

Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 11/4/18

Monday – Read Matthew 28:16-20. **The Great Commission.** This scripture is the basis for our mission *to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. Jesus sends us out to make disciples of all people by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that he has commanded us. There are two ways we make disciples of Jesus Christ. Through evangelism we share the Good News about Jesus with people and help them to grow in faith to confess that Jesus is Lord. Through baptism people become Christians, and we help them grow as disciples by teaching them Jesus' ways in a small group. Pray for the young people in our church.

Tuesday – Read Hebrews 10:19-25. **Encourage One Another.** When people are baptized and become Christians, we do not expect them to become super-Christians overnight. Rather, we help people begin the process of growing in God's sanctifying grace. This is the grace that helps us to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who continually seek to do God's will. We recognize that being a Christian is not something any of us can do by ourselves. We need the encouragement of other Christians. We offer and find this encouragement when we connect with others in a small group and when we connect to ministry by serving with people in our church. Even as we connect to God in worship we are filled with the Holy Spirit so that we can go back into the world to join in Jesus' ministry to all people. Spend some time praying for someone you know who could use some encouragement, and ask God to help you reach out to someone in our church who has not been to church in a while.

Wednesday – Read Matthew 19:13-15 and II Kings 2:1-18. **Youth and Children's Ministry.** Children and youth are important persons in our church, and we give our best to help our youngest generation grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Faith is passed from generation to generation. Young Christians learn how to follow and serve God by spending time with long-time Christians who have served the Lord for many years. You can make a tremendous difference in the life of young person by sharing your wisdom and your time. Who are you mentoring? If you would like to help with our Children's Ministry, contact Tausha Davison-Beverly, and if you would like to help with our Youth Ministry, contact Rev. Michael Carpenter. Spend some time praying for our youth and our children.

Thursday – Read Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12 and Ezra 7:10. **Finding the Bible Again.** The kings who reigned after Josiah led the people back into idol worship. They were defeated and taken captive. Once again, they lost the Bible and forgot God's ways. In 445 B.C. when they returned to Jerusalem, Nehemiah helped them rebuild the Temple and the walls of the city. Nehemiah called the people together, and Ezra, the priest, read the Bible to them for six hours. Levites helped the people understand. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. We encourage people in our church to be part of a Sunday school class or a small group so we can help each other understand God's Word. Pray for the people in your small group.

Friday – Read Mark 2:1-12. **Stretcher Bearers and Care Ministry.** Jesus has the power to heal, and the men in this story had a friend who needed healing so they brought their friend to Jesus. At first, they could not find a way through the crowd, but they did not let that stop them. They carried their friend up on the roof and dug through it so they could lower their friend to Jesus. Jesus was impressed by the faith of these friends. We all need at least four close friends who will serve as our stretcher bearers. Do you know how you find stretcher-bearers? You become a stretcher bearer for someone else. Members of our Care Committee visit our homebound members and comfort grieving families when we have a funeral. Through their caring acts of ministry they bring people to Jesus. What would you be willing to do to bring your friends to Jesus? Contact Jean Webber if you would like to serve in our Care Ministry. Pray for our homebound members and grieving families.

Saturday – Read Malachi 3:8-12, 16-18. **Tithing increases my faith in God.** This is the only passage in the Bible where God invites us to put God to the test. Do you believe that God blesses us when we respond to God through generous giving? How is it true that 90% with God's blessing goes further than 100% without God's blessing? Pray for God to help you give God your first and best so God can bless the rest. Prayerfully consider, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give this year?"

Lectionary Readings: Ruth 1:1-18; Psalm 146; Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34.

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