

Study Guide for the Week of June 4, 2006

Meet Me in Managua

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 how God expects us to put our faith into action and how God has a special concern for the poor and needy. **Read Proverbs 14:31, 19:17, 22:9, 28:27.** These passages, particularly the last one, challenge us to open our eyes to those who are poor and needy—the marginalized. Have you had an eye-opening experience with someone who is marginalized? Recall as many details about that instance. How did you feel? Did you sense God saying, “This changes everything, doesn’t it? Because now you have seen.” If you have not had an eye-opening experience with someone who is marginalized stake out 30 minutes this week to do so. Some suggestions: Go to Salvation Army, visit a nursing home, visit Soul’s Harbor. What do you now know about the poor and marginalized of Nicaragua that you did not know before?

Tuesday –**Read Matthew 10:39-42.** We are called by God to cultivate compassion for the poor by reaching out with our hands. This passage reminds us that when we are compassionate, giving a “cup of cold water” to someone in need, we will be rewarded. As you look at this verse it is very important to remember that we cannot “buy” God’s love by being compassionate. We should not be compassionate to those who are poor and marginalized because we’re looking for a reward from God. We are compassionate because we are trying to follow in Jesus’ footsteps. How do you reach out your hands to the marginalized?

Wednesday – **Read Matthew 25:31-46.** This is a good-news, bad-news story that Jesus tells. He is so closely associating himself with people who are in deep need that when we help them, we are literally encountering Jesus himself. Look closely at the list of people mentioned. Who most often gets left out of receiving goodness from Christians? Why?

Thursday – **Read Luke 14:12-14.** These words of Jesus challenge us to avoid doing good as a favor-exchange program. Have you been tempted to do something good for someone simply to get something in return? What does Jesus say will happen when we share our blessings with those who are in need? How can you live this out today? In the future?

Friday –**Read James 2:15-18.** Rewrite verse 17 of this passage in your own words. How does this passage speak to you? How does it relate to us putting our faith into action locally, nationally, and internationally in places like Nicaragua? Log onto www.rainbownetwork.org for information about the Rainbow Network and what it is doing for the poor of Nicaragua. What can you do now to help?