

# Middle School PreTrip Devotional Packet



**CHICAGO**

# A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH PASTOR

Welcome to the Chicago 2019 Pre-Trip Devotional Packet. Each devotional is written by a mission trip participant (except the first 3 are written by Rachel, Samantha, and Hope Eriks who won't be attending the mission trip but were willing to still write a devotional. Please pray for them and message them too). It's so exciting to think that each person going on the trip has already started thinking and praying about the trip (by writing their devotional), and that each of us will be preparing for 23 days leading up to this trip! I expect God to bless this preparation in huge ways!

## **Instructions for using this devotional packet:**

1. Read each devotional on the date at the top of each page.\*

2. Pray for the person who wrote the devotional. Prayer tips:

That God would speak through these devotionals and prepare them for this trip.

That this trip would be an encouragement in their spiritual life.

That they would connect with God in deep ways during worship.

That they would give all of themselves to God in service.

That they would be an encouragement to others.

That they would see God in other people and tell them that.

That they would deepen their relationships with people in our youth group.

That they would develop, even more, a caring, compassionate heart for others.

That this trip would lead to life change after the trip.

That they would have SO much fun.

That they would keep a positive attitude and help others to stay positive too.

That they would understand God in a new way.

That God would speak to them through others.

That they would be willing to try new things.

That other people would enjoy their company.

That they would find times to connect with adult leaders.

For safety and good health.

That they would be hungry spiritually for God before, during, and after the trip.

3. Text/Email/Message the person who wrote the devotional, letting them know you prayed for them. This can be as simple as saying, "I prayed for you today" or you could write out what you actually prayed for them. (parents, its up to you if you want to text them)

**\*If you get behind in doing these devotionals, don't quit. Simply catch up, and text people, "Sorry, I got a little behind, but I prayed for you." Feel free to work ahead too if you will be gone on vacation and not have internet access.**

**You need to do them all and message everyone before getting in the vans to leave on June 23.**

**If you haven't done the devotionals and messaged everyone by then, you will have to spend some time alone at the beginning of trip writing out prayers to the people you missed.**

## May 31 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### What Do Our Words Say About Us?

Rachel Eriks

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“The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.” --  
Proverbs 15:4



How often do we think about the words we say, the way in which we say those words, and how those words will affect others? Think of a balloon on a weighted string filled with helium, how it rises and stands tall, looking cheerful and happy. Our kind, encouraging, helpful words are like a freshly-filled balloon. Hopeful, encouraging words say to others, “I notice you. I value you. I care about you.”



Have you ever said something you wish you could take back because of how you hurt someone? When we say, email, or text someone hurtful words, the Bible says we “crush the spirit.” I know that I have hurt those closest to me with unkind words, and I have watched first-hand how I have played a part in crushing their spirit. I wish I could take those words back!

As we think about the upcoming mission trip to Chicago, let’s ask God to help us use our words wisely to help build others up and give them encouragement, both on the mission trip and throughout our daily lives.

**Challenge:** Take 5 minutes to write a note of encouragement to someone in your life!

**Prayer:** *Dear God, you are the God of grace and of hope. Thank you for creating each of us and for giving us a place in this world. Help us to honor you by speaking words that give hope and encouragement to those around us. When we fail and speak unkind words that “crush the spirit,” help us to confess this to you and to seek forgiveness from those we have hurt by apologizing sincerely. When others hurt us with unkind words, God, help us to forgive them and still show love to them.*

**For Fun:** Watch Kid President’s “20 Things We Should Say More Often” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5yCOSHeYn4>

## June 1 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### Sharing the Hope We Have

Samantha Eriks

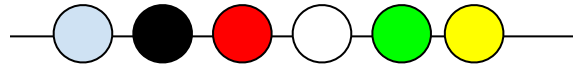
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When Hope and I went on a Mission Trip to Mexico this winter, we saw things that we had never seen before. It was eye-opening. Poverty, faith, a community coming together are just some to share. It was an amazing experience and we ended each day with devotions at dinner to talk about our experiences. The theme for these devotions was faith (and sharing it with others). On Sunday (the first official day) we made a bracelet. The bracelet had six beads on it and represented the key aspects of our faith.



