy and therefore bringing life to the rest of your body, or is it in need of de-clogging? Invite the Holy Spirit to both inspect and cleanse your heart and set a divine guard over it.</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>Deuteronomy 6:4-5; 1 Samuel 16:7; Mark 12:30; Luke 6:45;</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Father, I give you my heart today. Would you make my heart soft and forgiving, full of compassion for others. Show me where I may need to forgive and help me to have the courage to do so. Give me an undivided heart that is devoted to you and set a guard over it, by your Spirit to protect it. Lord in your mercy, hear my prayer. Amen.</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Friday 27 May
<p>'The wife of noble character...opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy' Proverbs 31:1, 20</p>	
<p>Devotional The Hands</p>	<p>Today we will think about our hands. Although these verses speak of the wife of noble character, they remind us that as followers of Jesus, God calls us all to extend our hands to those who are in need (Matthew 10:8; James 1:27). To be able to share with others what God has given us, be that time, talents, finances etc, can be such a joy. At Hope Church, our vision is clear - more people, more like Jesus, in more places. Time and time again we read of how Jesus extended his hand to those he came in contact with, be that to heal; to uphold; to deliver; to love, to forgive.</p> <p>As we continue to consecrate ourselves to God, once again invite the Holy Spirit to show you anything that you might be keeping hold of with a tight grip. Is this something that belongs to you or is it for sharing? If the latter, what will it take for you to open your hand and lovingly share this with others to the glory of God?</p> <p>God has given us all gifts that we can use to minister to or serve others. These gifts are meant to be given away to build the church and bless our community. What gifts have you been given? How are you/could you use them to build Hope Church and serve the community? Where have you had a nudge from God but have been saying 'no' to him? Ask him today how he wants to use you and step out in faith.</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Matthew 10:8</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you, praised for you or criticised for you. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service. And now, O wonderful and holy God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, you are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it also be made in heaven. Amen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">John Wesley, Covenant Prayer</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

Date	Saturday 28 May
<p>For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Romans 10:13-15</p>	
<p>Devotional</p> <p>The Feet</p>	<p>On this final day of consecration, our focus is on our feet. Take a moment and look down at your feet. For some this will be an ok experience whilst for others, the years may have taken their toll and our feet are not quite as beautiful as they once were!!</p> <p>As an apostle (Gk. <i>'a sent one'</i>) Paul urges his listeners to go and share the good news of Jesus with others. In quoting Isaiah the prophet (Is. 52:7) he says, ‘how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’ For some, this seems a very natural thing to do. For others, our feet seem to get stuck and we’re far more comfortable spending our lives in the company of other Christians, often for fear of not knowing what to say or simply being rejected. As followers of Jesus, all of us are called to go and share our faith so that others may come to know Him too. The key words there being ‘to go.’</p> <p>In his book, ‘Just walk across the room’, Bill Hybels encourages Christians to positively impact others’ lives by simply leaving their circle of comfort and reaching out to others, extending their hands of care, compassion and inclusiveness to those living far from God. Just a few steps could make an eternal difference. All you need is a heart that is in tune with the Holy Spirit and a willingness to share the love of Jesus with another human being.</p> <p>A new season of mission is upon us with immense opportunities to reach out to our community! Today, will you choose to join the call to consecrate your feet by saying to the Lord, ‘here am I, send me!’ (Isaiah 6:8)</p>
<p>Further reading</p>	<p>Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10: 13-15; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 6:10-11</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>As we conclude this week of consecration, we finish by praying through an adaptation of Psalm 51:8-12:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Heavenly Father I ask that you would give me back my joy again; you have shown me where I have let you down but now let me rejoice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you that you don’t keep looking at my sins and have removed the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Do not keep me from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Amen.</p>

My notes

What is God saying to me?

