

Study Guide for the Week of April 6, 2008

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday, April 7 – Read Exodus 20:3-5. If you were to look very closely at your life, and honestly reflect on your values, would you say that there are things you value more than your relationship with God? Are there things that you channel all your energy, time, devotion, and affection into? Those are the things you worship. Why are we so attracted to things that lure us away from God? Why are we so drawn to a worldly view of success?

Tuesday, April 8 – Read Luke 18:18-23 and Mark 10:17-22. This is the story about the rich, young ruler. Aaron used this story to illustrate how even religion can be a matter of image-management. How was it so with this young man? In what way is his story your story? How is your story different? How are Luke and Mark's accounts different from one another? How are they the same?

Wednesday, April 9 – Read Philippians 2:4-9. Paul writes this passage pointing out the external signs of success in his life. What does he call those external signs? What does he say is of real value in his life? What might be the external signs of success in your life? If you are a follower of Christ, how do you see your real value?

Thursday, April 10 – Read Ephesians 3:17-19. This passage has been on the study guide in recent weeks, but it is worth returning to. Remember that the word "understand" means to apprehend, to grasp fully, to rust through. The objective is that the concept and experience of God's love is something we would grasp, apprehend, and allow to eat through us completely. How would you describe the width, depth, length of God's love? The bigger question is this: have you experienced this love? God's love is there and it is a reality, what might keep you from receiving it completely?

Friday, April 11 – Read James 4:10. This is a simple, yet profound passage. It implies that when we humble ourselves to God, we are made great; when we bow down to God, we are honored. This is one of many reversals, or opposites, in scriptures. How might humility lead to greatness? Where in your life have you bowed down before something besides God? How has that worked out for you? **Read Matthew 6:24-34.** What does this say about God's definition of success? How might we live into this?