Every day, we wore these bracelets as a way to have a conversation starter about our faith. It wasn't complicated, it was easy to explain. The story of the bracelet went like this:

**Blue (Oceans and Skies):** God created the World and it was good

**Black:** Sin entered the world

**Red:** God sent his Son into the World and covered up the sin

**White:** We are now saved

**Green:** We have a green light to GO and tell people about Jesus

**Yellow:** We will spend eternity with our savior

In the Bible, there are many examples of people sharing their faith but I think sometimes we find it hard to strike up a conversation... (I know I do) How do we tell our peers about Jesus? What should we say? How will people react? This is the blessing mission trips give us, the opportunity to share our faith. We have such incredible news to share, and we need to tell people.

On the final day of the trip to Mexico, we (Hope, my cousin and I) were able to share the story of these bracelets with the kids who we built the house for. It was a great experience and I know those kids will treasure the bracelets they got but they will also treasure the story. I treasure the bracelet I have because it reminds me....

**Sharing our faith does not have to be COMPLICATED,  
It's a blessing we know about Jesus and can share it with  
others.**

In Psalm 96: 2-3 it says "Sing to the LORD; praise his name. *Each day proclaim the good news that he saves. Publish his glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.*"

Dear God, Please help me to share my faith and the hope I have in you with others, that I would not be afraid about what will happen or the questions they might ask. Please give me the words when the time is right and use them to help others know you. As we get ready to step into new experiences, help us to use them to share about you. Amen.

## June 2 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### Trusting God in your Fear

By: Hope Eriks

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I remember when Samantha, my cousin Tana, and I went to Mexico on a mission trip to help the people over there by building a house for a family. I was scared to be so far away from home, and I was scared I wouldn't be able to help the people there or fulfill their needs. But when I went to Mexico, I realized God would help me the whole way, and he did. I put my trust in God, and he made me realize that he was always watching over me and everyone else in Mexico. I ended my mission trip knowing that God had a plan.

I know God will help you and me with our fears when we trust in him.

The verse I chose was Psalm 56:3, it says, **When I am afraid I put my trust in you.** So, when we are on this mission trip, we should give our fear and our concerns to God, and trust in his plan for us.

Chorus of **Trust, By: Hillsong Young and Free**

Jesus I will trust You

I will trust you

I know you never fail

I will trust you

Jesus I will

Jesus I will

This is a link for the full song (Trust by Hillsong Young and Free):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=En4LGz5N8T8>

Prayer: Dear God, I pray that when we are afraid on this mission trip we would put our trust in you, and remember that, no matter what, you have a plan, and you are always watching over us.

## June 3 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

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### Bible Verse:

Philippians 2:13-17 New Living Translation (NLT)

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God, just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy.

While on our mission trip we will be serving others. The work we will be doing may be hard or boring. By the end of the week, we will be tired and won't feel like doing much. Instead of quitting and complaining we need to remember who we are doing it for. God needs our willing hearts. It might not be easy but complaining never makes anything easier. We should work with open hearts and minds. All our work will be worth the difference that we are making. Back in 2011, while I was on a mission trip my group's job every day was to go around the city and pull weeds. Not just small sections, huge hills, and gardens full of weeds. We all hated it at first, my group was over the whole idea of yard work. Until our group leader decided let's make it fun, so we decided to see who could pull more or who the fastest person was. In the end, we realized how much work we had done and how beautiful we were making the areas become. Just by changing our attitude the work became better. The work we will be doing in Chicago should make us feel good, so let's remember to keep a positive attitude and work hard for God.

Song: Send Me Out - by Fee

Pray: That we change the lives of the people we will be serving and that we are prepared to work. That we focus on those around us and remember that we are working for God.

## June 4 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

**Helping others**  
**abigailursiny@gpsbulldogs.org**

— Proverbs 22:22-23

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you"—when you already have it with you.

