



September 15, 2019
“Who Are Your People?”

Daily Readings and Devotions for September 16-21

Monday, September 16 Read Psalm 107:1-9;43

The shepherd metaphor throughout the Bible is very appropriate. As we see in this psalm God is about gathering in His people, redeeming the lost, healing the broken and unifying the scattered into a new people bound by God’s love and grace. What are the implications of this for us as a church? _____

How does this make us look at our differences? _____
Why? _____

Tuesday September 17 Read 1 Peter 2:1-12

The word “holy” doesn’t mean to be good or perfect, but rather to be set aside for a special purpose. That concept is summed up beautifully in vv.4-5 here. Given this, what is the motivation to live into the calling of the first three verses? _____

Peter reminds us here that the family of believers exists not to enforce moral rules but to live in a way that is both alternative to and better than the way the rest of the world works. How might that understanding shape how we worship, plan programs and interact with each other and the community? _____

Wednesday, September 18 Read Matthew 5:13-16;38-48

How does the second half of this section (vv.38-40) relate to the first four verses? _____

What does this tell us about God’s understanding of discipleship? _____

Note that the Greek word for perfect in v.48 is *teleios* literally means “looking toward completion.” How is this a reminder to constantly look beyond ourselves and towards God and others? _____

Why is that important? _____

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Thursday, September 19 Read Colossians 3:12-17

Note here that the common core of the Christian church has nothing to do with doctrine, worship practices or even Scripture but rather an all-pervasive Christian love played out in graciousness, forgiveness, restraint and care for one another. If this is true, why do we struggle with this both within and outside of the church? _____

Why is a deep relationship with Christ so important if we are to have such characteristics? _____

Friday, September 20 Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11;27-31

Read this through a couple of times. According to this passage, what is the purpose of our various gifts and talents? _____

What is the reason for the wide range of diversity within the church? _____

What binds us together and why? _____

Read on a bit and reflect on how Paul’s “more excellent way” is to guide the use of our talents.

Saturday, September 21 Read Ephesians 1:3-14

In light of this passage as well as all of the readings this week, how would you explain what is God’s ultimate plan for humanity? _____

How is this different from some of the perceptions people have about the purpose and function of the church? _____

How is the church today living into this goal and promise? _____

Sermon notes for

“Who Are Your People?”

- 1. The sole defining characteristic of the Christian family is our relationship to Jesus.**
- 2. That relationship is characterized by:**
 - A. Graciousness in the face of differences**
 - B. A passion to increase in knowledge of Christ.**
 - C. Lives that honor God rather than ourselves.**



September 22, 2019

“Who Are Your People?”

I. Gathering

1. Open with prayer
2. Read Psalm 107:1-9;43 aloud to the group and discuss the questions below:
 - *God’s desire seems to be to gather his scattered people together. What are the implications of this for us (specifically) as a church here in Cordele?*
 - *How does this make us look at our differences? Why?*

II. Living as God’s People

1. Read Matthew 5:13-16;38-48 and review the questions from Wednesday 9/18 with your group.
2. Look at the notes below from Sunday’s sermon and discuss the following questions with your group:

The sole defining characteristic of the Christian family is our relationship to Jesus.

- What is the difference between a belief in Jesus, a doctrine of Jesus and a relationship with Jesus? Is the difference important? Why or why not?

- What does such a relationship look like and how does it affect us as individuals, in our relationships and as witnesses to Christ (being salt and light)?

-What does Matthew 5:48 mean to you? (Note: The word ‘perfection’ here is translated from the Greek word ‘telios.’ Unlike the Latin ‘perfectus,’ telios (from which we derive words like telescope) implies a striving-towards as opposed to achieving a particular goal. Such a translation can affect how we understand this verse)

That relationship is characterized by:

A. Graciousness in the face of differences

- Reflect on the readings from this week. Given the varied nature of the church, why is graciousness so important? How is it the most Christ-like of attributes?

B. A passion to increase in knowledge of Christ.

-What are some ways we increase in this knowledge? In your experience is this a passion for most church members? Why or why not? Is it important?

C. Lives that honor God rather than ourselves.

- Give some specific examples of what it looks like to honor God as opposed to ourselves? What are some ways we confuse getting what makes us happy with being part of God’s larger plan (see Ephesians 1:3-14)