



Monday, November 17, 2014

READ - The Old Testament: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

The prophet Ezekiel lived during the time of the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people. Jerusalem had been destroyed and the people scattered in places of foreign exile. Ezekiel speaks words of hope and comfort to the people that God has not forsaken them forever.

REFLECT -

- God's promises via Ezekiel in this passage show a special concern for the weak, the lost, and those who have been oppressed by those in power. This is a consistent theme throughout the bible. The Great Shepherd comes in judgment, will we be among the fat sheep or the lean sheep?

PRAY -

Lord, I thank you that you love us so much that you seek us out in our times of weakness, despair and need and lift us up with your mighty hand. Amen.

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

READ - The Psalter: Psalm 100

This classic psalm of thanksgiving expresses simply but eloquently our reasons for praise to God. God made not only human beings, but all of this remarkable world in which we live, which he tends like a shepherd cares for his sheep, not just now, but for all eternity

REFLECT -

- Print or write this psalm out on a small piece of paper and take it with you today. Put it in your pocket or on your desk and read it over and over, expressing your joy and thanksgiving to God. Let it be your song of praise today!

PRAY -

O God, thank you for your beautiful creation and for your steadfast love which endures forever. Amen.

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

READ - The Epistle: Ephesians 1:15-23

Paul writes beautiful words of support and encouragement to the Christians at Ephesus, asking God to provide them with a "spirit of wisdom and revelation" (vs. 17) so that they may see the "big picture" of God's intentions for his people through Jesus Christ.

REFLECT -

- In what ways has God enlightened the "eyes of your heart" (vs. 18)? How have you felt God's power working in, around and through you? How have the words of scripture and your life experiences informed and shaped your faith?

PRAY -

Father, I thank you for your Holy Spirit which gives us wisdom, power, love and the ability to do your work in the world in ways we cannot even imagine. Amen.

Thursday, November 20, 2014

READ - The Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

In the last of Jesus' public teachings in Matthew's gospel, he spells out explicitly on what basis we who call ourselves his followers will be judged. Jesus leaves no doubt of God's priorities – caring for the hungry, those in need, those who are sick or suffering, and those in prison. In response to God's great love for us, we are to care for the "least of these".

REFLECT -

- In a world in which there is so much evil, need and suffering, it is easy to become overwhelmed and discouraged. Yet Christian people, working together, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can offer care and compassion – one person at a time. How are you being called to help the "least of these"? How will you respond?

PRAY -

O God, help me to make your priorities my priorities. Help me to live into Jesus' commands to love one another with my time and resources. Amen.

Friday, November 21, 2014

ACT -

Focus Verse: Matthew 25:35-36

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.

Over the weekend, choose at least one of Jesus' commands in this passage and live into that command in a way that allows you to "put a face" on the person you are helping. Visit someone in the hospital or nursing home; volunteer at the food pantry, a soup kitchen or Union Mission; visit folks at the county jail. Offer a word of encouragement, pray with someone. It can make a remarkable difference in your life and that of that other person.