When I was in 6 grade i rode a bus with a 4th grader and it was winter. Her coat was not in the greatest condition. It had holes and rips and tears and it was dirty I asked her if the was getting another coat anytime soon and she said no because her mom could not afford one. So I went home and asked my mom what we could do and we decided that we could give her one of my coats and i just grew out of one that I hardly wore. And when i gave it to her she was so and thankful.

Prayer:

Dear God please help me to do this again and and help others that are less fortunate than us. Amen

[Happiness is helping others - YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcrulov45bl>

1.



1.

▶ 3:06

## June 5 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# Rich and the Kingdom of God

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### Luke 18:18-29

**18** A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**19** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. **20** You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’[a]”

**21** “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

**22** When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

**23** When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. **24** Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! **25** Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

**26** Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?”

**27** Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

**28** Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!”

**29** “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God **30** will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

When I was seven years old, we played a particular game in the car. It was called, “Hey cow!” Simple rules: When you see a cow you open the windows and yell, “Hey cow!” If the cow looks up, you score a point. Most points wins. So the family was playing this game and not once did a cow look up. I gave up, my brothers gave up. After passing through multiple states over the course of ten hours, my dad was the only one doing it. He never gave up on that cow to look up.

How does this relate to following God? We all must give up everything to stand up and follow Jesus. This rich man loved his stuff, which prevented him from following. I gave up on yelling at cows, which prevented me from seeing that cow perk up. We need to truly give up everything we have and follow. Don't be the rich man. Don't be me quitting “Hey cow!” Drop all your idols and desires and follow.

*Dear God,*

*We pray that everyone on the mission trip will forget about our riches, desires, wants, and idols. We pray that with you we can truly get to know you without these desires. We pray we can help others without these desires,*

*Amen.*



## June 6 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### God's Marvelous Plan

By Hannah Frost

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Ephesians 3:20-21

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever"

This passage means: Christ Jesus wants everyone old and young to hear his word, and all praise him together. The youth will be the new generation to continue praising Jesus and keeping his love and power alive.

I recently attended the one heart conference at Reslife church. I was able to share this amazing weekend of worship and praise with friends and many other youth members. My favorite part was when the speaker Robbie Dawkins, talked about his Mom standing in a basket offering herself to Jesus and what he asked her to do. Generation to generation his family has held on to this story and the word of Jesus. His Mom was the glory in the church her young age didn't matter because with Jesus all things are possible. Jesus wants everyone to be his soldiers to hear his word and to teach the next generation how to worship and pray to keep his glory alive.

On this mission trip, I pray that myself and all the youth group member feel his love, hear his praise, and see his power. We shall be the glory in his church.

Dear God, thank you for the opportunity to serve you and others during this mission trip. Please provide us with your guidance and courage to do all that you ask us to do. The ability to feel closer to you through worship and serving you through others. Amen.

[Ephesians 3:20-21](#) | [ESV](#)

## June 7 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# Little Prayers

By Braylon VanWyk  
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During sixth grade camp I prayed to god a lot when I was scared or out of my comfort zone like when I went on the flying squirrel and the zip line I prayed a lot because I was scared and I knew he would look after me. I also prayed at night and at every meal because no matter where you are God is always with you And he will watch over you no matter what.

My favorite verse: Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."

Prayer: God please help all the people in the world that have struggled or are struggling with things and help them power through and find you through us.

## June 8 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# The Fall

By: Noah Zondervan

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Genesis 3:1-7 new international version (NIV)

Song: Genesis 3:6-7 <https://youtu.be/c6VwAfJhoBs>

**3** Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

**2** The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

**4** "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5** "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

**6** When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Thoughts: Many people do devotions because they have to and others do it for the love of God and because they want to worship him. Doing devotions more helps you be able to do them with ease instead of struggling on one when you have to.

Prayer: Dear God I pray for my youth group and that we have a fun safe time in Chicago and that we get to know you better and become closer to you in our lives and worship you with more meaning. Amen.

## June 9 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# Being Brave

By: Reagan Davis

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Psalm 27:1

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?"

This is saying there is nothing we can not do because we have god right next to our side guiding us. On this trip you might have to do things that you are not super comfortable with but remember that god is right next to you.

