

Read - Think - Pray

Proper 22A, 3-7 October 2011, Prepared by: Angus Kelly

Monday

Psalm

Psalm 80:7-15

Think:

For the Israelites exile to Babylon was a horrid punishment. The Psalm paints a picture of fallen Israel and conveys a sense of hopelessness; a sense of betrayal.

It is a horrible feeling to live with, but do you ever feel hopeless and betrayed? Forgotten by God?

Pray:

Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine.

Amen.

Tuesday

Old Testament

Isaiah 5:1-7

Think:

'He expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!' - Isaiah 5:7b

This text speaks of God's seeming abandonment of Israel because of all the injustice done there. It indicates every opportunity for good - stones cleared, choice vines, a watchtower, a wine vat - but wild grapes.

Are we making the most of each day and opportunity for God?

Pray:

Lord, help us to see the opportunities that you give us; the gifts and skills that we possess; the resources we have access to, the moments we have to use them. And give us the courage to bear fruit for you.

Amen.

Wednesday

Epistle

Philippians 3:4b-14

Think:

'...this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.' - Philippians 3:13-14

So often - when we dream of what we would like to do for Jesus; as a church - or as individuals, we are trapped by our past failures. Paul reminds us to forget what lies behind - and strain forward to what lies ahead.

Pray:

Thank you that every moment is a new opportunity.

Amen

Thursday

Gospel

Matthew 21:33-46

Think:

'Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.' - Matthew 21:43
Jesus challenges us as he challenged the chief priests and Pharisees of his time - they were so angered by his statement that they wanted to arrest him, which they eventually did.

Pray:

Lord, you challenge us to bear the fruits of your kingdom, so we pray again:

'Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine.' We ask that you would nurture us, discipline us and strengthen us - so that we bear the fruit of your Kingdom.

Amen

Friday

Next week's gospel

Matthew 22:1-14

Think:

This is a dramatic parable. It speaks of God's generosity inviting people off the street to a great banquet - but it also reminds us of the responsibility that comes with the privilege of invitation. One of the guests didn't bother to put on wedding robes - and was 'summarily dismissed'.

We shouldn't take our salvation for granted.

Pray:

Lord, I confess that I have often taken the privilege of invitation to your kingdom feast for granted - and have not responded to you as I should.

Help me to live as your servant.

Amen
