



Week #2: "Plain Truth for Plain People"

Daily Devotions for January 22-27, 2024

Monday, January 22 Read Psalm 59:16-17

This is one of the royal psalms praying for deliverance from enemies, yet it is built upon the confident knowledge of God's abiding love. How does the knowledge of another's love provide strength and confidence for you? How does knowing God loves you give you courage and hope for living?

Tuesday January 23 Read Deuteronomy 6:1-9

We are familiar with the call to love the Lord (Jesus echoed it in Matthew 22). Why is the scripture so insistent that we teach this fact repeatedly and write it down? Given the subsequent history of the people of Israel and our own experience of discipleship, why is this repetition good advice and what does it say about our tendency to fall away?

Wednesday, January 24 Read Micah 6:1-8

The motivation for doing good is the response of a loving and grateful heart to all that God has done and will do. Since we cannot pay that back, what does God expect from you? Reflect on some specific ways you are being called to live out v.8?

Thursday, January 25 Read Romans 5:1-8

Our faith is rooted in a recognition that we have done nothing, and can do nothing, to earn our own salvation. Indeed, any good we do is a response to God's love and a gracious action from the Holy Spirit. Why is recognizing our own sinfulness the first step to living Christ-like lives? What, in practical and relational terms, does recognizing our own sinfulness look like?

Friday, January 26 Read Luke 22:14-20

Love is an expression of sharing all we are with another. In what ways does the celebration of communion re-enact or re-member the love of God expressed in Christ? How can a deeper appreciation for this sacrament help us stay in love with God?

Saturday, January 27 Read 1 John 3:17-24

We are called to 'walk the walk' not merely 'talk the talk.' John tells us that God's very nature is love so why then is loving others so vital to our Christian faith?



Lesson #2: "Plain Truth for Plain People"

Small Group Study & Discussion Guide

Sermon Notes for

"Plain Truth for Plain People"

January 21, 2024

Being Vile means we accept that...

1. Everyone is equal in their sin and in the possibility of salvation through Christ's gracious love.

"Christ died for us at a time when we were helpless and sinful... But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful." - Romans 5:6,8

2. We live a discipleship shaped by...

A. ...doing no harm.

So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.- Romans 14:19

B. ...doing good.

"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up.- 1 Corinthians 10:23

C. ...staying in love with God.

"If you love me, keep my commands."- John 14:15

Part I. Pernicious Roots

1. **Share:** *Often the core of Christianity gets obscured by denominational differences, arguments of worship styles, and the tendency to pretend to be something we are not. Wesley believed that Christians needed to return to the fundamentals of radical discipleship, what he called "plain truth for plain people."*
 - What are some of the things Christians and churches do (and invest a lot of energy in) that has very little to do with the purpose for which we have been called.
 - Suppose you met someone who had never heard of Christianity. In one sentence, tell him what it fundamentally means to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Part II. Reclaiming Vile-tality

1. **Read Romans 5:1-8** Share: "Our faith is rooted in a recognition that we have done nothing, and can do nothing, to earn our own salvation. Indeed, any good we do is a response to God's love and a gracious action from the Holy Spirit." Discuss the following:
 - Why is recognizing our own sinfulness the first step to living Christ-like lives?
 - What, in practical and relational terms, does recognizing our own sinfulness look like? How does recognizing that truth affect how we live out our faith?
 - Look at Sermon note #1. If we really believe this statement, how will responding to it put us at odds with how the rest of the world works? How might this be different from merely accepting and tolerating everything anyone does?
2. **Look at Sermon note#2. Discuss the following:**
 - What does doing no harm mean to your understanding of living discipleship?
 - How is doing good more than just an occasional good deed or mission project?
 - List some ways you (and your church family) can stay in love with God.