



Words of Blessing

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Junior High School Weekly Words Pentecost Week 26: November 18, 2007

Living the Word

Acts 2:25-26 and 28 For David said about him, "I saw the Lord before me at all times; he is near me, and I will not be troubled. And so I am filled with gladness, and my words are full of joy. ... You have shown me the paths that lead to life, and your presence will fill me with joy."

Confidence

How do you gain confidence so that you can be the courageous and caring person that I know you can be? Through the Holy Spirit, who pours love and courage into your heart and gives you the confidence to face difficulties, rejection, illness, hurts, or loss. I will strengthen you to step out trusting that you can do it. I will fill you with confidence as you await the Holy Spirit—empowered moment of grace when you know you can do anything I ask you to do.

My child, I have a specific plan for you and every person. And with your yes I can fulfill that plan. No matter what needs you are asked to meet, the call you are challenged to accept, or the difficulties in your life, turn to me. Ask for my wisdom and love, and then believe I will give you all you need to see our plan fulfilled. Turn to me for the infilling strength and faith of the saints in my church. Let the Holy Spirit fill you with courage and wisdom of my mother Mary for every decision, situation, loss, need, or challenge. I will provide.

I see you looking for the call or ministry that you alone are called to do, the right place to be where you can do the work that will bring you joy. You can only find it through me. It is found when you let go and put your trust in me. Whatever you face or do, whatever loss, illness, or hurt you endure, you will be okay. The Bible is filled with stories of people like you who came to God, to me, facing struggles or impossible situations. They were strengthened and encouraged to overcome, and they did. They had faith. I assured them, as I do for you today, that I would always be there. For you that means coming to me with problems or decisions, believing in me, and holding my hand. Decide to put your faith and confidence in me. Miracles will happen. God will empower and bless you, just as he did Joshua, Paul, and many others even today. Whatever you face or do, whatever loss, uncertainty, struggle, or hurt you endure, you will be all right. I am with you, renewing your confidence and faith in me for all things.

When the angel told Mary she would be the mother of the son of God, she was overwhelmed and troubled. How could this be? She turned to her faith in God. God took her by the hand and gave her the quiet confidence she needed for this call and task. However impossible this call seemed, Mary knew God would help her. I want to convince you that whatever I have asked you to do in my name, you will have the confidence and courage to do it. Put your life in my hands. I am

here. I am real. I will help you each step of the way to share my love, words, and reality and to share your gifts. I bless you with ever-growing confidence in me and in your journey ahead. Believe in me.

Word for the week: Confidence

Prayer question: Are you facing a difficult situation or problem? Are you afraid of something? Seek my presence and help in prayer and scripture and most of all in letting the Holy Spirit empower you. Be confident that I love you and will always be at your side. You will hear the Holy Spirit remind you of my love. You will know that all will be well.

Action for the week: Think of something you have been worried or concerned about. Bring it to me in prayer and faith. Share it with one friend or family member, or share it with a group of friends and ask for their prayers and support. Telling someone else about a struggle or fear will make it less of a burden. You will feel surrounded by their faith, and your confidence will grow.

Witness my love and reality: Like my mother Mary, my disciples, and my followers, you are called to build your life on the firm foundation of my promises. Whether you are facing a job loss, moving to a new home, facing a painful illness, dealing with difficult decisions, getting married, having a child, in a broken relationship, away at school, or just afraid, have confidence in me. Show others that as difficult as this time seems, you can count in Jesus. When you have made it through this time, share and witness your experience of faith with others.

Daily prayer for this week: Lord, life can be hard sometimes, and fear and doubts fill me. Like the lost sheep, I am not sure where to turn at times. I know you can help me. Your wisdom and love can renew and guide me. Fill me each day with confidence in my call and in the place and way to use my gifts in your name. Show me the right path. Show me how to step forward with courage and confidence in you and in myself. I put my trust in you. I know that all will be well. I can see that you are with me and all will be well. It will.

The following words are for you. You will know which ones speak to you and answer your questions or prayers. These personal words are guidance for you in your journey today.

- You have the gifts of leadership and faith. I ask you to use them in the church each day and each week to bring people together as a community. Build up the confidence of each person and build up the ministries, groups, and goals that are struggling. Begin by using your gifts to help everybody see that they are needed by encouraging them, building up their gifts, and showing they are very much needed. I want my people to minister together. You can do this. I have confidence in you.

- Sometimes a community struggles because it just can't get organized. Who leads what? How do "we" do that? How can we do the tasks and work needed to build up my church and people? Young people or new families often do not feel a real part of it, but they are. The young must see that and not make excuses, and the adults need to encourage them and build up their confidence and gifts. You can be an encourager, teacher, and leader more and more. You can.

