



Monday, February 11, 2013

READ- *The Old Testament: Deuteronomy 26:1-11*

This passage describes the giving of agricultural tithes in thanksgiving for God's goodness to the Israelites. Those tithes were not optional – they were used to feed the priests, widows and orphans who had no other means of support. It also served as regular reminder of what God had done for the people bringing them out of Egypt and giving them a homeland.

REFLECT-

- Just like the Israelites, everything we have comes from God. If we understand that, why are we so reluctant to return a portion to the work of God's church? When we give with joy for God's work, God multiplies our gifts in remarkable ways!

PRAY-

Lord, thank you for all the ways you have blessed us and make me a good steward of those blessings for your Kingdom. Amen.

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

READ- *The Epistle: Romans 10:8b-13*

Paul emphasizes once again that we cannot earn righteousness with God. We may only be saved by our faith in Jesus Christ and his atoning act on the cross. Once we accept that salvation, then it is very important that we share this good news with all who will hear it.

REFLECT-

- Paul stresses that it is only through our faith in Christ, that we come into God's righteousness. But Christ taught us our obedient response to that faith should be lived out in acts of love, compassion and justice.

PRAY-

Father, help me to remember that it not enough to simply say "I believe". Help my actions to be a reflection of the faith I say that I have. Amen.

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

READ- *The Gospel: Luke 4:1-13*

The devil tempted Jesus to use his powers in self-serving ways – food for his hunger, power over all nations, and a theatrical display of God's angels saving him from harm. Yet Jesus understood God's plan for his power – not to serve himself, but to save a broken world and reconcile human beings with a loving Father.

REFLECT-

- For too long, many of us church folk have become focused only on serving ourselves. We expect the church to provide programs we want, sermons that make us feel good, and activities for our children. Jesus set the example for the church – we are here to serve others, not ourselves.

PRAY-

O God, use me to share your love with all those I encounter today. Amen.

Thursday, February 14, 2013

READ- *The Psalter: Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16*

The psalmist compares God's love and care for us to a mother bird who protects her chicks under the cover of her wings. Jesus used this same image as he spoke of the people of Jerusalem, "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Matthew 27:37)

REFLECT-

- The fierce protectiveness of a mother bird for her brood is an image that would have been very familiar to those in the time this psalm was written, but may be lost on our modern culture. Birds and many other animals will sacrifice their own life to protect their young. That's how much God loves us.

PRAY-

Thank you for your great fierce love for us which never leaves us to face the trials of life alone. Amen.

Friday, February 15, 2013

ACT-

Focus Verse: Romans 10:12

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him.

We are all offered the gift of salvation, regardless of our race, ethnicity, gender or nationality. God reaches out to all people – even those who are very different from us or whom we may not like or approve of. Jesus reached out to all kinds of people – most of them poor, sick, blind or lame, or outcasts from mainstream "acceptable" society. He began with an act of compassion – feeding, healing, forgiving – and through those acts, they felt his love and power. He calls us to do likewise. Be attentive to opportunities that may come your way today to do just that. God's generosity often comes through our hands and hearts.