

Community of Grace

DAILY WALK WEEK OF JULY 25, 2022

Partners in Ministry: Stronger Together
Written by Wanda Mulkey

Monday, July 25, 2022

Lesson: Mark 10:35-45

Procrastination. Here I sit at my computer, writing seven Daily Walks in one day. How crazy. And actually, I will still be a day late with my writings. I don't know how Alexia puts up with me. I love writing. But starting the process is the problem. I think it started in school. It was not hard for me to wait until the last minute to do a school project and slap it out, then get a good grade. Or wait until the day before a test to study. I always seemed to do good. But in real life, to procrastinate is not fair to the people who have to wait on you. So, I am down on myself today. Not feeling sorry for me but mad at me. As I contemplate my next sentence, I keep coming back to the Bible. I found out that there are at least 24 verses that reference procrastination. Like James 4:17, "If anyone, then knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them." Now that is deep. And Psalm 119:60, "I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments." Or 1 Corinthians 14:40, "But all things should be done decently and in order." I surely know now that anything you need to know is in the Bible. And I need to get to praying about this procrastination. I know only God can help me with this. One more thing, my mother had said many times, "You'll be late to your own funeral." Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, Many of us do not realize the burden we put on others. Help us in our everyday lives to be more aware of our shortcomings. Be with us as we go through our struggles. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

Tuesday, July 26, 2022

Lesson: Romans 9:30-10:4

When my children were younger, I was a Sunday School teacher for first and second graders. It is exciting to teach the little ones.

They observe and share so much love that it takes your breath away. I love kids. You never know what they will say or do but you do know that it will be honest, even if it hurts. One time we were discussing the Ten Commandments. I told them that these were the basic laws. If we did not break these laws, Jesus would be so pleased. One little boy raised his hand and said, "Wow! My dad doesn't have a chance with Jesus. He has already broken two of those laws." Another time, I was teaching about Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai. I had gone behind the church and made a path to a bush. On this bush I had "flames" made out of tissue paper all throughout the plant. On that Sunday morning (a warm Sunday) my class and I walked the path and discussed how hard it would have been for Moses to go up the mountain. When we arrived at the bush, I said, in my deepest voice, "Take off your shoes Moses, for you are on holy ground." First, the children looked at me like I had two heads. But then they saw me taking off my shoes and then they began to take theirs off. Except for one little boy (that I will call Matt.) Again, I said in my deepest voice, "Matt, take your shoes off, you are on holy ground." He stood there with his shoes still on his feet. So, I whispered, "Matt, don't you see the burning bush? That is God talking to Moses." Then he said, in his most mature, for a six-year-old, voice, "Miss Wanda, if I am walking up a mountain all by myself and I see a bush on fire, talking to me, the last thing I will do is take off my shoes. I will need them to run away like the wind." Touché. Now, I love teaching all kids but the ones like Matt are my favorite. They have a mind of their own and if you listen to them, they will teach you something. Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for the laws and guidance you have given us. If we follow the path of righteousness and obey your commandments, we

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will be a beacon for others. Maybe then they will choose to seek your wisdom. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Partners in Ministry: Trust in God

Written by Pastor Matt Henning

Wednesday July 27th Love and Trust

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous." Matthew 5: 43-45. Jesus is calling his followers to love even when they encounter someone who "persecutes" them. He goes on to point out that it is easy to love people who love you and that it is a great challenge to love the un-loveable. For Jesus, the love command is about sharing the same grace that we are given in our own baptisms. Baptism is where we are loved by God, marked, claimed, and given a place at the table. Reflecting on the complete grace we have all been given by God will empower us to love; with such trust, that we will be able to love where we once thought it was impossible. Trusting in God's grace will grow love in our lives, relationships, and interaction with the world around us. Prayer: "Guide me into deeper practices of love for my neighbor, even when it is difficult for me to do, this day. Amen."

Thursday July 28th

Trust in the right things

"Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches? Truly, no ransom avails for the one's life, there is no price one can give to God for it." Psalm 49:5-7. It is tempting to misplace trust in the things of our lives: our jobs, our bank accounts (property), or our own abilities. The psalm

writer is calling us to remember that all we have (our lives) are a daily gift of God. Placing our trust in God each day over the things of our days will enable us to understand God's love, grace, and mercy for us. God invites us into life thru trust in his loving way in our world. Each day will present its own challenges and God is with us calling us to place our trust in the right things that he has placed in our lives. Prayer: "Gracious God, my life is in your hands. Help me to remember your love to be a good steward of all that you have given me and to place my trust in you. Amen."

Friday July 29th

Build Your House on Wisdom

"Do not envy the wicked, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of mischief. By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches." Proverbs 24: 1-4. The teacher in proverbs is inviting us to place our trust in the wisdom of God. This is found in the Scriptures, and it invites us to not "envy" what appears to be successful or popular in our world. The proverb also teaches us that the truly "precious and pleasant" things in our lives grow out of the wisdom of God. When we put God's grace and mercy into practice wisdom and love grow. When we read the scriptures, talk with a spiritual friend, or invite the Holy Spirit in through prayer we grow in wisdom and understanding. Take time today to build your house with the bricks of God's Living Word that God's wisdom would temper any envy or desire we experience in this life. Prayer: "Guide me, O Lord, deeper into your wisdom this day that I may put aside my envy and desires placing all my trust in you. Amen."

Saturday July 30th Nothing New

"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing of

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which it is said, 'See, this is new'? It has already been, in the ages before us. The people of long ago are not remembered, nor will there be any remembrance of people yet to come by those who come after them." Ecclesiastes 1:9-11. When Luther reads this text he reflects on the reality that God is up to new things, while humans remain sinful, unable to do anything to make up for that sin. We all fall short in one way or another, but God is ever creative in grace and mercy at work in the world around us. If we were left to ourselves we would be in trouble, but we are not alone. We have a God who loves us and wants what is best for us even when we fall short. Though our lives are made small by sin, God's grace is great and brings us to his kingdom of mercy. It is God who will make all things new through love and mercy. Prayer: "When we look at our lives and efforts we see that there is nothing new. In your grace bring us into your kingdom of mercy. Amen."

Sunday July 31st

Partners in Ministry...Trust in God

"Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So, it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.'" Luke 12:18-21. I usually look at this text in relation to money or things that I accumulate throughout my life; but today I'm looking at this text in relation to my need to plan and control the things of my life (using control to build a bigger barn). Today is the last day that I will preach and preside at Community of Grace and there is no amount of planning that I could do to be ready for this day. There is no amount of

work I could accumulate that would ensure me I have done everything I need to do to prepare the congregation for change and its future. Jesus is inviting me in this lesson to realize that "yes" correct there is no way for you to plan your congregation into a "larger barn" spiritually. He is inviting me to trust in God over my own abilities. To understand that God is at work in this ministry through Holy Spirit has been growing all these years. When I let go of control and step in with faith, then I am simply called to trust, to believe, and to understand that God will be at work in the same way next week when I am not here as God is at work in the present when I am. This is easy to understand but it is really hard to do; thankfully, God will be here to help me. Prayer: "Gracious Lord, enable me to place my trust in your provision for Community of Grace. That your Spirit, the people and your Kingdom would thrive in the years to come. Amen."