Week 17 Word of God: *Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness*

Gathering Song *Man Shall Not Live By Bread Alone by Cross Fellowship*

Daily Prayer *Jesus, Jesus you are with me as I step into this day.*
Let me hear you gently calling, "Precious child, walk this way."
Jesus, Jesus when I hear you, calling me to follow you,
In that hour, give me grace to love my neighbor like you do. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 4:4 Context: 1-4 Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness
"Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Devotional Thoughts What are the basic human needs for survival? We need oxygen, water, food, clothing, and shelter to name the basics. But just as important, or even more important on occasion, are the needs of our mind, our heart, our spirit and our soul. We need connection and relationship. These are the "food" for our mental and spiritual health.

One of my favorite quotes is from Henry David Thoreau. "*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not when I came to die, discover that I had not lived…I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life…*"

This reflects the philosophy of living deliberately and fully, emphasizing the importance of embracing life as a gift from God to be cherished and lived with thankful passion. "*Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God*" reminds us that being truly alive requires being spiritually alive.

Jesus answered, "*It is written*". This simple sentence tells us what we need to know when we are searching for guidance or wisdom. When tempted in the dessert, Jesus refused Satan and answered by pointing to the "*word that comes from the mouth of God*." We need the Word as well.

This Week's Challenge? How can we "suck out all the marrow of life" this week? How can the words of God fill us up and give us the same pleasure as the best meal we have ever had? Take some time to ponder what it means to "not live on bread alone".

Ask yourself, what are the "empty calories" in our spiritual life? What things should we consider getting rid of because they are not filling our soul as they should be? Take a little extra time this week to fill your soul with the "food" that comes from listening to God's word.

Affirmation of Christian Vocation: Make the sign of the cross on your forehead (or if you are doing this devotion with others, make the sign on the forehead of another) while saying…

All that we do belongs to God—our work and our rest.
We follow Jesus with thankful hearts and open hands, serving our neighbor in love.
Morning and evening, at work and at play, our life is in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN