



Monday, January 28, 2013

READ- The Old Testament: Jeremiah 1:4-10

This passage is Jeremiah's call by God to be a "prophet to the nations". God said that he would give Jeremiah the messages he wanted delivered to his people. During Jeremiah's time, Judah was conquered, Jerusalem was overthrown, and the people exiled. Jeremiah's message was this was God's judgment for their disobedience and unfaithfulness.

REFLECT-

- Even in Jeremiah's prophecy of destruction and judgment, God also included words of hope for the future – "to build and to plant"? Our world around us seems hopeless sometimes with so much violence and evil. Yet we are called, as God's people, to speak words of hope and do as much good as we can to share that hope with those who have none.

PRAY-

Lord, help me to be someone who encourages, helps, heals and shares good things with those around me today. Amen.

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

READ- The Epistle: I Corinthians 13:1-13

This passage is one of the most famous in the entire bible in which Paul challenges the Corinthian church members to emulate the self-giving, extravagant love of God in their relationships with one another. He describes the behaviors that involves and ranks that as much more important than concerns about the spiritual gifts.

REFLECT-

- Patience, kindness, humility, truth, and justice. Paul says these are the traits of agape love. How can you be intentional about putting those into practice today? Which is the most difficult for you to "live into"?

PRAY-

O God, I thank you for your great, great love that knows no end. Amen.

Wednesday, January 30, 2013

READ- The Gospel: Luke 4:21-30

After Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah in his home synagogue in Nazareth, he commented that the prophecy was now fulfilled in him. At first the people were pleased, but when Jesus made clear that he had come as messiah to all peoples (even Gentiles as in vs. 25-27), they were enraged at him and wanted to kill him.

REFLECT-

- We may feel that God should care more for us as "churchy" people than for those who do not have a church or do not yet know Christ. Yet Jesus here cites two instances in which Old Testament prophets reached out to non-Israelites to carry out God's redemptive plans. God can redeem or work through anyone!

PRAY-

O God, help me to be a positive witness for Christ in the way I live my life today so that someone who does not believe may turn to Him. Amen.

Thursday, January 31, 2013

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 71:1-6

This is a wonderful passage to mark in your Bible as a source of strength in difficult times. Using images of God's strength – a rock and fortress – the psalmist emphasizes that God is always there for us; God is trustworthy and will never leave us alone to face our trials.

REFLECT-

- The psalmist writing this passage says God has been his hope "from his youth". His confidence and reliance upon God has come through years of experience in God's gracious love and care. Think about a time in your life where God took care of you in ways you never expected or perhaps even understood at the time. This is your assurance of God's care for you in times to come.

PRAY-

Thank you, O God, for your steadfast love and that I can always trust you in good times and in times of sorrow and difficulty. Amen.

Friday, February 1, 2013

ACT-

Focus Verse: I Corinthians 13:5-6

[Love] does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

Try living intentionally with these verses today. Let someone else go ahead of you in traffic or in a checkout line; let someone else speak first and hold your tongue; when things irritate you or feel unfair to you, think first before you complain or speak angrily, "Is this a truly loving response?". Turn away from conversations involving gossip or examining someone else misfortune; make your words positive, uplifting and encouraging. At the end of the day, reflect on what you have learned by trying God's agape love in these ways.