



A WEEKLY RESOURCE FOR LIVING OUT THE WORD OF GOD

What: a weekly resource that helps the community of CCE take the sermon into their lives throughout the week with a variety of reflections, group discussions, and individual practices.

Why: Sermons aren't just for Sunday morning. "We submit ourselves to the way of faith and practice revealed in the Word of God. The sermon is explanation and exhortation, making this Word clear and *applying it to our lives.*" (definition on bulletin)

Individual and communal rhythms that help us take the liturgy into daily life allow us to open ourselves to what God is teaching us through his Word and his people.

Feel free to go through all the days, or select one or two exercises that help you apply the sermon to your life this week.

February 9, 2020

Sermon Title: Union With Him

Mike Boland

Passage: Ephesians 2:11-22

NT Reading: John 17:20-26

Key Idea: As we continue in Ephesians, we read Paul's letter to the Church about the Church. Paul is reminding us that we have been given access to the Trinity and to His Glory. We are a part of the bigger story and the bigger family. Through Jesus taking on the hostility of the world, we have become fellow citizens with one another – a commonality that nothing else can compare to. So how do we get this? There is no way for us to achieve this gift of being welcomed into the Fellowship, we simply must receive it.

Monday: Lectio Divina

Take some time to practice an ancient way of reading Scripture. For more on lectio divina, see the additional resources at the end.

- (Lectio) Reading*. Slowly read the sermon text (Ephesians 2:11-22) and get a sense of what it is saying. Read it a second time and listen for any words that strike you.
- *(Meditatio) Reflecting*. Read the passage again slowly. As you pause on the words or phrases that stick out to you, take some time to consider what the word, passage, or phrase means (in the context of Scripture) and how God might be using it to speak to anything in particular in your life.
- *(Oratio) Responding*. Read the passage again, slowly. Consider now how God has spoken to **you** in this passage and respond back to him.
- *(Contemplio) Remaining*. Now, take time to simply remain in the presence of God.

Tuesday: Discussion Guide

Each week we'll provide some questions to consider that will help you take the Scripture and the sermon into a deeper place. We hope this fosters meaningful conversations with those in your community group, your spouse or a friend. Authentic change happens in community.

1. How does it make you feel knowing that there is no way to achieve the goodness Paul talks about?
2. If you truly believed, at a gut level, what Paul is saying about not being able to work for your glory, how would it affect your everyday life?
3. How does it affect you, knowing that God has made you "fellow citizens", "members of the household of God", and a part of "the holy temple"? What are your thoughts, feelings, and desires?
4. Read verses 11-12 again. Paul reminds the Church that they were once separate from Christ and without hope. How does it affect you to look back on your own life and remembering when you were alienated and see what Christ has done for you?

Wednesday: Review of Confession

Father, this morning we are reminded that we were once far off and alienated from ourselves, each other and most of all from you. We went on our own way, seeking to find life and meaning on our own. Thank you Jesus that through your blood we have been brought near and have access to the Father. Forgive us Lord for not cherishing what you have done for us and treating it as secondary in our lives. Forgive us for allowing hostility to continue to divide our relationships and not pursuing peace with one another. Jesus you are our peace. As we go to your table, help us experience the union and access we have with you and the Father. Fill our hearts with your love, Amen.

Spend some time talking with God. Perhaps this corporate confession stirred some deeper places in your soul that need to receive His grace.

As you received communion this past Sunday, what burden did God free your heart from?
Where do you sense God drawing you further to himself, his community, the world?

We were reminded at Communion that Jesus is the Bread of Life—here to feed us. (see 1 Sam 21:1-6 and Mark 2:23-28) Nothing else has meaning in or value in our life unless we start with Sabbath and receive nourishment from Christ.

Thursday: Hymn Devotional

From the text, Paul's prayer for the church is that, we know what Christ has done in our lives by looking back and remembering our story. Let's meditate on the kindness, power, and Glory of the Lord God Almighty with In Christ Alone.

*In Christ Alone/Solid Rock
Stuart Townend / Kristian Stanfill / Travis Cottrell*

*In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my life, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid rock
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of Love, what depths of Peace
When fears are stilled, when Strivings cease!
My comforter, my all in all
Here in the love of Christ I stand*

*There in the ground, His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ*

*On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand*

*No guilt in life, no fear in death
This the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry, to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till he returns or call me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand*

Friday: Sabbath/Soul Rest

Read over this quote from Brennan Manning's book "[The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus](#)":

"The Psalmist writes, "Pause awhile, and know that I am God" (26:10). I favor the Jerusalem Bible Translation because it takes time for me to be still, to come to that place of inner quiet. Stillness is more than silence and it is beyond solitude. Interior stillness is too deep for words. Unhampered by self-consciousness, our attention is focused entirely on God and His love."

Take a few minutes— ideally at the beginning of your day, or whenever works best for you— and simply do nothing. Just be. Stand in love before God. Sit there long enough for the peace of his spirit to well up inside your body. Thank him for it.