

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.

Monday, April 10th – Luke 16:1-9

We begin this week by looking at this parable of Jesus. It seems to confuse many people, but let's try to get some insight into it, so that we can better understand and apply it. Read verses 1-4. What is the situation the servant finds himself in? What is going to happen? What does the servant come up with as the solution to his problem (vss. 5-7)? This sounds deceitful, if we do not understand the culture of the time. The Law prohibited the loaning of money with interest. One way around it would be to charge more for wheat or olive oil. So when the servant is reducing the amounts, it is believed he was removing the interest portion. Olive oil, being considered of more value than wheat, would carry a heavy repayment plan. What does this reveal about the master in this story? He is not as innocent as we may have thought! How does this explain the response in verse 8? What is Jesus' advice to his listeners (vs. 8b)? Do you think Jesus is telling them to be cunning when it comes to money? The answer to that is no. Jesus however, is encouraging us to not hoard our money, but be generous in helping others. Be smart and loving when it comes to the use of our money. If you were brought before Jesus today, how would he rate your use your money? Are you generous to others or are your personal finance interests more important? Be honest with yourself, because you are not fooling God.

Tuesday, April 11th – Luke 16:10-17

Today we read the next part of Jesus' teaching from yesterday. Remember, the point yesterday was to not hoard, but to be generous towards others. Read verses 10-12. What point is Jesus making? How does how we handle the gift of our money and possessions reflect on our faith? If we do not handle our finances or those of others faithfully, what will be the consequences? What is the heart result of improper care of what God has provided us (vs. 13)? You can't say you love and serve God and hoard or misspend your financial resources. Remember, Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees. What is their response to his story and summary comments (verse 13), in vs. 14? What is Jesus' response to them (vs. 15)? The Pharisees looked at the possession of land and great wealth as God's blessings on them. It appeared to them and others that they had it right with God. How does what Jesus say tear that understanding apart? As we read verse 16, Jesus is announcing that the Kingdom of God is present and the rich are not necessarily the only ones getting in. Everyone who believes is forgiven and accepted. This new understanding does not do away with the Law, but rather the Law is a collection of "sign-posts" that point to the Kingdom of God in Jesus. Nothing is removed. Not even the heart of the Law that teaches about finances. The Kingdom of God does not hoard or boast about finances. Those in the Kingdom of God understand they have all resources available to them, for God is the one who provides, so they can give generously. Which master are you serving? Are you like the Pharisees who mock Jesus and cling to the prosperity gospel – if I am rich, it is because I am favored by God? Which master are you serving if this is your perspective? Spend time today considering Jesus' example and teaching. What might the Holy Spirit convict in you so your understanding of money and resources can be transformed into Kingdom thinking?

Wednesday, April 12th – Mark 12:41-44

We now turn to Mark and Jesus' teaching about the widow and her two pennies. As we read this story, we will learn two things about giving. We learn about motive and amounts. Read verses 41-42. What is happening in front of Jesus? What is the stark contrast between those in verse 41 and the widow? The collection boxes had large metal bells that the donations would be made into. Imagine the sound of vast amounts of coins being donated. For large sums of money, it might even make people look to see who was giving so much, based on the sound. What do you think the motive for depositing such large amounts of change into the donation box might have been, in addition to giving back to God? Now consider the widow's contribution. How much noise would that have made? And yet, Jesus noticed her donation as well. Now read verse 43. According to Jesus, who gave more, the rich people or the widow? From the human perspective, what would most people answer? What does Jesus say about this (vs. 44)? What category do you think Jesus would find you in? Are you among those who give to be seen or who only give out of their excess? Or are you a giver who does not draw attention to themselves? Do you have faith to sacrificially give as the widow did? It is important to check your own motive and to check in with God in prayer. God will guide you on what you need to give. It isn't that God needs your money, but that you may need a "faith-lift". Our faith is never strengthened when we give out of our excess. It is grown and strengthened only when we have no choice but to rely on God to meet our needs.

Thursday, April 13th – John 13:1-20 Maundy Thursday Service 6:00 pm

Happy Passover. Today is the the third day of Passover this year. The actual meal would have been eaten the first two nights. Tonight we will celebrate as it would have been on the third night of the celebration. In preparation for tonight, read the account of the Passover feast from John. What elements are present? How does it make you feel to know the Lord teaches about humility through foot washing? Read the conversation in verses 6-11 between Peter and Jesus. Where do we need to submit like Peter? Finish by reading verses 12-20 again. Imagine Jesus saying this to you. What is he telling you? What is he asking of you? What are you called to do in response to Jesus' words? See you tonight for our Maundy Thursday Celebration, as we live and experience this text.

Friday, April 14th – John 19:12-42 Good Friday Service 7:00 pm

Today is Good Friday, the day Christ gives himself up for you and all humanity. There is no meditation today. Just slowly read through the text. Imagine yourself being there. What do you feel? What do you see? Who do you join with? Be in the moment. Then join us tonight at the foot of the cross.

Saturday, April 15th – *No reading today as we wait for the light to return tomorrow.*