

Daily Walk on the Rock



St. Paul Lutheran Church

“Your Refuge from the Storm”

Date: October 22, 2023

Text: Isaiah 5:1-7, Matthew 21:33-46

Theme: Restoration

Restoring the Church: God’s Vineyard

Day 1: Monday —“Prone to Wander, Lord, I Feel It”

In the 1700s Robert Robinson wrote lyrics which speak of God’s rich blessings and our aptness to wander from God’s love and grace. Read our theme texts, Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46, then ponder Robinson’s lyrics: “Come, thou Fount of ev’ry blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; Streams of mercy never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise...O, to grace how great a debtor, daily I’m constrained to be! Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter, bind my wand’ring heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love; here’s my heart; Lord, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.” In humility and with gratitude, offer the Lord your heart.

Day 2: Tuesday—The Problem Is Not with the Owner of the Vineyard!

Do we serve God with full devotion and grateful hearts, or do we expect God to serve us and cater to our desires? Prayerfully, read Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46. Pay close attention to word pictures of the landowner’s (God’s) deep love and tender care for his vineyard (people). Did you notice the protection the landowner provides? Ponder the reference to the vineyard as God’s “pleasant planting” (*NRSV*) or “garden of his delight” (*NIV*). Have you ever been betrayed by someone you cherished and into whom you had poured your heart? Imagine the Lord’s grief at being spurned by those he loves. Spend time telling the Lord you love him.

Day 3: Wednesday—Truth for God’s People of All Generations

We cannot trifle with God! God is God! Read Deuteronomy 6:1-15; 7:6-11; 8:11-19. Did you notice God’s heart of love and God’s desire to bless? Did you also hear the warnings? God is love! But God is also holy, and God deserves our worship, love, and obedience. God’s words in Deuteronomy were spoken to God’s people as they prepared to enter the Promised Land; centuries later, prophets were still bringing God’s messages to God’s people. Read Isaiah 5:1-7 and notice the similarities to God’s message in Deuteronomy. How is Jesus’ message in Matthew 21 similar to the earlier passages? Pray for the Spirit’s insight about what these messages say to us today.

Day 4: Thursday—Tender Love and Tough Love

Ponder the depth of our holy God’s love for us and patience toward us, as you read John 3:16; Romans 2:4; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 2 Peter 3:8-9; and 1 John 4:9-10. Do you struggle with the judgment

aspects of our Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46 texts, or do you accept that, sometimes, we so strain against the cords of grace and love with which God binds us to himself that God allows us to break free and suffer for it? How might the judgment pictured in our theme texts lead, ultimately, to restoration? Use Robinson’s lyrics (Day 1) to again form your prayer.

Day 5: Friday—Learning from the History of God’s People

Isaiah prophesied to people distracted from whole-hearted devotion to God and captivated by sins including idolatry, materialism, greed, complacency, and injustice. For generations, God sent prophets to warn the people that, if they did not repent, judgment would come through history (foreign invaders, exile). Jeremiah wrote Lamentations after the judgment had happened. Listen to the messages of judgment and hope as you read Lamentations 1:4-5,18; 2:5-6a; 3:19-26. Now read Matthew 21:33-46 (note: the servants are the prophets); Romans 15:4; and 2 Peter 1:19-21. Are we, God’s people today, heeding these lessons from Scripture? Pray it is so.

Day 6: Saturday—Just What Is ‘Fruit’?

Read Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46 again. Isaiah speaks about bad fruit or wild grapes. The Matthew parable pictures tenants who disrespect/disregard the landowner (God) and exhibit a sense of entitlement; they attempt to usurp the landowner’s right to that which is his. The parable is an attempt to awaken the Jews (especially the religious leaders) to God’s love and grace, made manifest in the Son/heir, Jesus. And once awakened, all are called to bear fruit. But what is the good fruit or harvest that the vineyard (God’s people) should be producing for the master? Read John 15:1-12; Galatians 5:22-23; and James 3:17-18. Ask the Spirit to bear fruit in and through you.

Day 7: Sunday—Repentance and Restoration

Ponder again the messages of Isaiah 5:1-7 and Matthew 21:33-46. God’s people face judgment because they are not honoring God as God and bearing fruit for God’s glory. They have become self-focused and have missed their servant mission/call. Have we as individuals and churches also failed to remember our identity—who we are and whose we are (*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)? Are there consequences (*John 15:1-12 and Revelation 2:4-5*)? What does Scripture say about restoration (*2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 51:1-12; 1 John 1:5-9*)? Pray what is on your heart.



Deuteronomy 6:7 is a call for parents/grandparents/adults to talk about faith issues throughout the day. We have a chance to be facilitators of intentional connect conversations with our children. Here is what the verse says about faith matters...

“Impress them upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” -Deut 6:7

Mealtime

...when you sit at home...

