



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Saturday, July 18, 2020

Matthew 7:15-20 <https://tinyurl.com/yccqd9ox>

PONDER

How disappointing to pick an apple off a tree only to find the side not facing you is rotten. You're standing in an orchard full of trees so you throw the rotten one off to the side and pick a good one for your bag. If you put the rotten one in a bag full of good apples, soon the good ones will become rotten too. We have a choice in what we feed ourselves: are we going to feed ourselves with the rotten fruit swirling around us – racism, hatred, condemnation? Or are we going to feed ourselves with the fruit of Christ's example while he was here among us – acceptance of difference, naming false prophets, exposing rotten apples?

PRAYER

God, help me know when a false prophet is waging war against my faith in you. Keep my eyes focused on you so that I will bear good fruit. Thank you. Amen

ACTION

Remove a piece of bad fruit from your life.

Monday, July 13, 2020

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 <https://tinyurl.com/y9ak7zck>

PONDER

Living a holy life encompasses all kinds of things to avoid. Sins of all types should be avoided. Rejecting that which draws us away from God is part of life as a disciple of Christ. We reject sin, and yet it creeps back in. We reject unhealthy behavior, and yet we don't place a priority on exercise or proper nutrition. We reject excess, and yet we buy more than we need. Living a holy and sanctified life is a matter of balance. Choosing carrots over candy, charity over accumulating stuff, listening over ridicule, grace over judgment brings our hearts and lives into alignment with the joy of discipleship. To seek anything less leaves us being less than we can be as holy children of our loving God.

PRAYER

Holy God, be with me in all I do and say so that as I reject sin and take on your holy work I'll find rest in you. Help me balance work and play with my love for all of your creation.

ACTION

Find something you need to reject – a feeling, an action, a possession – and release it to God. Let it go completely.

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

Ephesians 4:17-5:2 <https://tinyurl.com/y8jye5mr>

PONDER

Imitate God. Live a life of love. Follow the example of Christ. This sounds simple enough, right? Yet think of all the things we imitate and live out and follow that suck the life out of our faith journey. We imitate our parents who set the tone for our lives. We love others and commit to things that keep us separated from our community of faith and the God who sustains us. We follow the lead of others, we follow politics, we follow the stock market. We're on information overload until Jesus nudges us. When we put the nudges on hold we lose precious time for holy endeavors. Putting on Christ means new life and holiness of purpose.

PRAYER

God, guide the words of my mouth so that love and truth and everything I utter builds up your people. Forgive my shortcomings and create in me a new being worthy of your grace. Thank you. Amen

ACTION

Tell someone you've never told before that you love them, and that God loves them.

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

Matthew 13:10-17 <https://tinyurl.com/y9pl9ty2>

PONDER

People often hear what they want to hear. We gather with people who look like us and think like us and have the same opinions as we do. To learn about other peoples' lives and ideas and opinions, we have to work at it. We have to listen to the voices and stories of those around us, even when they differ. We have to open our eyes and our ears and our hearts so that we can learn and grow. We have to go to unfamiliar places and talk to strangers. From simple to spectacular, the parables still speak to us today if we listen for their Truth.

PRAYER

Lord, you sent Jesus to teach and heal and save. As I read his words today, help me listen. Help me understand the deeper meaning and live fully into your Holy Presence. Thank you. Amen

ACTION

Find someone you know whose opinion on something differs from your own and have a conversation about your differences. Authentically listen to their story.

Thursday, July 16, 2020

Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24 <https://tinyurl.com/yastjv92>

PONDER

The Lord knows us. The Lord's Presence is everywhere. From our highest high to our lowest low, from our darkest day to our loneliest hour, the Lord is with us. Using this knowledge in our present-day struggles is life-giving. When happenings in the world are dark, the Lord is already working in the situation. When we celebrate accomplishments, the Lord is there. When we can't be actively present in someone's suffering, the Lord is there. This certainty, this praise of Presence, is humbling. We cannot falter when this kind of faithful love surrounds all we are and all we do in the name of our God.

PRAYER

Lord, keep me aware of your ever-abiding Presence in my life. Soar with me. Weep with me. Sit in the darkness with me. You are my Light and my Salvation. Thank you. Amen

ACTION

Look for the Lord and how the Lord's Presence awaits you at every turn in your day.

Friday, July 17, 2020

Hebrews 6:13-20 <https://tinyurl.com/y9uje8b5>

PONDER

Taking refuge in God includes promises from God and patience on our part. God's promises are true and offer us safety and rest. How easy it is for us to lose patience in God's refuge! God's timetable is not our timetable. We apply for a job, and we wait, and it passes us by. A few weeks later, we're offered something better. We ask for help, and it comes in a form we don't expect, quicker than we asked. Jesus our anchor offers us hope in our struggles and grace in our strivings, even when we can't remember to be patient. Just as we wait for a seed to sprout and grow into a ripe vegetable, God is growing us to maturity. Trust and be patient in all things.

PRAYER

God of refuge and strength, hold me tight in your arms this day as I try to be patient. Anchor me in witness for Jesus as I go about my work for your kingdom. Thank you. Amen

ACTION

Patiently accept God's promise that is being whispered to you right now.