- Joseph had to have confidence that he could take care of his wife and newborn child. Mary had to have confidence in her husband and in God's promise. I put my confidence in my disciples and followers. Today, I put my hope and confidence in you. There is a special and important work for you to do now, next year, and in the future. It will use your gift of wisdom and your ability to make everyone feel needed and special. Your caring and encouragement are what many need right now.

- You have the gifts of leadership and encouragement. Talk to someone you trust and respect about how to use your gifts and talents in your church, work, schools, community, and out into the world in the year ahead. It can be a simple ministry. Maybe you could even reach out to

others one on one. What will you call it? How will you organize it? Get others to help you— friends, family members, your youth group, or one person you admire. Yep, you will be a great leader!

- There are opportunities in your church, school, work, and community to use your talents and compassion in my name. This week think of one need you see that bothers you because you see that it is important. Volunteer. Sign up! Get a group to help. And watch for a special blessing and powerful affirmation through a friend or small group who will help and believe in you.

- So many times it is the simple note, the passing smile or hello, the sincere concern in someone's "How are you doing?" that makes a huge difference in someone's life. You offer those things all the time, but this week and through the end of this year, make it a commitment, a daily promise to look at others in your day and offer a simple smile or a hello. Watch people change through our love.

- Believe all will be well. It will! The questions you have will be answered. The direction for the future will be clear. The decisions you have to make will be blessed and affirmed. I love you. I see the path you are on, and it is leading you in the right way. You will see how and where to use your gifts in more powerful ways, because my church and its people need you, and they need me.

- You have a decision to make. What to do? Pray about it and listen to me. Turn to prayer each day and ask for my help. Listen for my answer. Then it is your decision whether to follow my guidance. You can also seek insight and wisdom from some trusted friends or someone in your church or you can read scripture for help. But what many people do is simply begin each day reflecting on their decision and saying, "Lord, show me what to do." Believe I will show you. I will begin this week. Look.

- I was there. I was walking with my head down, but when you came near me, I looked up and smiled. Did you see me? I wanted you to know that when you are looking for answers or direction in deciding what to do, look for me. I will be there and will guide you with a word or a sign. I will also bless you with faith and courage. Trust me for I am with you. I am.

- There is a new ministry needed in your church to build people up and get them involved and coming weekly. The ministry should include everyone, from children to teens to adults. It is called MAP or Ministry—A Priority! Begin by making a map of what priorities you have for your church and its people to grow. You can do this. It is a short-term project. Brainstorm with three to five others to help you or involve a group or class. Make a map and share it with your clergy, congregation, teens, and adults. It will wow them! I love this!

- I know there are times when you struggle: Are you doing enough? Is your faith strong? Are you blessing others as I want you to do? Is church a priority each week? Are you involved, helping and welcoming people? Is daily prayer time important enough to do? Do you believe you have gifts that can be used to help countless people? I will show you how to do it. Believe.

- Charlie was a great angel. He took his work very seriously and always tried to be the best angel. We could all depend on him, for he was faithful in his promises and was always caring. You are like Charlie. You also try hard to be the best Christian you can, and you do a wonderful job. Many people have been blessed and helped by you. This week look for George and Daisy. They want to be your friend and learn how to be caring, happy, and confident. (Charlie loves green.)

- You have the ability to bring out the best in others. You challenge, encourage, listen, and support people. Your strength and faith are so needed by others in your life. My church needs you, too. You have a special place in my plans for the church. I know you can do what is needed for the people, for the clergy, and for the youth. It is there, not in a box, but in people's hands.

- I love you very much. You bring me joy each day through your enthusiasm for life and your

kind and caring heart. I smile when you feel you did not realize I was there. Trust in your own faith more and more. You are wonderful and have the special gifts of caring, joy, and love.

- Philip had courage. Lydia had wisdom. Barnabas was strong. Mary was humble. What about you? I see the gifts you have. They are very special and are so needed in the lives of many people in the church, schools, jobs, and homes. Help me. Say a big yes to help and support some special people that you know need you and your gifts. Offer. Say yes. Ask. Pray and go out.

- What can you do? Love others in your life, no matter what. Forgive hurts. Be strong about what you believe, and witness and share with others. Your caring and the time you give to friends and family are so important. You are good at listening, and few people have someone like you to hear them and affirm them. You tell them you are there, Jesus is there, and all will be well.

- You have the gifts of prayer and faith. I ask you to use these gifts to bring healing and hope to others. You can be part of a prayer team in your church or you can work with teens and youth to create a prayer event or team. You are creative and inspiring. You will see healing and miracles.

- Say yes. The invitation will be there. You will see the opportunity. You will see the need for help or support. Say yes. You have the gifts of leadership and faith. Be creative in how you do this. Be right out there with posters, invitations, and phone calls. I see one big miracle.

- A new season is here. People are busy with plans for holidays and work and school events. You are coming to a new time, too. You may not see the path and special work clearly yet, but you will. It is a time for believing in the gifts you have and how they will all come together in something very important in your life and the life of someone else. Watch for me. I will be there.