Verse:

Look up and read aloud Galatians 5:22

God cuts off and trims branches to keep the garden fruitful. Fill in the blanks:

- _____ is the true vine.

(Jesus Christ)

- _____ is the gardener.

(God the Father)

- _____ are the branches.

(We)

- The fruit of being nourished with God's Spirit is _____.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for preparing everything we need to produce a fruitful harvest. Help restore us as workers in your vineyard – bearing the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in the world. Nourish us with fruit of your Holy Spirit. Amen!

Morningtime

...when you get up...

Before the day begins, find a quiet place to pray Psalm 80:19. Pray it two or three times as you listen for God's voice. Look for God's face shining upon you throughout the day, restoring you as his wonderful creation!

Restore us, O LORD God Almighty; make your face shine upon us; that we may be saved.
- Psalm 80:19



Drivetime ...along the road...

Key Verse:

Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. - 1 Peter 3:8

Questions:

Harmony is a combination of musical notes created by God to sound good together. How do we “live in harmony” with other people? How do you think living in harmony restores people to the way God created us to be? Do you think it's possible to be restored without God's help?

Prayer:

God of all grace, Thank you for creating us to live in harmony with one another. Only you, our Creator, can restore us as sympathetic, loving, compassionate and humble people. Help us to create a joyful noise, living our lives in harmony with one another. Amen!

Nighttime

...when you lie down...

Read:

Psalm 23:1-6

Say:

God restores us as we learn to trust him as our Shepherd. The Shepherd cares about us as his sheep and looks out for our best interest. God doesn't want us to worry about the things we have or want, or to be distracted from who he created us to be. We are created for a purpose that goes beyond these things. Talk about the differences between needs and wants.

ConnectTip:

*“JUST A MINUTE”...
For each minute that goes by we have one less minute. Sometimes conversations are only a minute.... just a minute.
So...take a minute and visit, talk about life, talk about things.*

Night Time Prayer: (begin by praying Psalm 23):

Dear Lord, thank you for being our guiding Shepherd. Help us find our identity in you and who you created us to be; not in the things we have or want. Thank you for rest in your green pastures and quiet waters. Amen!

Parents are the #1 influence in the lives of their children. 6:7 is a tool to help families engage in those meaningful conversations. St. Paul Lutheran Church, Kodiak, Alaska

LifeGroup Study

Date: October 22, 2023

Text: Isaiah 5:1-7, Matthew 21:33-46

Theme: Restoration

Restoring the Church: God's Vineyard

Belong

- *Talk about a time when you restored something or had it restored. What was the motivation to have it restored? Was it worth it?*
- *What are the necessary steps you have to take in order to restore something?*

As we enter this new worship series we're going to focus on how God is at work in the world graciously restoring what has been broken by sin. We're going to look at the meaning of the word "restoration." We'll explore why America needs a restored church so badly and, finally, our apostolic call to be part of that great work of the Spirit.

Prayer...

Creative, restoring God, we live in a creation that is broken. You can restore the vision of your kingdom in us. Only you can bring the renewal and restoration that will transform our desires and make us your passionate followers. We want to live for what matters to you. We want to make a difference in the things that make a difference to you. Amen!

Believe

Read Isaiah 5:1-7.

Here is a rather unpleasant picture of a vineyard that has not proven to be fruitful. This is a picture of the nation of Israel as tenants in the vineyard of God. The prophet is clearly telling the people of Israel that they need to change and restore God's original vision for Israel.

- *What do you think the word "restoration" means in this context?*
- *What specific things must the people of Israel do for "restoration" to happen?*

Read Matthew 21:33-46.

The structure of the parable is that God is the owner of the vineyard and has prepared everything we need to nurture the vineyard into a fruitful harvest. We are tenants of God's with the task of tending the orchard, the world, and/or the church, so it will be fruitful.

- *In what ways is the church, local and global, like a vineyard that needs tending?*
- *What are some ways in which the church has failed to live up to God's calling?*

Restoration has to do with focus. In both the Isaiah text and in the

Matthew text, the focus of the people is not on the kingdom agendas of the Holy Spirit, but their own possessing and enjoyment. Over-possessing is our focus on acquiring more and more as the goal of life. The church can fall into this trap as well.

- *How does God's kingdom agenda often differ from our own; that of the church?*
- *In what ways does the church fall into the trap of over-possessing?*

Become

The restoration of the church is about leadership. In the context of the Matthew text, Jesus is challenging the church leadership directly in how they are leading the Jews. When leadership steers the people to understand themselves as tenants and focus on being lights to the world, restoration will begin to happen.

Prayer...

God of this church and every church around the globe, restore the vision of your kingdom among us. May we be those who work for justice and equity; who give for comfort and healing; who live for all that matters to you. Bless this church and every church, that we might focus on your agenda and work for your purposes in Jesus' name. Amen!

