



Monday, April 30, 2012

READ- The Gospel: John 15:1-8

Jesus uses the metaphor of himself as a vine, God as the gardener, and Jesus' followers as the branches of the vine. The purpose of the branches is fruitfulness which cannot happen unless they are fed by the vine and tended by the gardener.

REFLECT-

- Jesus speaks of God "pruning" branches that do not bear fruit. What in your life needs pruning in terms of the way you spend your time and your material resources? Where in your priorities are you not "connected" to the true vine?

PRAY-

O God, help me to stay firmly rooted in your loving presence through reading your scripture, time spent in prayer and seeking to do your will. Amen.

Tuesday, May 1, 2012

READ- Acts of the Apostles: Acts 8:26-40

Philip was one of the deacons identified to help the apostles care for the early church, but in this story, he clearly is a Spirit-filled evangelist to a Gentile. He responds in obedience to a directive to "go" and encounters someone very different from himself who has a sincere desire to understand the scripture and to know God.

REFLECT-

- As disciples of Christ, we are called to "go" and share what Jesus has done for us with others who may not be like us and who live very differently from us. Do you put yourself in a position to encounter people who may need to know Christ? How might you begin to do that on a regular basis?

PRAY-

O God, help me to be obedient to your call to "go" and share the love of Christ with others. Amen.

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

READ- The Epistle: | John 4:7-21

This passage is the epistle writer's exposition on John 3:16. He emphasizes that God loved us so much that he sent Jesus to die for our sins; therefore, we are to love God and love our "brothers and sisters". Our love for God is shown in this life by how we love one another.

REFLECT-

- Verse 18 makes clear that there is no need for fear in our relationship with God. Fear of punishment is not God's desire for us in relationship with him; rather a deep knowledge of his love for us and for the world is God's desire. Which figures more strongly in your view of God – his judgment or his love?

PRAY-

Father, I thank you that you loved this world enough to sacrifice your Son. Help me to share your love with all whom I encounter today. Amen.

Thursday, May 3, 2012

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 22:25-31

The psalmist addresses the worshiping congregation and invokes praise for God. He offers thanksgiving for God's mercy, care for the poor and afflicted in the past and challenges the congregation to remember the power and might of their God and to serve him with obedience.

REFLECT-

- Regular worship of God within a family of believers is important. We need reminders of God's goodness to us in the past through the words of scripture, prayers lifted together to raise our praise, thanksgiving and needs to God, and collective words of repentance offered for our sin. It's not optional for the faithful believer.

PRAY-

O God, thank you for this body of believers who gather each week to raise our voices and prayers to you. Help me to love, encourage and support those brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen.

Friday, May 4, 2012

ACT-

Focus Verse: | John 4:20b

Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

In the Kingdom of God, "love" is an action, not a feeling. When we as Christians have the power, the time, and the resources to help those around us who are suffering or in need and we choose not to do so, this scripture tells us plainly that we are actively not loving God. Take the time today to identify one way in which you can offer care, concern and/or help to someone who needs it. Visit someone who is grieving or lonely. Take a good meal to someone who lives alone. Visit someone in the hospital or nursing home. Donate food or money to the food pantry or Samaritan fund. Volunteer your time on Saturday at the food pantry. Make "love" an action in response to God's love for us.