



GROW. PRAY. STUDY.

The Church of the Resurrection – Weekly Guide

Vision 2030 “Closing the Gap”

SUNDAY 2.10.19

You are the light of the world...let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in heaven. *Matthew 5:14 and 16*

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *2 Peter 3:18*

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” *Matthew 19:14*

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? *Micah 6:8*

Jesus reached for a little child, placed him among the Twelve, and embraced him. Then he said, “Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me.” *Mark 9:37*

Jesus defined his mission

MONDAY 2.11.19 Luke 4:16-21

Luke recorded a key moment in Christ’s early public ministry. Confidently he read this section of Scripture from centuries earlier. Then he stunned his hometown audience by boldly saying, in effect, “This text about God’s anointed one was about me.” He claimed to be the one and only Messiah. Jesus’ choice of “platform” (which frustrated and angered his hearers—cf. [Luke 4:28-30](#)) said his mission was to radically change the world’s priorities, to bring spiritual and social good news, healing and liberation.

- ✚ As Jesus defined his mission, so must we as a congregation and as individuals. The Vision 2030 goals we introduced last weekend are the result of “asking where God will lead our church over the next eleven years.” They apply the principles of Jesus’ ministry to our specific time and place. In what ways can you see our goals continuing to bring spiritual and social good news, healing and liberation?
- ✚ Resurrection members cannot, of course, assume the Vision 2030 goals are for somebody else. As you review the goals, ask what God calls you to do in making these goals a reality. The desire to know God’s will for your life is one key sign of spiritual health. Instead of waiting for God to change the world “someday,” how are you making yourself available now for God to change your life—and through you, the lives of others?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want to discern your calling and direction for my church, and for me as faithful citizen of your kingdom. Keep my mind and heart open to your calling. Amen.

* From Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message*. NavPress, 1993-2002.

Close the spiritual gap

TUESDAY 2.12.19 2 Peter 3:17-18

We have chosen a set of goals to “deepen the spiritual vitality of all Resurrection members.” That’s because accepting and living into God’s wonderful, life-changing gift of grace is not a “once and done” experience. We can never become indifferent about parts of life in which we need further growth. The gift of grace gives us a climate of love in which we keep growing closer and closer to our gracious God.

- ✚ Scholar William Barclay wrote, “The Christian must daily experience the wonder of grace, and daily grow in the gifts which grace can bring; and he must daily enter more and more deeply into the wonder which is in Jesus Christ.” * That’s a lot of “daily’s”! But what nutrition program tells you that eating once a week will make you strong? What exercise program says working out once a week is plenty? How can you choose to “grow in grace” every day? (We hope and pray the GPS helps.)
- ✚ “Growing in grace” is not just intellectual. Pastor and scholar Christopher Green wrote, “It is impossible to stand still as a Christian.... We need to know more about [Jesus], to be sure; but we also grow in that knowledge by obeying him, by treating his promises as genuine promises of the Savior, and his commands as genuine commands of the Lord.” ** In what ways are you growing in trusting and obeying what you learn about Jesus?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, give me the gift of honesty with myself, so that I can recognize where I need to change. Show me the places where you call me to grow in your amazing grace. Amen.

* William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible Series: The Letters of James and Peter* (Revised Edition). Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1976, pp. 350-351.

** Christopher Green and Dick Lucas, *The Message of 2 Peter and Jude*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, p. 157.

Close the generational gap

WEDNESDAY 2.13.19 Matthew 5:13-16

In the next eleven years, Resurrection aims to “connect new and younger people” (cf. [Deuteronomy 6:4-7](#)). We plan to continue “effectively reach(ing) non-religious people” in our increasingly secular community. Jesus called us to be “the light of the world” through whom God’s light illumines the lives of people around us. We respond as we live lives led by the Holy Spirit through which God’s light reaches beyond the walls of our church. We want the way we live to draw the people who see and know us to our Father in heaven, not just us.

- ✚ Have you ever flown over a city at night? Or driven along a highway from the dark countryside into a well-lighted area? What was it like spiritually when your life went from darkness to light? Where are the dark places of your neighborhood, city and world that need God’s light? In what ways can you help shine God’s light into these dark areas?
- ✚ Jesus said, “A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden.” He intended for his followers’ actions to be visible and attractive. He added that we let our light shine for a specific reason—so that people who see what we do will praise God. We often see corporate PR campaigns aimed only at acquiring fame, money or market share. If our ultimate purpose is to lead people to praise God, how must that shape our efforts to make our church’s actions visible?

Prayer: Loving God, fill me to overflowing with your light, so that it shines out to everyone with whom I come in contact. Help me to live as your salt and light, your physical presence, right here, right now. Amen.

Close the love and justice gap THURSDAY 2.14.19 Micah 6:6-8

The prophet Micah lived in times when Israel practiced ceremonial religion and “conspicuous consumption” side-by-side. On God’s behalf, he urged a change of course: “Do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.” In that spirit, one Resurrection goal in the next eleven years is to “address injustices and build bridges of healing” in Kansas City. Like Micah, we know that pious rituals are no substitute for simply treating people justly.