- Let's think big! Yes, you! Invite some people from your church, school, neighborhood, or family to help you with an outreach. Plan a Sunday project where everyone comes together to brainstorm ways to make your church grow and bring more people in. It does not have to be totally serious. You can make it fun. It will be fun! You are creative and even funny at times. This event will be a practice run for something to do with a team you bring together later.

- Healing is a powerful and important gift. Some seek it, and some are blessed with the gift and are called to share it and use it in my name. I want you to be confident in this gift you have. I will empower you to use it to bring new life and healing grace to others. Healing is needed for those in pain or doubt, for those who struggle, and for those who don't go to church or support its people. Healing is needed from the past and even the present. It is needed to cast out evil or self. It is good to be part of a healing ministry—to support it, pray for it, and learn from it.

Ready?

- When you pray, I listen. I hear you and answer. This year I ask you to bring more prayers to me. Offer the concerns of others to me. Listen to my answers. Your gifts of prayer, helping, love, and faith are all that is needed for those special miracle prayers you see people needing. This week pray for three friends in your life who need a prayer answered.

- I hope you noticed me, for I was trying to get your attention. I was in plain and simple clothing. I smiled at you. Did you notice? I know you keep looking for me. Remember, I can be in a school, a grocery store, a hospital, or a doctor's office. I am in coffee shops and fast-food places. Yes, I am everywhere when I am trying to get people's attention. I wanted you to know that all will be well. This year will end with a growing confidence in your own faith and in your call.

- There are so many needs in the world, and one sees them more at this time of the year. Yes, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and holidays are coming. It's a time to reflect on your blessings and give thanks for your friends and family. Know that your words and your loyalty as a friend and Christian have helped someone who really needed you. This person prayed for a friend and for help. And, as always, you are there for others. You give so much with a quiet confidence, knowing all will be well.

- I was there. I blessed you. I know what a caring and generous person you are. There are people

around you who need a friend like you who has that needed word of encouragement so they can be confident in their decisions. In the past few weeks you helped someone more than you realize, and this person's life has taken a turn. This person feels loved, needed, and special. You are such a joy.

- Healing is done through prayers, through the laying on of hands, and always through me and the power of the Holy Spirit. Your gift of healing will grow stronger each and every day. Just believe in me. You can heal people, situations, and problems through me. Miracles happen.

- Next year is coming pretty soon. How do you think this past year was? Hmm, I think it had ups and downs, but mostly ups. You have worked hard. You have been kind and caring to many, many people. You offer your help, friendship, and support everywhere—churches, schools, jobs, and home. In the weeks ahead please help one friend who needs a listening friend. Help one person in your church who needs some assurance and help with a decision. Help one person in your family who needs your loving words and appreciation. We will see many blessings and miracles.

- My church and its people need you and your energy, gifts, and ideas. You are creative and very friendly. People love you. Like an explorer, you need a map. You have already set out and yet are not exactly sure where to go next and what you should do. My church and its people need me. Without a church of worship, love, prayer, and evangelism, where will my people go? Where will the youth go? Where will the homeless go? Believe you can do something in the weeks ahead, before the end of the year, to build up our church with your time and presence. Listen.

- A new year is just ahead. It will be a time of surprises and blessings. Know that your gifts will be used in more ways to help and bless many more people. People will come to you for help, support, friendship, and sharing because of who you are and the way you live your life of faith. They see your strength and commitment to me. You have inspired many friends this year with your gifts and commitment to all you do. I will give you a very special surprise gift, soon.

Read and pray my words to you

Please note that the Bible verses are drawn from the Good News Translation (or Today's English version), so references to a particular stopping place may not match your translation exactly.

Jeremiah 31:35-36

2 Samuel 10:12

Isaiah 6:8 and 12:2

Joshua 1:5-7

Genesis 28:15-16

Isaiah 58:9, 11-12

Exodus 3:10-14

Psalms 16:1-2, 7-8, 11

Psalms 145:1-2, 15-16

Psalms 20: 4-5, 7 and 9

Psalms 57:7-11

Psalms 3:3-6

Psalms 40: 9-10

Matthew 9:27-31

John 12:35-36

Acts 10:42-43

Matthew 28:16-20

Luke 21:13-19
Mark 6:7-13
Matthew 21:21-22
Acts 23:11
Luke 18:26-30
Matthew 10:16-20
John 8:12
Matthew 4:18-22
Romans 16:17-20
1 Corinthians 10:13
Ephesians 6:10-11, 18-20
James 1:2-6
Romans 5:1-5

Note: For suggestions on how to conduct a weekly words sharing group, go to the Words of Blessing website at:

http://www.wordsofblessing.com/pdf_docs_other/word_sharing_instruct_v5.pdf

And for more details about the Words of Blessing EGGS Project, see the website at <http://www.wordsofblessing.com/eggs.html>.

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