

Study Guide for the Week of November 20, 2005

Thanksgiving 2005: Understanding What is Good

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—**Read Genesis 1:1-31** in the Old Testament. This past Sunday we focused on the goodness of God. In the creation story notice the usage of the word “good” over and over again. Count how many times it’s used. Do you see creation and notice it’s goodness? What good things might you be overlooking today?

Tuesday--**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** in the New Testament. This short passage teaches us to give thanks in **all** circumstances. It’s a challenge with a great reward! In which situations of life are you more likely to give thanks—good or bad? How can we encounter bad things and still give thanks? **Read Philippians 4:4-7** in the New Testament. Notice the link in this passage between worry and thanksgiving. If we are not careful worry can replace thanksgiving in our lives and leave us miserable. What are the things that worry you most? In the midst of those worries what blessings can you be thankful for? Notice at the end of this passage. What will guard our hearts and minds if we go to God with thanksgiving?

Wednesday--**Read Deuteronomy 26:1-11** in the Old Testament. This is a Jewish celebration of thanksgiving. Identify in this passage the four elements of thanksgiving that Aaron spoke of in the sermon: God’s providence, God’s deliverance, giving back to God, and celebrating. How well are you doing at each of these? How can you improve?

Thursday--**Read Genesis 50:15-21** in the Old Testament. This is the end of the story of Joseph. He was sold into slavery by his own brothers. He faced hardships and loss, but he never gave up his faith. God provided for him even through his challenges. This passage is his statement to his brothers. How did God provide for Joseph? How will God provide for you in your trials and difficulties? Spend time giving thanks for how God has provided for you in the good times and the bad.

Friday--**Read Psalm 105:1-5** in the Old Testament. This psalm encourages us to be thankful and share what God has done in us with the world. Find a way this week and next week to share something you are thankful for with someone else. **Read 1 Timothy 4:4, 2 Corinthians 9:15, James 1:17** in the New Testament. **Read 1 Chronicles 16:8-9, 34** in the Old Testament. What can you learn about thankfulness and gratitude from these passages? Tell how God has been good to you.