



Monday, September 12, 2011

READ- The Old Testament: Exodus 16:2-15

The Israelites complained to Moses, fearing that they had left Egypt only to starve in the desert. God provided manna for them each morning and quail each evening, meeting their needs. The Israelites learned to trust that God would take care of them in a miraculous way.

REFLECT-

- What if you did not know where your next meal was coming from? What if you had to trust that God would provide for you? Many in our community find themselves in this situation often due to our current economic problems. God works through each of us to provide food for those in need through our food pantry.

PRAY-

Lord, I thank you for the ministry of food which our church family provides to those who are in need. Thank for all those who give of their time and their resources to make that ministry possible. Amen.

Tuesday, September 13, 2011

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

This psalm was likely written during the Babylonian exile after the temple had been destroyed in Jerusalem and the Jews were scattered, once again slaves in foreign lands. They needed to remember what God had done for them in the past and have a hope of restoration in the future.

REFLECT-

- We are often quick to forget the wonderful ways in which God has blessed us in the past and are quick to despair and complain when hardship comes. Remember today the important ways in which God has touched your life in miraculous ways and give thanks.

PRAY-

O God, I praise you and thank you for your constant presence and abiding love in my life. Thank you for all the ways in which you provide for me and lift me up when I go through sorrow and pain. Amen.

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

READ- The Epistle: Philippians 1:21-30

The church at Philippi held a special place in Paul's heart. He writes this letter from prison, likely in Rome and expresses a desire to see them once again. He is waiting for his trial which could result in his death and that obviously does not frighten Paul. He encourages them to continue to "live in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ".

REFLECT-

- Although we are not persecuted for our faith in America, the many temptations offered by our culture can just as easily cause us to waver in our faith and stray from Christ's commands. What are the temptations that threaten your Christian faith?

PRAY-

Father, help me to stay firm and focused in my faith. Give me the strength to live in a manner that is worthy of Christ's sacrifice for me, sharing my faith with others so that they may know Christ. Amen.

Thursday, September 15, 2011

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

This parable teaches about justice and grace in God's economy. The early workers received justice – they got the wage they agreed upon when they were hired. The late workers received grace – they did not deserve the same wage based on their work; yet the landowner chose to offer them a daily wage.

REFLECT-

- This parable throws the concept of fairness, which is so highly prized in our society, out the window. If each of us received what was "fair" from God, we would have no hope of redemption. Think of a time when you received grace rather than what you deserved. Who needs that grace from you today?

PRAY-

O God, forgive me when I have responded in anger or resentment to someone rather than with forgiveness and mercy. Help me to be mindful of this parable as I go about my day today and "live into" it. Amen.

Friday, September 16, 2011

ACT-

Focus Verse: Matthew 20:15-16

Am | not allowed to do what | choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because | am generous. So the last will be first, and the first will be last.

Those of us who have been abundantly blessed have the opportunity each day to be generous with our material resources. We can choose to spend our money on ourselves on things we likely do not need. Or we can share what we have with someone who is without - someone who may be seen as among "the last" in our society. Find an opportunity today to act as the generous landowner did. Give - without expectation of thanks.