

11/8/20 Covenants

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/8ferLlsvlml>

Read: 2 Corinthians 5: 14-21

In Jesus' death and resurrection, we see that true covenant faithfulness looks like self-giving love. When we receive, trust, and imitate the love of Jesus, we begin to live as the humans God created us to be. We can once again glimpse the beauty God had in mind when he first created and partnered with humanity.

Question 1:

Review 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. According to this passage, what does it look like to partner with God in his new humanity?

Question 2:

Who is one person that is difficult to love in your life? How can you partner with God to forgive, love, and honor them this week?

Question 3:

Identify a challenge in your family, neighborhood, or workplace where self-giving love could make all the difference. Take a moment and ask God to give you wisdom about how you can be a faithful covenant partner with him in that scenario this week.

11/15/20 Temple

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/wTnq6l3vUbU>

Read: Ephesians 2:11-22

All the nations, also known as Gentiles, were once separated from Israel's temple. Literal walls kept them from accessing God's presence on earth. But it was always God's plan for Israel to be a light to all the nations, so that everyone could have access to his life and love. Though Israel failed to faithfully shine this light, Jesus carried Israel's story forward by tearing down the walls of division and rebuilding the temple. But instead of building with bricks, this time he built a whole new temple made of both Jews and Gentiles. Now God's presence can live inside of a unified multiethnic group of people.

Question 1:

What stands out to you as you read this passage?

Question 2:

What is hindering unity in the relationships within your family, church, and city? How has Jesus addressed those barriers with his death, resurrection, and ascension?

Question 3:

Ask God to bring one person he wants to reach to your mind this week. Who is he/she? How will you reach out? Is there anything you need to repair in the relationship? Consider asking him/her to show you where God's power and presence is at work in their life. Listen and seek a connection.

11/22/20 Witness

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/jhcmzjwbvyk>

Read: Matthew 28: 16-20

The disciples are told to go to a mountain after witnessing Jesus' life, death, and powerful resurrection. When they see Jesus alive on the mount, this amazing encounter leads many to worship Jesus, but some of the disciples still doubt what they've seen. Jesus comes closer and tells his disciples to go to all the nations with the authority of his name, the testimony of his message, and the assurance of his constant presence.

Question 1:

How can you bear witness to what you have seen, heard, and learned about Jesus?

Question 2:

Why do you think some disciples doubted when they witnessed Jesus alive from the dead? What do you need to believe in order to move away from doubt into worshipful amazement?

Question 3:

Review verse 19. What are disciples of Jesus commissioned to do exactly? What happens to our Christian witness when we neglect an aspect of this call (i.e., only make disciples of our own nationality or only teach some of Jesus' commands)?

Question 4:

What do you think can happen when we seek to obey Jesus' commission (vs. 19) without remembering his promise to never leave us (vs. 20)? Reflect on this powerful promise and how it is fulfilled in the gift of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:3-9). In response, pray to receive or remember his gift.

11/29/20 Lamentations

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/p8GDFPdaQZQ>

Read: Lamentations Chp. 3

Learning to lament is an uncomfortable yet important part of our spiritual growth, and since there's so much worth lamenting in the world right now, this is an appropriate time to practice. May God give us hearts big enough to take up the pain of the world and bring it to him in prayer.

Question 1:

What is one broken reality that comes to mind as you allow Lamentations 3 to shift your mood?

Question 2:

What about this broken reality would be wrong in God's eyes? How does this circumstance go against God's plan for his world? Take time to protest, process your emotion, and voice any confusion in a heartfelt prayer.

Question 3:

Consider Jesus' cross and empty tomb as you lament this broken reality. How did Jesus enter into the sufferings of the world? How does Jesus' resurrection change your perspective on the state of the world?

Question 4:

Notice how the poet does not place his hope in improved circumstances; rather, he places his hope in Yahweh (vs. 24). What do you think it looks like to place our hope in Yahweh instead of in our desired outcomes?

Question 5:

How do the truths in verses 21-26 help us hope in Yahweh while we grieve?