

DAILY BIBLE STUDY SHEET

Daily meditation on the Word of God is imperative to our growth. As the people of God we should commitment reading Scripture every day. There are questions to help prompt your meditation. If you do not have a Bible, please contact the church office and one will be given to you. To locate the passages, use the Table of Contents to find the page number. The number before the colon will tell you the chapter to find. The numbers after the colon are the superscript numbers in your Bible indicating the verses to read. Our Lenten Meditations are based on Warren Wiersbe's book, "Jesus in the Present Tense."

Monday, February 22nd – Psalm 23:1-3; John 10:1-5

We turn our focus this week to Jesus' declaration, "I Am the Door." Our study yesterday pointed that the door imagery is tied to the sheepfold of the first century. It was a way to care for the sheep. As you read these passages together, what commonalities do you see? Who does the leading? How does John's teaching help us to discern between the thief and the Shepherd? Several scholars believe the gatekeeper to be John the Baptist. How does putting John the Baptist in that position give a deeper meaning to the gatekeeper? Consider the gatekeeper that opened the door for Jesus in your life. Was it a Sunday School teacher, a parent, a friend? Who taught you to hear the voice of Jesus? Now consider for whom you might be the gatekeeper. Who is it that you should be teaching to hear the voice of Jesus? Whom do you open the door to? Consider how God has been leading us to begin praying about whom we are to ask to invite. Who is God leading you to be the gatekeeper for, so you can open the door to Jesus for them?

Tuesday, February 23rd – John 3:16-21; John 10:9

John 3:16 is one verse most believers can quote. As we read what follows verse 16, how does this tie into 10:9? We live in a world where we want more than one way to eternal life, yet Jesus says that we must believe in him and pass through him. How does this challenge you? How do we minister to a world which rejects "one way" and yet still hold fast to what Christ teaches? Many say that tolerance is the key, but tolerance today has taken on a different meaning than what was the traditional definition. To be tolerant today means to be accepting of everyone else's truth. However, to be tolerant traditionally meant to forbear – which is to restrain oneself. It is to allow others to act as they choose, while still holding firm to what you believe. Just as Christ allowed others to try other doors and reject him, so we too must allow others to make that decision, while we pursue Christ and follow his voice. This is a tension that is difficult at times to relieve. Pray asking God to reveal to you how you can believe in Jesus and strengthen yourself for the freedom to come out of and to go into the world, without losing your own way to Christ's "door."

Wednesday, February 24th – John 15:18-19

As a follow up to yesterday, we read today about being either of the world or not of the world, as well as how to tell which you are part of currently. How does this tie into yesterday's discussion of tolerance? How do you feel knowing that if you choose wisely the right door, you will be rejected by the world? How many times do you choose to be loved by the world (friends, neighbors, relatives) rather than risk rejection? Spend some quiet time in prayer and journal where in your life you compromise to get those in the world to like you. Ask God to convict your heart to withstand the hate that comes from choosing Jesus and then walk through that door. Remember, Jesus is always there with you.

Thursday, February 25th – Luke 13:22-30

We have read and considered a lot about choosing to go through the door of Jesus and what that might look like in real life. Today we read about passing through the door and how narrow the entrance is. Notice that Jesus is teaching as he moves towards Jerusalem, and it is a person from one of the towns along the way who asks the question. It is not directed at the religious leaders. What did the people “left out” claim for their right to be admitted? What did you learn this week that is the key to the door? Why is belief so important and why does the belief need to be in Jesus as the Son of God? Can you fake it? Will God know? Can you fake yourself out by thinking as those who were “left out” think? Take time today to seriously consider whether or not you are passing through the narrow door or following the crowds down the super-highway of life, thinking a little bit of Jesus is enough. How can traveling down the super-highway actually cause you to miss the narrow doorway?

Friday, February 26th – Acts 20:28-31

As we finish this week, we need to look at how we are charged to live our life of coming and going through the narrow door of the Shepherd Jesus. In Acts, Paul is giving final instructions to the leaders of the church of Ephesus. He knows he will not see them again and is giving them some final directions. In verse 28, what are they charged to do? How does this look in our own setting? How are you guarding your own soul from wandering away from the narrow door? Where do you need to shore up your spiritual disciplines, so that after Easter you don't wander away again? How do you care for the flock of God—those at Saint James? Are you a once-a-week caregiver, or do you check in and encourage others more regularly than once a week? As you move to verse 29, what does Paul warn about? What makes a wolf in the midst of the church sheep? How would you recognize a wolf? How do you know that an outside wolf is present in your midst—what would be some indicators? Now move to verse 30. Notice that the wolves in verse 30 become those already in the midst of the believers. What is the indicator that they are wolves leading others to the wrong door? What door are they leading them to? What will be their weapon of choice to lead the sheep astray? Why do we need to take extra care of what we say to each other? How important is it that our words always point to Jesus? Consider where you may have fallen into this trap of misspoken words. Seek forgiveness and the power of the Holy Spirit to keep you heart, mind and words pointing towards the door of eternal life.

Saturday, February 27th – *To prepare for tomorrow's worship please read John 10:11-18*