Song: [Whom Shall I Fear \(God of Angel Armies\)](#) by Chris Tomlin

Prayer

Dear God, help us remember that you are right next to us the whole trip.

## June 10 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### Do What Is Good

By: Tom MacGraw

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Titus 3:1-2 (MSG) Remind the people to respect the government and be law-abiding, always ready to lend a helping hand. No insults, no fights. God's people should be bighearted and courteous.

There are 4 big things being pointed out in these verses.

- 1) We should be law-abiding and respect our government, even if we don't agree.
  - a. Romans 13 talks about submitting to all governing authorities, because all authority comes from God. God placed people in authority for a reason, and it isn't for us to know that reason, but we should still submit to, and follow the laws given. This also means you should listen to and follow your parents' rules, since they are a governing authority over you.
- 2) We should always be ready to help someone in need.
  - a. Remember that the point of our trip is to help others.
- 3) We should hold our tongues and our fists from others.
  - a. Our words and actions should build people up, not tear them down. You never know what someone is going through and what hope they may find in kind words and actions, but hurtful words will always bring pain.
- 4) We should be kind and show mercy to everyone
  - a. The New Living Translation puts it like this. "Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone." We will be meeting people on our trip that come from a very different place than you and me. You may meet kids that only have 1 parent, or a kid that has no parents at all. You may meet someone who is homeless and living on the street. Our job is to meet people where they are, to be kind and show them love.

On my second trip as a youth leader we went to Toronto, Canada. We used the same organization for that trip (Center For Student Missions), so it was nearly identical to the Chicago trip. One of our evenings we went out into the city and they brought us to shores of Lake Ontario. There we met a homeless man that many of the CSM groups meet, and he told us his story. He lived a pretty normal life, had a house, I think he even had a wife at one point. Then he lost his job, lost his house, and ended up on the street. He didn't do anything wrong to lose his job, it was just gone. He tried to pay his bills, he just couldn't. And now he goes from shelter to shelter or sleeps outside. Many of us think of homeless people as either lazy people or people who have made bad choices and ended up on the street. After I heard his story, it hit me that I had been judging people without knowing anything about them. It is still a challenge for me to not judge someone based on look alone, and it is something I don't want any of us to do while in Chicago, because we have no clue what someone else's story is until we ask.

Pray for the people we will meet on our trip. Pray that they will feel loved and not judged. Pray that we find many words of encouragement for everyone else on the trip, and that we don't get on each other's nerves or bicker. Pray for those you submit to (parents, teachers, youth group leaders, police, politicians), that they listen to what God is calling them to do and that they also submit to Him.

## June 11 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### Strength

By: Emily Verbrugge

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I'm feeling very excited and a little nervous about going on my first mission trip. There are going to be new places to visit, new tasks to do, new people to meet & new foods to try. Getting out of our comfort bubble will challenge us a lot. So, I thought I would remind us all of Who will give us the courage to do it. God.

“I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13

God is giving us the chance to visit Chicago. He is giving us the chance to experiencing something new. He is giving us an opportunity to show others what His love is all about. I've been encouraged by my family members who have gone on lots of other mission trips to go with the flow, do everything asked of me and to try everything new, because the opportunity may not happen again. I think that is important advice for all of us. Yes, stepping out of our comfort bubble can be scary but the feeling we get is amazing when God helps us to do something we didn't think we could.

Prayer:

God, I thank you for things like animals, plants & people that make the world so interesting and full of joy. I pray that everyone who is going on the Chicago mission trip will be willing to lean on your strength and have the courage to try everything even when it is hard. Amen.

## June 12 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

Forgiving Others

By: Sydney Mott

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Matthew 6:14-15

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

This means that we should always forgive others even if we don't want to, because God forgave us and will always forgive us. On this trip we should express forgiveness to all the people who may have hurt us and share God's forgiveness and love with others. Also we should not forget the great love God shows us by forgiving our sins.

