

DAILY BIBLE STUDY SHEET

As the people of God we should be committed to reading Scripture every day. Here are daily readings and questions to help prompt your meditation. If you do not have a Bible, please contact the church office and we would be honored to provide one. To locate the passages, use the Table of Contents to find the page number of the book. 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, August 12th – Acts 2:1-24 (read through 41 to see the full witness)

This week of our Believing Out Loud series, we look at what it is to be a witness. Sometimes we have a tendency to turn into lawyers rather than witnesses. So, we will look at witnessing examples and try to actually practice being a witness this week. We start with Acts and our first set of witnesses to the Good News. What is the first thing we learn about these future witnesses (vs. 1)? They are gathered together, because God is communal. While as individuals, we may have personal witnesses to God's work in our lives, it is in commonly shared experiences in community that we often experience his presence and power in our lives. What happens next (vss. 2-12)? What does this tell you about the Holy Spirit's work in people? How many languages are probably being spoken here (vss. 7-11)? As we move on, who are the first to begin speaking (vs. 14)? While Peter is doing the talking, notice who is with him. They, too, are talking (interpreting) all those other languages, so they are actually all witnessing through Peter's sermon. How does Peter explain what is happening (vss. 16-21)? These are Jews he is speaking to and they would know this text from the prophet Joel. Next Peter begins to explain how and why this has come about that day. What does he say (vss. 22-24)? How is Peter able to say these things? How does he know God prearranged these events, based on human responses to Jesus? How does Peter know that death could not hold Jesus? How is Peter able to make such claims? Because Peter heard Jesus talk about this before this death and Peter then saw the risen Lord. Peter simply tell the people what he and the others had heard and seen. He is simply a witness to what he has experienced. Ok, so how have you experienced God or seen God work? What part of the Good News have you experienced? Write it down. Write down in a few short sentences what God promised to do and actually did in you. If you are not sure what to write, pray and ask God to show you. Then be quiet and let the Spirit do His thing! But WRITE IT DOWN.

Tuesday, August 13th – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Yesterday, we spent time discovering how God has worked/taught/changed/healed in our lives. We found something we can witness to about God. If you don't know what God has done for you and cannot name it, you can't be a witness. So that is first and foremost. Next is how we begin to share it with others. Read through today's passage. What does Paul do to be afforded the opportunity to witness to all sorts of people (vs. 19)? How is this from a position of humility? He does not witness using a "top-down" approach but rather a "bottom-up" one. What examples does Paul give concerning where he meets folks in their lives (vss. 20-22)? And what is Paul's sole purpose for this course of action (vs. 23)? Common ground with folks is where our story intersects with theirs, so we can show them how their story also intersects with God's. Think about the folks you hang out with or meet with on a regular basis. How can you be like Paul, finding common ground with them? Not being better or worse than them but sharing like experiences. When you find the common ground, *begin to pray* so that you can witness to how God has worked through or is working through that part of your life. This actually requires us to live our faith, our belief Out Loud. We know our story and we intentionally begin to find ways to share it Out Loud, not as a know-it-all, but as one who has a gift to share. It is important at this point to remember that not everyone wants the gift. Our job is to witness to and only offer them Christ. If they want to accept what you have to offer, bring them to Jesus and trust the Spirit to help you bring them to repentance and faith in the Good News. But know that not everyone is going to want to hear what you have to say, and that's okay. You are called to be faithful and to be a witness. God will make you fruitful. Okay, today's assignment is to think about who you are going to meet and find ways to find common ground with them, so that you may witness as to how God intersects in your life there and intersects with their lives, too.

Wednesday, August 14th – Philippians 1:3-8

So far, we have written down our story with God, what we have seen and experienced. We have also learned how to connect with those with whom we would like to share. Today we get our marching orders. And what I like about today's text, it shifts the responsibility from me being the "paid witness" or "paid professional" to being one witness among many sharing the Good News. What does Paul write that helps me remember this (vss. 3-8)? What words of encouragement for this sharing the Good News does Paul give the Philippians (vs. 6)? Why does Paul have a special place in his heart for them (vs. 7)? As we read this text (and there are others like this one), we see that spreading and sharing the Good News is not just the Pastor's job. Paul was their pastor, but they shared the work with him. So how are you doing at sharing the work with your pastor? How are you helping spread the Good News? Well, today is a good day to start. Take time to consider who you will meet today and pray asking God to show you how to connect and share. Also ask God to help you keep your eyes open for the one that you might not have planned on meeting, but God has scheduled you to meet. We need to share in season and out. And we need to do it OUT LOUD WITH WORDS.

Thursday, August 15th – Acts 18:24-28

We return to the Book of Acts today to learn about another witness. Who is this witness and what do we learn about him (vss. 24-25)? He was witnessing boldly to what he knew, even if he didn't get it completely accurate. How did he get help in becoming more accurate (vs. 26)? This is where our small groups come in handy. It allows us to help each other become more accurate. Now read verses 27-28. Becoming more accurate, Apollos could refute the Jews' arguments and use Scripture to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Also note, Apollos had an exceptional gift for this. Who among us has that kind of exceptional gift for sharing the Good News? While we are all to do that, some, like Apollos, have a special talent given by God. Does that mean the rest of us are off the hook? Do you think the Church of Ephesus just stopped talking about Jesus, because Paul and Apollos would handle it? Of course not! But we do need to be aware and on the lookout for those with this gift and be encouraging and ready to send them out into the world. Consider who you know in the body of Christ who has that kind of calling. Are you one? While you think about this, remember today is a new day and you have a divine appointment somewhere today to share the Good News. Be in prayer and ready to go when the moment arrives.

Friday, August 16th – 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Today we will learn about why our motive matters when we witness to others about the Good News. What does Paul say about his and his companion's motives, when speaking with the Thessalonians (vs. 3)? What in verses 1-2 support his statement in verse 3? Paul offers additional support regarding his motives. What support does he give (vss. 4-8)? What does this tell you about how Paul feels and relates to the Thessalonian church? He had rights, but he forgoes his rights to meet their needs. What did Paul think was their biggest need? Hearing the Good News seems to be the answer to that question. Notice verse 5. What did they not do? We are to be friends with folks, even if they don't believe. Today, examine your motives. Are they pure? Are they loving towards others? Do you care about the eternity of others, or do you just not bother? Consider today what you have learned this week about sharing the Good News of what God has done in your life and what God wants to do for others. Where do you need to step up your game? Where do you need a motive check? Go out and share with someone today, after praying and asking God to show you and guide you. I can't wait to hear what God does!

Saturday, August 17th – To prepare for tomorrow's worship, please read Romans 10:5-11.