

Study Guide for the Week of July 30, 2006

ESPRESSO YOURSELF—*Rude is the Mood*

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.saintpauls-umc.com.

Monday. This week's readings will focus on the topics of respect, humility, courtesy, and purity. We'll begin with the ultimate act of humility as we picture Jesus on the cross. **Read Philippians 2:1-11.** Paul writes this passage that describes the humility of Jesus and our response to that humility. Throughout the process of his crucifixion, Jesus was humble and gentle. He suffered the rudeness of humanity and instead of returning more rudeness he humbled himself. Why is it so hard for us to face the rudeness of others? How do you most often react when people are rude to you? Why do you react that way? What might your reactions be if you were to model Jesus?

Tuesday. Today we read from the writings of the apostle Peter. In this passage Peter is encouraging followers to stand up to the ridicule of others with good news and respect. **Read 1 Peter 3:12-18.** Aaron talked about how one way we reverse rudeness is through respect. How do you define respect? How might having a respectful attitude diffuse the rudeness in others? This passage tells us that we may suffer at times in life, and for our faith, but in the face of suffering we also rise up with respect. What is your typical response to someone who causes you an element of suffering? How might that response be different if you were to take this passage to heart?

Wednesday. In many ways our culture encourages us to respond in like kind to what happens to us (persecution with persecution, suffering with suffering, rudeness with rudeness). Yet the Gospel calls us to live in another way. **Read Romans 12:14-21.** Why are passages like this so difficult for us? In what way could you repay evil with good, instead with more evil? How might our world be different if individuals, communities, and even nations, operated with the principles in this scripture?

Thursday. Today we read about how we use our words and the power of our words. **Read James 3:3-13.** How does this passage relate to rudeness, respect, humility and courtesy? **Read Matthew 12:33-37.** In this passage Jesus is speaking very sternly to religious leaders who have been undermining him and speaking badly of him. Jesus places a great deal of emphasis on our words. According to this passage, how much do our words matter to God? How can you be more careful with the words you speak, making sure to use words that build up and offer respect rather than words that tear down?

Friday. We end the week with a simple statement about love. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:5.** Look at the Outline at the different translations of this passage. How does love play into our level of rudeness? How does it play into how we respond to the rudeness of others? Spend time in prayer asking God to guide you in seeing others with humility and respect. Ask God to use you to help make a reversal in rudeness in your corner of the world.