



Monday, June 18, 2012

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 9:9-20

This psalm is primarily a lament for the poor, the oppressed, and those who suffer at the hands of the wicked. Although the psalmist praises God and expresses confidence that God will prevail on their behalf, it is clear that this was written in a time of great suffering to give hope to God's people.

REFLECT-

- Sometimes it seems as though God does not care about our suffering. When little children die from terrible cancers, whole families are slaughtered in Syria by their government, and people starve in Africa because rival tribes prevent food aid from reaching them, it is hard to understand if God does indeed love us. At those times, we need psalms like this one to assure us.

PRAY-

Lord, there are many things we don't understand in this life. Help me to trust you and keep my faith strong. Amen.

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

READ- The Epistle: II Corinthians 6:1-13

Jewish Christians in the Corinthian church were insisting that Gentile believers must be circumcised in opposition to Paul's instruction and authority. Paul writes this letter reminding the church of all he has sacrificed and suffered on their behalf so that they might have faith in his teaching.

REFLECT-

- Verse 6 suggests that these "fruits of the spirit" given to us by God are what carry us through times of suffering. Has that been your experience throughout your lifetime?

PRAY-

Father, thank you for the gifts of your Spirit that strengthen and sustain us in good and hard times. Amen.

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

READ- The Old Testament: I Samuel 17:1-49

In one of the most well-known stories of the bible, the shepherd boy David takes down the giant Phillistine with only a slingshot and a stone. But before doing so, he invokes the name of the Lord God, making this a "holy war" that declares God's power to Israel and their enemies.

REFLECT-

- At the time David kills Goliath, Samuel has already anointed him as the next king of Israel and God's spirit rests on him in a powerful way. David shows great courage, skill and wisdom far beyond his age or physical ability. What may God be calling you to do that feels beyond your wisdom or abilities? How might this story encourage you to step out in faith?

PRAY-

Loving God, help me to be bold to do your will and be your witness, trusting that those whom you call, you also equip for that work. Amen.

Thursday, June 21, 2012

READ- The Gospel: Mark 4:35-41

Storms come up quickly on the Sea of Galilee and waves can be a challenge even for seasoned fishermen like Jesus' disciples. This storm caught them by surprise and they feared for their lives. Jesus demonstrates his power of the wind and water and then chastises the disciples for their lack of faith.

REFLECT-

- When has a "sudden storm" come into your life and you were fearful even though you know God is with you? How did God comfort and reassure you during that storm? Jesus may not always calm the waters, but he is there to keep us from drowning if we only trust him and listen to his voice.

PRAY-

O God, sustain me when the waters of my life are rough and I feel that I am all alone and drowning. Amen

Friday, June 22, 2012

ACT-

Focus Verse: II Corinthians 6:12-13

There is no restriction in our affections – only in yours. In return, I speak as to children, open wide your hearts also.

Paul speaks here on behalf of the Father – there is no restriction in God's affection for us, only in ours for Him and for our brothers and sisters whom he calls us to love. We protect our hearts carefully because we have been hurt before and so we are cautious about opening our hearts too widely. Yet that is what Christ calls us to do – to love generously without calculating the risk of not being loved in return. Remember God's great love for us and make a special effort to love extravagantly today, especially toward those who are suffering, in need or are lonely. Open wide your heart!