

Thursday 26th November Carolyn Powell

Devoted to you

Good morning, everyone. And welcome to today's devotion is it is a little bit dark behind me because it's actually Wednesday night. And not Thursday morning.

But anyway, I was thinking today on what to say. And I've just over the last few weeks just kept having a word devotion in my head and I felt this morning as I was praying, I was going to work and I was just like, okay, Lord, what is it that you want me to say? What? What is it that's on your heart for tomorrow morning. Devotion just kept coming to my head and not as I looked up in the dictionary and to devote, to devote means to give everything to give everything that you have to something to a person to an exercise to something that you're doing. Which is what these things in the morning, you're meant to be devoting ourselves debating, equipping us to devote ourselves, to our God to our father to in worship, in exhortation in praise and everything to him and all that we do throughout our day, that we would give it all to him.

Then, as I was thinking, I was just like, wow, you know, it's the first Sunday of Advent. This week. And on this on the 29th, this Sunday's first Sunday of Advent. And it's a day that it used to be called the Sunday of hope was a day when we thought about in church you think about the hope that God gives us the joy, and the peace, that He gives us. Everything and Advent is of course it means is the Latin word for coming. And traditionally, in churches, it's when you think about the second coming of Christ. So when Jesus came back and devoted himself forget, you know, he's just what my mind was taken to Christmas because of course, the first Sunday of Advent is for most of us it's that it's the time when we think it's the build up to Christmas in churches for the for Sunday's before Christmas Day and when we celebrate the birth of Jesus when we celebrate when God He so loved the world that He sent His son, He was so devoted voice he was so passionate about as He so much wanted a relationship with us, he's so much wanted for us to know his heart to experience His love to know who He was that He sent his son down so that we could get to know Him so that through Jesus' life and through everything that Jesus shows we would get to know the heart of the Father He created us who wanted a relationship with us who desires for nothing more for us to be devoted to him in the same way that He is devoted to us in and then to top it all now only two cheeses come so that we would know him as so that but also said that we would live life in abundance so that we would we would be able to live in forgiveness that we would be able to spend the rest of our days experiencing not only heaven on earth, but having after we die but it having this amazing relationship with a God who is who loves us so much and is desiring for us to have the same passion in the same heart that He has for us and that was just I felt wealth going through my head on the way to work this morning, which was at I think about seven o'clock in the morning was I lift my eyes up until the heavens Where does my hope come from and then this morning, I thought okay, Lord, that's something and then I I get I get to work and halfway through the morning this little notification comes up on my phone of George's devotion for this morning for Wednesday morning. And the title was I lift my eyes and oh, my first reaction was well, okay, again God, that's a confirmation and then it was like, Oh my goodness, is he going to do the same stuff that you were talking to me about? And I guess Yes, I've listened to his devotion now. And it is a similar thing it's the same thing is you know, but not it said in the same way so I'm just going to say it in my way.

I was just I said no. How do we get how do we devote ourselves to you in all everything that is going on in our, in our daily lives, no matter what it is, we're going through, you know whether we've got five kids whether we've got two kids We've got non whether we've got ill parents or we've got busy lives or we've got so much stuff going on, how do we devote ourselves to you? How do we experience your heart and your passion for us in lives that are busy and it is that we lift our eyes when I was at, in primary school at one of my favourite teachers was somebody called Mr. Sykes. And I was probably about nine at the time, I think he was my class teacher, and he would take us out on nature walks, which is right at my street anyway. And I remember one of the walks he said, lift your head up, take your eyes off the ground, because otherwise you'll miss all the stuff that's going on around you. And I'll just put that back to me today. And so I had lifted eyes up, lift your head up, lift, lift your head, and you will see all the things that I have around

you. All the things my heart My passion. A few years ago, when I was I was driving along Blandford road, the upper Blandford a very high blend provider, everyone, I remembers driving through cheese and I was thinking you know, there's lots of you out there who know our story. know some of the things that happened to us, but so many things such as, you know, we've had businesses and lost businesses and just the normal stuff that goes on in families and just stuff that makes you really question who you are, who God's created to be and whether sometimes actually do what is even called Are you even out there and without fail every time to go to take my eye to something and in this case, it was the trees that are around me. I was just as I Wow, Lord, your creation is just blows my mind. It's just stunning. And He said to me, in everything, in every leaf that you see in every feather in every cell in every petal in every everything is my fingerprint of love. And even now, that sense, tingling down my spine, it's I can't bring that back to me today. In fact, it's never, it's never left me. You know, I spend my time, all my days out doing gardening. And I have to say that without that over quite a few number of years, especially whilst we were going through stuff with our business and go to just lift your eyes Carolyn, look at what's around you. Look at what I've put in front of you. Look at that rose smell that rose hear that bird song. See, look, there's an eagle flying up above you look at that amazing cedar tree live. Look at that tiny blade of grass. Look at those mushrooms popping out. My kids will laugh because on my phone when I said there's just like hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pictures of plants have in particular mushrooms. And because every time I see them, it's like let's just put a little or a massive just blessing right in front of me to lift my eyes up to lift my spirits to say I love you.