- ✚ Using irony, Micah kept making the proposed sacrifices that God didn’t want in verses 6-7 bigger. He ended with child sacrifice, a ghastly practice among some of Israel’s neighbors. What do the three divine requirements Micah listed tell you about what God is like? “To walk” was the Hebrew way of identifying a person’s lifestyle. In what ways does your lifestyle reflect your choice to “walk humbly” with your God?
- ✚ In what ways does your culture and community fall short of doing justice, embracing faithful love and walking humbly with God? Scholar Gary Smith wrote, “Micah’s delineation of God’s requirements is noteworthy insofar as it includes no negative statements about what is forbidden to the Israelites. It presents a positive case of what God thinks is best for humankind.” * How can you actively move yourself, your family, your workplace and your community toward what God thinks is best for humankind in words and actions?

Prayer: Lord God, you created the life processes that gave me birth. It makes sense that you know what is best for me, and for all of us. Guide me into a life that shows the goodness of your ways. Amen.

* Gary V. Smith, *The NIV Application Commentary: Hosea, Amos, Micah*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001, p. 555.

Close the opportunity gap FRIDAY 2.15.19 Luke 9:46-48

The church’s fourth 2030 goal says we will work to “break the cycle of poverty for children in Kansas City, giving each child the possibility of attaining a future with hope.” Scholar Craig Keener noted that the culture in which Jesus lived was even more dismissive of children than ours: “Status was a preeminent concern in ancient society; children had none.” * We speak more positively about children, but (especially if they are not our own offspring) we are too often blind to their lack of opportunity in life.

- ✚ Jesus did not specifically mention children in [Matthew 25:37-40](#), but he clearly signaled the importance of caring for all who are hungry, thirsty, naked, a stranger, sick and in prison. And he added that whatever we do to help “one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine,” we do for him. Now as then, children are often “the least of these.” How does Jesus’ parable, along with today’s Scripture, shape Resurrection’s fourth goal?
- ✚ Jesus’ message about children was more than just “Be innocent and sweet.” His disciples argued about who was greatest (i.e. had the most status). Jesus told them not to focus on status, but on who needs you most. In what ways does that principle point to serving children without opportunity? Mother Teresa of Calcutta said hungry, sick or ill-clothed people are “Jesus in disguise.” How can setting aside our human interest in power, celebrity and status help Resurrection (and each of us individually) serve “Jesus in disguise,” caring for people in many kinds of need?

Prayer: Lord, I’m excited, yet fearful that you would call me to serve your people in a way that takes me outside of my comfort zone. Please help me remember that all people are you in disguise. Amen.

* Craig S. Keener, comment on Luke 9:46-48 in *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Jesus' ultimate mission (and ours)

SATURDAY 2.16.19 Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus was so eager to learn more about Jesus that, wealthy adult though he was, he climbed a tree to offset his short stature. If anything, Jesus was more eager to reach Zacchaeus. He ignored people's grumbling by very publicly inviting himself to a meal at the house of one of the town's most despised "sinners." He told the grumbling crowd (many of whom Zacchaeus had probably cheated) that he "came to seek and save the lost." That was his central, guiding mission—not one that limited his focus just to one type of activity, but rather moved him to restore and set right all the brokenness evil creates in our hurting world.

- ✚ Jesus said he "came to seek and save the lost." Scholar William Barclay wrote, "In the New Testament 'lost' does not mean damned or doomed. It just means in the wrong place.... A man is lost when he has wandered away from God; and he is found when once again he takes his rightful place as an obedient child in the...family of his Father." * In what ways has God "found" you, and moved you to your rightful place in God's family?
- ✚ The same Jesus, with the same mission, preached, "Now is the time! Here comes God's kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!" (Mark 1:15) At Resurrection, we believe that "when Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God, he was speaking of the world as it should be." As we allow God's power to work through us to achieve our 2030 goals, how will we move the world closer to being the world as it should be? How will you help?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for coming "to seek and save the lost," including me. Help me to join you in doing that great, world-changing work. Amen.

Family Activity: Through portraits of biblical characters and God's followers of today, the stained-glass window at Resurrection's Leawood campus tells the story of God's transforming love for all people in every generation past, present and future. Online ([click here](https://sacredspaces.cor.org/leawood/window) sacredspaces.cor.org/leawood/window) or in person, view the window together as a family. See how many people you can identify and whose stories you can share. As Resurrection introduces our 2030 visions, discuss how your family can share God's love for all people. Gather some family pictures and along with words, phrases, drawings and magazine cutouts design your own artistic expression of God's love. Find a special place in your home to place your family's creation. Consider a title for it such as "Our family shares God's love with all!" Thank God for His love and ask God to help you continue to tell the story of His amazing and faithful love.

* William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible Series: The Gospel of Luke* (Revised Edition). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1975, page 257.