

Read - Think - Pray

7-11 February
Epiphany 5A
Prepared by: Angus Kelly

Monday

Psalm 112:1-10

Think:

Verse 6: "For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever."

I think everyone wants their lives to be of some significance; yet we feel insignificant - when compared to the heroes we encounter in the media and in history.

The Psalmist paints a simple picture of 'true greatness'; people who 'conduct their affairs with justice.' (Ps 112:5)

Pray:

Look at your day ahead; ask God to help you enact the values of the Psalm throughout the day. Think about how you and your Bible Study or Church can work together to live these values.

Tuesday

Isaiah 58:1-12

Think:

After exile some Jews return to Israel to begin rebuilding the city; rebuilding the city, fasting and praying - seem like the right thing to do. But 'religion' gets in the way of living a life that honours God.

They have the form - but not the Spirit.

The Spirit brings justice and freedom from oppression, it brings the sharing of bread rather than the hoarding.

Pray:

Ask that God would help us not to pray out of obligation; but out of love. And to show us how to begin (in some small way) living out the justice to which these passages call us.

Wednesday

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Think:

1 Cor 2:5 "So that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God."

Paul says he decided to know nothing but 'Jesus Christ, and him crucified' when he first preached to the Corinthians. In the simplicity of that gospel message he speaks of the love the God has for the world (I think of John 3:16).

You don't have to be clever to follow Jesus - you just have to love; and the Spirit will empower you to be who you were called and created to be.

Pray:

All the passages so far this week challenge religion gone wrong. Religion that leads to arrogance and fighting - and moves away from our simple dependence on God for all our strength and power.

As you pray this morning simply give thanks to God for the breath and life you have been given; and commit your life once again to serving God by loving people.

Pray that we would all have the simple faith of which Paul speaks.

Thursday

Matthew 5:13-20

Think:

YOU are the salt of the earth, YOU are the light of the world.

In this passage Jesus affirms us; and reminds us that each and every one of us in our own unique way has a gift to offer the world.

A gift that brings light and life.

YOU are God's gift to the world.

Pray:

Today, don't pray about what you should do; pray simply that God would set you free to be who you were created to be; Salt and Light - the person that you truly are; at the very core of your being when all the sin and distraction of this world is removed.

Friday

Matthew 5:21-37

Think:

Sin makes life complicated.

Being angry with people is a waste of energy. Desiring what you should not desire leads only to distress and despair.

In this portion of the beatitudes Jesus' counsels us to a more simple way of life. A life of righteousness and justice.

Pray:

Pray that God would help you to clear up your thoughts, conflicts and suspicions; so that you could live at peace with yourself, with God and with others.

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