



Devotions and Notes for the week of October 12-17

Monday, October 12 Read Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

Read this psalm through a few times as your own personal prayer and praise. How has the Lord heard you and what is the bounty (v.12) you have received? _____

What is your thanksgiving sacrifice (v.17)? _____

What public vows are you being called upon to honor as a way of worshipping God (v.14)? _____

Be sure to use specific examples as you reflect on these questions.

Tuesday October 13 Read Genesis 18:9-15 & 21:1-7

Sarah's doubt is perfectly understandable! Both she and Abraham *are* too old and her laughter, perhaps, has a rather bitter ring to it. How much of our lives and our discipleship are shaped by what we are sure we cannot do as opposed to what we can hope that God will do? _____

How can we distinguish between the two? _____

Reflect on the how doing what God commands, however unlikely, can broaden our faith and our experience.

Wednesday, October 14 Read Exodus 19:2-

8

A covenant is a two-way relationship rooted in trust and shared experience. God here has saved the Israelites but what attitude and viewpoint is expected of them in return? _____

Why is this necessary for the purpose God has for them? _____

In what ways do you understand yourself as part of a covenantal relationship with God? _____

What does God expect from you and what do you expect from God? Why? _____

Discuss this with God in prayer today.

Thursday, October 15 Read Matthew 9:35-10:8

When Jesus talked about the need for laborers, do you

Lesson #4: October 11, 2020

“Old, Lost, Decrepit and Useless!”

Genesis 18:9-15 (The Message)

- 1. Our wildernesses feel worse when we feel unable to overcome them.**
- 2. The solution is to trust God to pull us through...according to His plans and purposes.**

*Listen to this sermon at
www.cordelefirst.com/sermons*

think the disciples initially realized he was talking about them? It's always easy to assume that the work should be done by someone more qualified or more skilled but then Jesus proceeds to give them their marching orders. How much of our reluctance to actively share the Gospel, lead church activities or take responsibility for ministry is rooted in our sense of inadequacy? _____

What do you think Jesus would say to our hesitation and why? _____

Friday, October 16 Read Romans 5:1-8

To be "justified (v.1)" means to be made right and acceptable. Sometimes our self-doubt borders on the blasphemous, as if God is somehow lying when He says he loves us! Rather than being a sign of disfavor, what does Paul suggest is the real role of challenges, hardships and tribulations? _____

How do you respond to the sufferings in your life? Why? _____

Saturday, October 17 Read Psalm 100

The core of this psalm of praise is found in v.3. All of our hope, confidence and willingness to face the world must be rooted in the sure knowledge that we belong to God and are His beloved people. What are some ways the reality of this relationship is solidified for you? _____

How can that knowledge and hope be made stronger? _____

How can such a hopeful faith be put into action and why might that be important? _____

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

If you use these devotions as a basis for a small group study, here are some suggested guidelines for framing your study and your discussion

Part 1: Discovering our wildernesses

1. Read Psalm 116 aloud and discuss the questions from Monday's devotions.
2. See if anyone had any particular question or insight from this week's readings and share them with the group.

Part 2: Feeling small in a big wilderness

1. Read Genesis 18:9-15 & 21:1-7. Ask: What do you think was going through Sarah's mind that caused her to laugh? In what ways do we often feel inadequate to God's call to ministry and how can we rise above that and trust more in God?
2. Look at the sermon notes from this week. What are some of the ways we let our challenges dissuade us from being faithful disciples? Share some specific ways members in the group have found for leaning more heavily on God in such times of challenge.

Part 3: Heading into the wilderness

1. Share Thursday's reading from Matthew with the group. Discuss the questions from Thursday's reading with the group and try to use as many specific examples or actions as you can.
2. Close with prayer