Dear God, I pray that we can all show forgiveness to everyone who has sinned against you, excluded your friends and family. I pray we can grow closer to you through serving you and I hope that we can grow closer together as a group. Thank you for forgiving us and please help us forgive each other. Amen

Song: [Forgive Me](#) by Tenth Avenue North

## June 13 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

NEVER GIVE UP!!!

By Taylor DeVries

find me by...

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“But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded”

2 Chronicles 15:7

This shows to never give up and it will pay off.

WATCH THIS (DON'T GIVE UP | GREAT Motivational Speech | Jeremy Anderson)

<https://binged.it/2GbSwVF>

Dear God, Show us on our mission trip what we have to do to never quit and push ourself to keep going when we don't think we can do things.



## June 14 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

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# JOY

Joy: a noun a feeling of great pleasure and happiness.

Verb: rejoice.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

I often ask my co-workers, family and friends where do you find joy? Is it being around people you love? Is it sitting down and reading a book? I often think that we look for joy in the wrong things such as possessions, electronics, vacations, cars, social media, Instagram likes etc. While some of those things make us feel happy or joy for a moment they really can distract us from the 1 thing that truly gives us joy. Being in relationship with others and Jesus truly brings me joy yet so many times I find myself looking for it elsewhere. I long to connect with our creator on a daily basis and share that with my friends, family and coworkers. So I'm sure I will ask some, probably most of you during this mission trip what brings you joy and how can I walk with you through some of the things that distract you? So think about this as you are preparing for this mission trip.

Listen to "[You are Joy](#)" by Warr Acres. This song talks about through it all, trials and storms we will give you praise. He is good, He is joy.

Please pray with me, Dear Jesus thank you for this day, thank you for the mission trip that you have planned for us, May we find joy in everything that we do, you are our greatest joy. We love you so much. Amen

## June 15 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### Loving Others By Amaris Demaray

Email [micheledem@ymail.com](mailto:micheledem@ymail.com)

John 5:2

By this we know That we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments.

Song: [You say](#)- by Lauren Daigle

Have you ever had that feeling you're just not good enough? That everyone is talking about you and picking out all your faults? I'm pretty sure this feeling has come over every middle schooler. I know it has for me. I have this feeling all the time. That people are judging my looks, my clothes, personality, everything. One time I was sitting in class and I looked at the girls and they looked at me. They kept whispering and laughing when they looked at me. I simply tried to ignore them but it was hard. I know I should've thought of it this way, God created me if he didn't love me or think I wasn't good enough why would he waste his time. God never thinks you're not good enough for him you're perfect and he loves you with all of his heart. Sometimes it's hard but you just have to love people even when they give you a hard time. Please love everyone especially the people who are not kind they need your love the most.

Prayer: dear God please help everyone who is feeling judged. Please help them overcome it. Please help them realize that they are beautiful and please let everyone be loved on this trip

Amen

## June 16 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

Jeremy Zoet

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### Dikaiosune

#### **Scripture:**

Matthew 5:6

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled.” (The words of Jesus)

#### **Thoughts:**

When the Bible gets translated from its original language, we, as English speaking people, often miss what is really being said. In this passage, the word for “*righteousness*” is the Greek word *dikaiosune* (pronounced dih-ky-oh-SUE-nay). While this is an accurate translation, there is more to this word. It also is talking about God’s just rule, or God’s justice. This is the same word that’s used in Matthew 6:33, “But seek first his kingdom and his *dikaiosune*, and all these things will be given to you as well.” When we hear righteousness, we tend to think of living right or being good. But what if we thought of righteousness as more than “right living” *and* more of a heart for *justice* (God’s kingdom meeting the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical needs of others)?

This passage also starts with hungering and thirsting. Think of a time you’ve been extremely hungry or thirsty. Maybe you ran a 5k for cross country at an away meet and you forgot your water bottle. Maybe you had to do homework or had a meeting during lunch period and had no lunch or snacks until you got home. Maybe you played mid-field at your soccer game and ran the length of the field what seems like a hundred times and you get home and there is “nothing to eat.” In these moments there’s somewhat of a sense of desperation to quench our hunger and thirst. We ache and long for food and water. We simply need it and will do whatever it takes to get what we need.