And for some people, it may not be mushrooms, or trees or birds or it might be it might be a smile on someone's face, it might be a building that is put together in such a way it might be the light that falls across something it might be I don't know might be a puddle. You know, the light shining of a puddle. It might be a car that goes past that is just breathtakingly beautiful to some people. You know, it might be a noisy, it could be a sonic could be anything. Because fingerprint of love is in all of that. And He puts those things around us to lift our spirits to show his passion, his heart for us and how much He wants us to just explode and to experience the devotion that He has for us that He would surround us with things that when we feel rubbish, or when we feel happy. When we fit it doesn't have. It's just all the time. We lift our eyes that we lift our head up, we stop looking at the ground, we stop being consumed by our own thoughts, which is so easy to do where we just, you know, we're thinking about oh my goodness, I've got to pick the top this child up from school. I've got to drop this power and he's just saying, stop. Take a breath.

Take a breath. Just breathe and look around you. Lift your eyes up. lift them up to the heavens. I am your hope. I am your joy. I am your Peace, I am your everything I am so devoted to you that I have created this world that you live in the things that I've put around you, yes, some of it is rubbish. And that's not from me, but within it, within all things is my fingerprint of love, and I am pouring my love out on you in a really tangible way to lift your spirits. You know, see the colours in that rainbow, look at the sky, see the cloud see the it's stunning. The people I've put around your smile on someone's face, the clothes that they're wearing, whatever it is, I've put things there to lift your spirits. And if you look at the ground, you won't see them. You will you will miss it. In less what I'm showing you is the animal running across the floor, which in my case quite often is the centipede or butterfly or something. But those are things that God's put around me, but he's put them around you. Other things, whatever it is that lifts your spirits, He knows it. He's so devoted to you, He knows it. And those things were, and we lift our eyes and we lift our heart and we notice the things He put around us. We can't help but be blown away by his devotion to us, by his devotion to having a relationship with us by his devotion, this for us to feel his love that he's pouring out on us is all He wants. And I think that as I say as we lift our eyes as we see the things that he's around us, as we experience His love, His devotion, his passion, we can't help but respond like a lover. Like that lover that you read in Song of Songs, who runs towards her Saviour her the other part of her groom and just I want to I can't fail but want to pour out my heart in adoration and worship and devotion to you. You're my everything you give me everything I need. I need nothing more. You lift my hearts, you give me hope. And, you know, this is a Sunday of hope coming out as a first Sunday of admin is the day that we remember that we remember that we start to remember everything that God has for us. Everything that He has poured out for us, his son, and how much his son sacrificed for us that we will have this relationship that we would experience this life.

And the other thing I think that's got me just in this little lead up to Christmas is sometimes we can be really grouchy as Christians going off, you know a Christian is Christmas is not what it's about. Christmas is about the birth of Jesus. You know, it's not about spending lots of money it's not about giving presents is not about the pressure that it puts on everyone. But you know what the if we behave like that if we can't lift our heads and see his passion and his joy and manifest that to everyone else who's going about their world, trying to buy presents to give gifts, whatever it is, that is stressing them out about Christmas or not. If we're the Grinch, if we don't experience His love and passion and we are not devoted to him. We will not show the true light of the world to everyone else. This is the time when Jesus in any little bit, reminds himself to everyone starts to build a relationship and He uses us to do that as well. It is his heart for everyone out there to experience Him and if Christmas is a window into that, you know, it is about here's the ultimate gift He paid the ultimate price, to have our devotion to have our passion, our life and for, for us to want to share it with everyone else. And if we can't be full of his passion, his joy, his hope, his peace at Christmas time, when that's the message that we're trying to say is this is how devoted God is to us. He gave us his son on this day. Then there's something very wrong and we need to take a bit of a bit of a stop and lift our heads up and go you know what is actually about? Is us having a relationship with God being here. Heaven, his heaven on earth to those people around who don't know him, and showing him showing them and introducing them. Just as we're introduced to a life following Jesus through what He did at Christmas, is to give that to it, that should be our gift, not that of a Grinch, not to have somebody who's grumpy.

So I just today, I just ask that you would, My prayer is that as we go about our day, we do devote ourselves to knowing God's devotion to us to knowing his highest passion, that we lift our eyes up to him, that we see the things around us that he's put around us to give us joy to give us peace, to show us his fingerprint of love that He has built into this world, to his creation, to the things that He has built, the he's put in other people's hearts to create. His fingerprint of love is in that and that when we see it, and we experience it, and we realise how much how devoted He is to us, that we would give all our devotion to him and that would spill out onto everyone else. So Lord, I just ask that you would bless everyone and with an amazing day, that they their eyes would be open to see the things that you have around them.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai> Ed Perrys

