



Monday, October 28, 2013

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 119:137-144

An expression of faith and trust in God's unwavering love and justice, this passage clearly comes from a writer who has known suffering in his life; yet throughout those troubles, he holds firm to his belief in God's goodness and faithfulness to sinful human beings.

REFLECT-

- Think back to times of trouble and suffering in your life. How did you experience God carrying you through those difficult times? What are the promises of God that sustain you in those times?

PRAY-

Loving Father, thank you that you never give up on us – no matter how far away we may wander, you are always there – loving and forgiving. Amen.

Tuesday, October 29, 2013

READ- Old Testament: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

One of the minor prophets of whom we know little, Habakkuk raises a challenge to God on behalf of the Judean people who were being oppressed by their enemies. "Where are you, God? Why are you letting your people suffer evil and injustice and oppression?"

REFLECT-

- All the prophets in the Hebrew Bible, at one time or another, cry out to God in protest, pain and anger, "Where are you God? Why are you letting this happen?" We sometimes think it's inappropriate to tell God how we really feel; yet God knows our hearts already and is strong enough to handle all our pain and grief.

PRAY-

Lord, there are so many things that happen in life that I don't understand and I want answers. It's hard to be patient and trust. Help me, like Habakkuk, to "wait for" your will which comes only in your time. Amen.

Wednesday, October 30, 2013

READ- The Epistle: II Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

Paul writes here to encourage the faithful believers in the Thessalonian church which was experiencing persecution, not only from the Jews and the government, but from other Christian believers who rejected Paul and his teachings.

REFLECT-

- What encourages you in your faith? On what or who do you rely to help you remain faithful and obedient when temptations beckon or troubles press in? Paul identified two key components: "love for one another" and intercessory prayer. We need one another for help and encouragement on our Christian journey.

PRAY-

O God, I thank you for my Christian friends. Help me to be an encourager. Today I lift up these persons _____ who need your love and care in a special way. Amen.

Thursday, October 31, 2013

READ- The Gospel: Luke 19:1-10

One of the most well-known stories in the Bible finds Jesus once again reaching out to someone who is an outcast from "polite society". Zacchaeus was a "white collar criminal" in his day, gouging his countrymen on their taxes and lining his own pockets. Something about this man Jesus turned his whole life around.

REFLECT-

- What the people in the crowd failed to see is that we are all like Zacchaeus in that we have all sinned – perhaps we have not defrauded others, but we are just as guilty of other sins. Just as Jesus looked at Zacchaeus with compassion and invitation, he reaches out to us as well? How does your response compare to that of Zacchaeus?

PRAY-

O God, help me not to judge my neighbor, remembering my own sin and need for forgiveness. Help me see what needs to change in my life and to have the courage to do it. Amen.

Friday, November 1, 2013

ACT-

Focus Verse: Habakkuk 2:4

Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right within them, but the righteous live by their faith.

Examine your heart and the way you live today. In what ways are you "proud"? Based on what you know about what Jesus taught and how he lived, in what ways would he find your "spirit not right within you"? The oracle told Habakkuk that the "righteous live by their faith". What does your faith call you to do or refrain from doing today that shows you are a follower of Christ? Make a commitment today to make those changes.