



Monday, October 24, 2011

**READ-** The Old Testament: Joshua 3:7-17

This passage marks a major turning point in the story of the Israelite people. Joshua is ordained as their new leader after Moses' death and his first miraculous act is to step into the Jordan River along with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant and the waters parted for the people to pass, just as the Red Sea did as they escaped from Egypt. Their desert wandering is over and they have entered the promised land.

**REFLECT-**

- Joshua says to the people, "You shall know that among you is the living God" (vs. 10). That same living God is among us today offering each of us blessing and abundant life, just as he did with the Israelites. Our awareness and appreciation for God's constant presence and miraculous work should be a part of our daily spiritual discipline.

**PRAY-**

Lord, I give you thanks and praise today for your loving presence and all the ways in which you guide and keep us. Amen.

Tuesday, October 25, 2011

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37

The psalmist affirms God's everlasting love for his people and then cites examples of God's care for those who are hungry, thirsty, suffering and oppressed. It reflects beautifully God's blessing and care for the Israelites, bringing them out of slavery, through the desert, into a place they can now call home and live in peace and abundance.

**REFLECT-**

- In what ways has God blessed you abundantly? What good things in your life do you often take for granted? How has God lifted you up in times of hardship and pain? Take time to give thanks today.

**PRAY-**

O God, thank you for all the ways you love and care for me and for the world. Help me to reflect that love today in my words and actions. Amen.

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

**READ-** The Epistle: I Thessalonians 2:9-13

Paul reminds the Thessalonians here that he and Silas and Timothy all worked to earn their keep while they lived among them and preached the gospel, not depending upon the community for support. He also reminds them that just believing God's word is not enough; that their daily lives must be lived in obedience to God's commands, loving one another.

**REFLECT-**

- What does it mean in your daily life to try to "live a life worthy of God" and to be "called into God's kingdom" (vs. 12)? How does that play out in your relationships and the way you use your time and material resources?

**PRAY-**

Father, help me as I go about my day to be loving, compassionate, and generous with all whom I encounter. Amen.

Thursday, October 27, 2011

**READ-** The Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

After several confrontations with the Jewish religious authorities, Jesus here cautions his followers that they must know and follow God's commandments, not just give them lip service as those religious leaders do. He also warns them not to be tempted to let their faith and piety fall into pride and superiority as it has for the religious authorities.

**REFLECT-**

- As "churchy people", we may be tempted to believe that because we attend worship and participate in church activities, we are somehow superior to those who do not in God's eyes. We must be constantly reminded of our own need for God's grace and mercy.

**PRAY-**

O God, please forgive me when I look down on other people for any reason. Help me to always be mindful that you love them just as you do me and I pray that my faith may somehow encourage them to believe. Amen.

Friday, October 28, 2011

**ACT-**

Focus Verse: Psalm 107:1-2

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble.

As you go about your day, keep the first verse of this passage on your mind, repeating it often as your prayer of thanksgiving. And if you count yourself as "redeemed of the Lord", find an opportunity to share your faith in some way with another person during the day. Focus on all that God has done for you in good times and bad and your gratitude for God's blessings and care. At some point in your day, either in word or through your actions, let that gratitude overflow and be passed on in some way to someone who needs it.