

Seedling Group Questions for St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles/Reformation

The sermon can be found at www.lipstosing.wordpress.com

Questions for opening up

What was your best ever or most memorable Halloween costume?

Do you ever have reservations when it comes to talking about God? If so, with whom? What do you think a reason could be for this reluctance?

Read Jeremiah 26:7-16

Who can speak the Word of the Lord? What are the qualifications?

Jeremiah is pitted in an argument of great consequence against the priests and prophets *of the Lord*, with the people of God caught in the middle. How does it happen that people of the same faith come to different conclusions about what living out that faith looks like?

The Protestant Reformation was a case of this very thing. What do you see as the legacy of the Reformation? Is it still of consequence today?

Read John 14: 21-27

How has Jesus revealed himself to you? Is your relationship with Jesus different today than it was when you were a child or a teenager or a young adult?

How has Jesus given you peace or helped still a troubled heart?

Putting Things Together

According to the research of the Barna Group, religious and spiritual words have been in decline since the beginning of the 20th Century (not only words like “salvation” but also words like “love,” “faithfulness,” “kindness,” and “thankfulness”). If this finding is indeed true, does this surprise you? Why or why not?

What can the church do to make the Word of God more vibrant and persuasive today? What do you think we are already doing well which we should we make sure to continue to do?

Making It Personal

Joseph contends that “God intends to reveal himself through those who love him, through you and me, through those who treasure his word, keep it, meditate on it, allow our lives to be formed by it, and are *brave enough to speak it...by making God the subject of active verbs.*” If you agree that this is important how do we make this happen more often?

First Reading: Jeremiah 26:7-16

⁷The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. ⁸And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die!" ⁹Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, "This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

¹⁰When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. ¹¹Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears."

¹²Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "It is the LORD who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. ¹³Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you. ¹⁴But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. ¹⁵Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

¹⁶Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God."

Gospel: John 14:21-27

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ²¹"They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."