What if we long for God’s kingdom to meet the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical needs of others in this same way? What if we will do whatever it takes to have these needs met in others?

My hope for every mission trip, is that our eyes are open to the injustices of the world, and that we want to see God’s kingdom bring about justice - through us and others. So, on this trip, may we long for right living and justice for us and the people we meet. And may we go home after this trip with a hunger and thirst for *dikaiosune* and do whatever it takes to quench it.

#### **Prayer:**

God, give us a heart like yours. Give us a hunger and thirst for right living and justice. And as we hunger and thirst for it, may we be filled. May you use us and the organizations we partner with to bring right living and justice to the city we serve in and back home.

Listen to **Surely We Can Change** by David Crowder Band

## **June 17 Chicago PreTrip Devotional**

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

### **Giving Over**

Ian Lobbes

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#### **Scripture: Romans 12:1-2**

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

#### **My interpretation of this passage:**

This passage is stating that in order to spread God’s word one must be able to give oneself over to God.

### **Questions**

1. What is your interpretation of this passage?
  
2. What is one thing that people can gain from this passage?

#### **Prayer:**

God, I pray that on this trip that we can not be distracted by our day to day lives and be able to spread your word.

## June 18 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# God's Miraculous Love

By: Kaylee Anthony

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Romans 5:8 New International Version (NIV)

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

February of 2018, i went through a hard time with friendships and school. After school I was always wanting to be alone and nothing could seem to make me happy anymore. My parents ended up getting me in to see a counselor and I found out I had depression. After that, i had to go to counseling for a while. During that time, I found myself listening to a lot of christian music, it was the only thing that would put me in a good mood. God loves each and everyone of us so much. He sacrificed his own life to save us.

Listen to the song "[How he loves](#)" by David Drowder

He is jealous for me, Loves like a hurricane, I am a tree,

Bending beneath the weight of his wind and mercy.

When all of a sudden, I am unaware of these afflictions eclipsed by glory,

And I realize just how beautiful You are,

And how great Your affections are for me.

Prayer: Dear god, thank you for this opportunity to be able to go on this mission trip and be able to serve people in your name. I pray that we will be able to connect with each other and help people in need. Let us be able to see how much you love us. Amen.

## June 19 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

# GOD'S LOVE

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So as we look forward to another amazing trip. I could not be more thankful for the opportunity to embark on an adventure with all of you. I've been a youth leader at Zion since 2009 and the first 5 years I was a middle school leader. As a high school youth leader, I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you on this trip and can't wait to have you in high school youth group!

When I was growing up when I was asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" My answer was always, "A Mom." I never had dreams of a big, time consuming, high pressure career. My main goal in life was to raise a family. Twenty one years ago my dream came true! It is everything I dreamed and prayed about and more. You really can not describe it but the love you have for your children is different than any other love you can have. It is so unconditional. It is not based on achievements, good deeds, or how your children love you. This is the love GOD has for us!

**"This is love! It is not that we loved God but that He loved us. For God sent his Son to pay for our sins with His blood." 1John 4:10**

**"See what great love the Father has for us that he would call us his children." 1John 3:1**

**"I will comfort you as one is comforted by his mother." Isaiah 66:13**

Over the years I have been called the "Mom" of the youth group. I have always taken that as an honor. Being a Mom means you love and care for people in a special way. I look forward to expressing that type of love on this trip.

As a parent you get to watch your kids grow and learn new things. As a youth leader I have been blessed to see the love of Christ grow in the youth.

As we go to Chicago, I pray we can show the Love of God the Father to each other, and those we will be working with.

**Dear God,**

**Thank you for the love you give us everyday! You have given us the gift of eternal life with you through your Son Jesus Christ. All you ask is we love you back.**

**Let us use the gifts and strengths you have given us to help the people of Chicago. I pray that your love will lead us in all we do, and will be evident to the people we meet.**

**Thank you for this opportunity! We Love You God! Amen.**

# June 20 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

Mathew VandenBos  
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Mark 12:30

“Love the lord with all your Heart, Soul, Mind, and strength”

What this passage means to me is that if you are saved, you should love the Lord with all of who you are.

