

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Sept 30, 2018



Pastor Temple 8:15, 9:30 Pastor Hook 10:55

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15-20 min)

- Anything to share about the past week? About follow-ups from last Sunday's message, do you trust God?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- Opener: How would you characterize the life of a faithful Christian? 1. an unpredictable adventure where God is given control 2. A lifestyle change with great cost 3. Serving alongside others in Christian love 4. A gradual deepening of relationship with God and the church or 5. Something else?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture below, Proverbs 3:1-7. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law,

but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?

- The full baptism question for last week and this week is “Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?” What is the difference between confessing Jesus Christ as Savior, and serving Him as our Lord?
- What kind of personal costs might go along with “knowing Christ Jesus my Lord” (verse 8)? What kind of gains?
- How is the righteousness from the law (vs. 9) different than the righteousness that comes from God through faith in Christ (vs. 9-10)?
- Taken together, today’s baptism vow and verse 10 point out the church is an open community for all people striving to know Christ, become like him in his death and experience the power of his resurrection, even unto the resurrection of the dead. How is serving Jesus as Lord, both an individual and communal experience?

Another Related Scripture (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read aloud Joshua 24:14-27. After the Lord delivered His people out of Egypt and granted them victory in regaining their land in battle under Joshua’s leadership, Joshua appeals to the people to be faithful to the Lord in their future. How does Joshua’s speech in verses 14-15, leave very little middle ground in the choice between serving the Lord or not serving the Lord?
- At the time, saying yes to serving the Lord meant saying no to other things. What kinds of things were they to say no to (verses 20, 23)? What would be analogous in today’s time and culture of the things the Lord would want us to say no to?
- What were the stated consequences if they failed to live up to the promise they made that day (verse 19)? Does this remind you of Genesis 2:15-16?
- How would this covenant with Joshua and remembering the large memory stone in Shechem (verse 26-27) serve to strengthen God’s people against temptation to not keep him first as their Lord?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (15 min)

- What were points of encouragement or challenge for you personally in the sermon and in the reflections upon the additional scripture above?
- How can remembering our baptism vows serve in a similar way as Joshua and the Israelites remembering the covenant through the large stone at Shechem?
- Would you care to share about something God may be calling you to walk away from in your past that is keeping you from becoming more fully new in Christ or share something you may have written on your response card in the bulletin from Sunday?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- Did you know that Thursday is “Take Your Bible to Work Day?” Whether you bring it to work, school, Starbucks or wherever, sometimes carrying a Bible opens up opportunities for interesting conversations. Would you consider doing this on Thursday?
- Does this vow about the openness of the church to all people encourage you to invite others to church? Why or why not?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.