



Monday, October 17, 2011

READ- The Old Testament: Deuteronomy 34:1-12

The last book of the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Hebrew scripture – ends with the dramatic scene of Moses on the top of Mt. Pisgah surveying the promised land, which God will not permit him to enter. He dies peacefully after completing his calling and the Israelites remember all the remarkable things he did on their behalf.

REFLECT-

- It seems unfair that God would not permit Moses to actually enter the promised land. Based on the scriptural account, Moses was faithful and obedient to God through very difficult circumstances. Perhaps as the people's representative, he was punished their behalf for their great unfaithfulness, just as Jesus was for ours.

PRAY-

Lord, thank you for the stories in the scripture of great people of faith like Moses. Help me to learn faith and obedience from their example. Amen.

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17

In the first six verses, the psalmist reminds us of the greatness and power of God in comparison with the brevity and fragility of human life. Our understanding of the world around us is so limited while God's is eternal. In vs. 13-17, the psalmist calls on God in the midst of a time of suffering in which God seems to have turned away from his people asking that once more God's favor and blessing be upon us.

REFLECT-

- If only we had God's divine perspective to view the events of the world and our lives! The psalmist holds in tension here God's view with our very limited human perspective and our great need for God's mercy and grace in our lives.

PRAY-

O God, thank you for your love and care for us. Help me to be alert for the work of your hand in all aspects of life and give thanks. Amen.

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

READ- The Epistle: I Thessalonians 2:1-8

Paul emphasizes his and his companions' apostolic credentials here, reminding the church at Thessalonica that they share the good news of Christ, not to benefit themselves, but in response to God's will and at great personal peril at times. He also expresses a great love for the people of that church because of their faithfulness and good work for the gospel

REFLECT-

- In recent years, many high profile "evangelists" in this country have been found to be self-serving, greedy, and corrupt. Paul and his companions faced the same sorts of accusations, but were found to be faithful and true in their work. We, as workers and leaders in the church, may be tempted at times to be self-serving. How may that be happening in the life of our church now?

PRAY-

Father, help us as your church to use our time and resources in ways that glorify you and love and serve our neighbors. Amen.

Thursday, October 20, 2011

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 22:34-46

Once again, the religious leaders tried to trap Jesus by asking him a question about the law – which was the greatest of God's commandments. On some occasions, Jesus responded to their question with another question; yet this time, the answer is simple and straightforward – love God, and because you love God, love your neighbor.

REFLECT-

- Jesus expressed his love for his "Abba" through prayer, worship, and reading the Hebrew scriptures. He modeled for us loving our neighbor by healing, teaching, feeding the hungry, and comforting those who suffered. What patterns of living have you adopted that enable you to love God and love your neighbor?

PRAY-

O God, thank you for sending Jesus so that we might know your loving nature and learn through his example how to love one another. Amen.

Friday, October 21, 2011

ACT-

Focus Verse: Psalm 90:17

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands – O prosper the work of our hands.

What work will you do with your hands today? Will you cook a meal, wash clothes, repair something in your home? Will you shake hands with a stranger or offer a hug to someone who is sick or grieving? Will you use your hands to bring comfort to a child who is crying or an elderly friend who is lonely? The work of your hands is important and can make a difference in the lives of those around you by simple, compassionate acts and God WILL prosper that work. Each of those simple acts is your part in the bringing the Kingdom of God a little more fully here on earth.