



Monday, October 3, 2011

READ- The Old Testament: Exodus 32:1-14

After delivering the commandments, Moses returned up to the mountaintop for further instructions from God. As time passed, the people grew restless and demanded another "god" for them to worship. Aaron gives in to them easily and they fashion a golden calf as an idol. Only through Moses' intervention does God refrain from wiping them out.

REFLECT-

- How easily we are distracted from following God's commands and living obediently! We may not think twice about missing worship on Sunday for ballgames, weekends at the lake, golf or fishing. Rather than coming to bible study on Wednesday, we may be planted firmly in front of the TV to watch our favorite show. Making God our primary focus takes time and intentionality.

PRAY-

Lord, help me to be intentional and faithful in living according to all your commandments. Amen.

Tuesday, October 4, 2011

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

The psalmist reminds us of the faithlessness of the Israelites AND our own lack of faith and obedience to God. After giving thanks for God's love and mercy, the psalmist asks that God forgive us as he forgave the Israelites.

REFLECT-

- Remembering the stories of God's people through the ages is important. We are reminded of God's love and mercy and also made mindful of God's judgment that awaits those who are disobedient. Praise God that we have an intercessor on our behalf – Jesus Christ – who has already paid the price of our sins!

PRAY-

O God, forgive me when my faith is weak and when I do not do your will. Strengthen my faith and give me a willing heart to do your work. Amen.

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

READ- The Epistle: Philippians 4:1-9

As he writes from prison, Paul encourages the church at Philippi – particularly two women there in leadership – to "be of the same mind in the Lord". A rift has come up and Paul knows the importance of unity, forgiveness and mutual love within the church. "Rejoice," he says. "Don't worry. Pray and focus on all things that are good and true."

REFLECT-

- Our church has the same needs for unity, forgiveness and mutual love among its members as did the Philippian church. Where are the rifts within our church family? How can they be healed? In the course of our life together, do we rejoice, give thanks, pray, and do good work for God? Are you part of all those activities?

PRAY-

Father, I ask for your healing for our church family that we may come together in love and unity to share your love with the world. Amen.

Thursday, October 6, 2011

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells this parable to reflect that the Jewish people were "invited" to God's banquet and they refused – even killed the messenger sent by God to offer the invitation. Yet we must prepare ourselves for God's banquet by living a life of devotion and service so that when we are called into God's "banquet hall", we will be ready to be God's guest.

REFLECT-

- God invites us each day that we live to be active participants in the realization of the kingdom of God here on earth. That is a foretaste of the "banquet" to come when Christ returns. As we worship, read scripture, pray, and work in ways of justice and compassion, we are "stitching our robe" so that we WILL be ready to attend!

PRAY-

O God, thank you for your gracious invitation to be part of the coming of your Kingdom and all the ways in which you bless us each day. Amen.

Friday, October 7, 2011

ACT-

Focus Verse: Philippians 4:8

Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable... think about these things.

As you go about your day, focus your words, thoughts and action through the lens of this verse. Before you speak – will your words be true? Before you act – will your actions be honorable and just to all concerned? As you are tempted – will this choice be something pure and pleasing to God? Examine your thoughts, words and deeds throughout the day – would they be commendable in the sight of God? At the end of the day, reflect on how this perspective influenced your actions and experiences.