



Monday, October 10, 2011

**READ-** The Old Testament: Exodus 33:12-23

This passage follows the dramatic punishment of the Israelites for worshipping the golden calf while Moses was on the mountain. God has so far walked with them in the wilderness and now he says he will withdraw his presence from them. Moses once again intercedes on their behalf.

**REFLECT-**

- The Israelites had turned their backs on God, despite his deliverance from the Egyptians and his care for them on their journey. We often turn our backs on God, despite God's goodness and care in our lives. In what ways may you be turning your back on God? What needs to change for God to be your priority?

**PRAY-**

Lord, help me to clear away the things in my life that distract me from following you and being obedient to your will. Amen.

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 99

This psalm celebrates God's nature – power, justice, righteousness, mercy, and forgiveness; yet with accountability. The psalmist reminds the people of God's great deeds throughout history, his priests and prophets and kings who were obedient AND God's faithfulness to his covenant.

**REFLECT-**

- The psalms constantly remind us of God's love and power over ALL creation; yet that he loves each element of that good creation. His commandments are to maintain goodness, justice and peace within that creation. Our obedience to those "statutes" makes us partners in bringing about that ultimate good in the kingdom of God. Today, in all you do and say, work for that ultimate good.

**PRAY-**

O God, thank you for your love and care for me and all your creation. Help me to be instrument of that love in my circle of influence today. Amen.

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

**READ-** The Epistle: I Thessalonians 1:1-10

This letter of Paul's is the earliest writing in the New Testament and was directed to the church he founded in the capital of Macedonia. He seeks to lift up and encourage these new believers to hold fast despite the persecution and hardship they were encountering.

**REFLECT-**

- Paul commends these believers for becoming an example of living out the Christian faith to people in their community and surrounding areas. Are you an example to those around you of really living out your faith? Do people you know see Christ through your words and actions? That's the best testimony possible!

**PRAY-**

Father, fill me with your Spirit so that my words and the way I live may speak to others of your great love so they also may believe. Amen.

Thursday, October 13, 2011

**READ-** The Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

Jesus' reply to the Herodians and Pharisees was clear. Just as the image on the coin was that of the emperor, each of us is made in God's image. The coin belonged ultimately to the emperor and we belong to our Creator.

**REFLECT-**

- God created human beings in God's image and pronounced them (and all creation) good. We were designed to reflect God's nature (see the psalm) by the way we live our lives. We cannot do this on our own – we need God's guidance and strength.

**PRAY-**

O God, help me today to be a reflection of your nature - love, forgiveness, compassion, kindness, and justice – to all whom I encounter. Amen.

Friday, October 14, 2011

**ACT-**

**Focus Verse:** I Thessalonians 1:2-3

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praying for others. Paul did it and encouraged others to do it as well. Take extra time today to reflect upon those who encourage, teach, guide and walk beside you on your Christian journey. Give thanks to God for their faithfulness and obedience. Pray also for those you know who are struggling or suffering in some way – for their healing, comfort and strength and that you may be guided by the Spirit to be an encourager, teacher or companion for them on their Christian walk.