

Daily Readings

Please note: The Series of sermons for this month is called *The Invitation: Making Life Matter*. Each week we will deal with a different aspect of the discipleship growth process. We believe that being a disciple of Jesus Christ makes life matter. This week we deal with the irresistible invitation to SERVE as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The daily readings allow us to dig deeper.

Monday October 25 – Read Romans 12. Paul is outlining service through the presence of Christ and the gifts for service. Paul is more direct in this passage, giving us clear direction for our behavior as followers of Christ. He begins this passage with a clear call “... **to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.**” Use this passage as a guide for your day. Read it at the beginning of the day to prepare yourself and at the end of the day to see how well you have lived for Christ. What have you done for Christ and for others? Did others know you were a Christian because of the way you spoke and acted today?

Tuesday October 26 – Read I Corinthians 12. Romans 12, Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12 are the three places Paul mentions and explains spiritual gifts. Notice as you read this passage that Paul is reminding the church at Corinth (a rich, educated and talented church) that our work for Christ is always to bring unity to the church. The gifts are given to bring unity – anything that does not bring unity to the body is not of the spirit. Today examine your relationship with the church. Are you bringing unity or contention? Are you adding to what God is trying to do or only taking? What are you doing as a builder for the Kingdom of God?

Wednesday October 27 – Read I Corinthians 13. This familiar passage is often read at weddings. It is about the character and definition of love. It is easy to separate this passage from the rest of Paul’s letter as an aside about our behavior with one another. Closer examination reveals that I Corinthians 13 is the conclusion to chapter 12. Paul says clearly here that no matter what our gifts, actions, sacrifice or service, if it is not given in love – it means nothing. How are you using your service and spirit led gifts in the spirit of love?

Thursday October 28 – Read Philippians 1: 3-11. Focus on verse 6 – Jesus never gives up on us. Paul reminds us that no matter what our circumstances, “...**the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion...**” Pray for God’s will and strength that you might hear and respond to God’s call in your life.

Friday October 29 – Read Hymn 87. *What Gift Can We Bring?* Sing or read this hymn as a prayer for the day. Give thanks for the privilege of serving God and the growth that it brings to our faith and life.

***Invite someone to worship this week. You will be glad you did.
God is doing great things through the ministries of Trietsch.***



STUDY GUIDE & DAILY READINGS

Sunday, October 24, 2010

The Invitation — Making Life Matter *Serve Together (Week 4 of 5)*

James 2:14-18 — The Word from the Bible (New Revised Standard Version)

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

Matthew 7:15-20 — The Word from the Bible (New Revised Standard Version)

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Scriptural Basis

James 2:14-18 (Interpreter’s Concise Commentary)

This passage is probably the most famous of all in James. Faith apart from works is dead (verse 26) is an oft-quoted maxim. It has wide popular appeal because it makes good common sense. The author is obviously correcting a false notion about faith. Some people apparently thought that faith was mere belief in certain doctrines like the unity of God. Such belief is not faith, for even the demons can believe that much! (Verse 19). True faith, rather, is the kind of belief which produces good works.

Where did such false ideas of faith arise? Our lack of complete knowledge of the circumstances in which the letter was composed prevents us from answering this question with certainty. Yet the fact that “faith alone” was a basic doctrine of Paul suggests that 2:14-26 was directed against a distorted form of Paul’s teaching. The fact that Abraham, one of Paul’s favorite Old Testament characters, is used to illustrate the point gives added weight to this supposition.