Song (Cry out to Jesus by Third Day): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmVxRI5bc4Y>

## Lyrics:

To everyone who's lost someone they love	And love for the broken heart
Long before it was their time	And there is grace and forgiveness
You feel like the days you had were not enough	Mercy and healing
When you said goodbye	He'll meet you wherever you are
And to all of the people with burdens and pains	Cry out to Jesus
Keeping you back from your life	When you're lonely
You believe that there's nothing and there is no one	And it feels like the whole world is falling on you
Who can make it right	You just reach out, you just cry out to Jesus
There is hope for the helpless	Cry to Jesus
Rest for the weary	To the widow who suffers from being alone
And love for the broken heart	Wiping the tears from her eyes
And there is grace and forgiveness	And for the children around the world without a home
Mercy and healing	Say a prayer tonight
He'll meet you wherever you are	There is hope for the helpless
Cry out to Jesus	Rest for the weary
Cry out to Jesus	And love for the broken heart
For the marriage that's struggling just to hang on	And there is grace and forgiveness
They've lost all of their faith in love	Mercy and healing
And they've done all they can to make it right again, still it's not enough	He'll meet you wherever you are
For the ones who can't break the addictions and chains	There is hope for the helpless
You try to give up but you come back again	Rest for the weary
Just remember that you're not alone in your shame	And love for the broken heart
And your suffering	And there is grace and forgiveness
There is hope for the helpless	Mercy and healing
Rest for the weary	He'll meet you wherever you are
	Cry out to Jesus
	Cry out to Jesus
	Oh, cry out to Jesus
	Cry out to Jesus

## June 21 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

**Calum Leistra**  
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Last year I went on my first mission trip. We went to serve at BlackTop Rec. at Calvary Reformed in Holland, MI as helpers with their day camp students. One student, Thomwell, became special to me.

Thomwell liked to play basketball with me and I helped him with his learning work. On the last day of the trip we were planning on going to the pool, so everyone had their beach towels with them. Before we left for the pool, the kids had their learning time and Thomwell was cold. I gave him my beach towel and he fell asleep right in the middle of the circle. He curled up and was sound asleep for most of the class. I guess Thomwell was tired and felt safe enough to fall asleep right in the middle of us.

When the week was over I was sad to say “goodbye” to the kids, but especially sad to leave Thomwell.

When we believe in God we can feel safe, even when life stinks. God doesn't always make life easier, but He helps us through it. I hope that Thomwell grows up to believe in God and that I can see him again someday. For now, it was enough that we were friends and he felt safe with me.

Dear God, help me know that I'm safe with You, even when times are hard. Help me depend on you each and every day.

Psalm 91 MSG

**1-13** You who sit down in the High God's presence,  
spend the night in Shaddai's shadow,

Say this: “God, you're my refuge.

I trust in you and I'm safe!”

That's right—he rescues you from hidden traps,  
shields you from deadly hazards.

His huge outstretched arms protect you—  
under them you're perfectly safe;  
his arms fend off all harm.



## June 22 Chicago PreTrip Devotional

- I finished doing this devotional.
- I prayed for and sent this person a message

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# Look for the good in others

Jesus always saw the good in everyone around Him.

The bible verse that I chose is Matthew 9:9 *When Jesus saw Matthew, the tax collector, he saw the potential for good.*

I chose this verse because in that time it was bad to be a tax collector, yet Jesus picked Matthew to be His follower and that He knew that he would write the first gospel in the New Testament.

Jesus often chose people like Matthew, Simon Peter, and the Samaritan women as His followers. Others saw them as bad people and outcasts, but Jesus saw them as good.

Most people see what's bad about people first rather than the good. We need to see others like Jesus did.

My prayer I chose is: *Let us pray and be given Jesus' vision so that we can immediately see the good in others.*

Here is a poem that I chose to go with this: *Always pray to have eyes that see the best in people, a heart that forgives the worst, a mind that forgets the bad, and a soul that never loses faith in God.*

On our Chicago trip, I hope that I can see the good in others and that others can see the good in me.