

Study Guide for the Week of October 19, 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! Message manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday, Read Isaiah 6:1-8. As you read today, pay attention to the different parts of Isaiah's story of his calling. As you read the first four verses think and pray about things in your life that may reign in your life before God. Pray for God and God's will to be first in your life. Verses five through seven tell us that there were things in Isaiah's life that stopped him from doing God's will. Aaron talked about these as heart-stoppers. Think on those things in your life that stop you from doing God's will. As Isaiah, remember that God will help you to overcome those obstacles. Finally, as you read verse eight, think about God's calling for you. As God gave you a unique heart, how will you respond?

Tuesday, Read Jeremiah 1:1-8. The story of the prophet Jeremiah is amazing! He was alone in proclaiming God's will for God's people. Even in times of discouragement Jeremiah did as God told him to do because he was burning with the message that God gave him. As you read the first seven verses think about different arguments that you might use to not be involved in God's will, to not follow your God-given heart. As you come to a close of your devotional time, read aloud several times verse eight, God's PROMISE of being with you always.

Wednesday, Read the book of Jonah (only 4 chapters! Two pages long!) Today's focus is not on Jonah but on the people of Nineveh. Their lives were changed because of God's grace through Jonah. Think and pray on times when you have received a revelation from God (by word and/or deed) and your life has been transformed. Also pray for all the people around the world who are being, and will be affected by those who respond to their hearts. Think and pray in ways in which you can be a vessel of God's transforming grace through prayer, your gifts, and your service.

Thursday, Read Esther 4. Esther became queen of a great kingdom, perhaps because she never told anyone of her Jewish heritage. There came the day when Jews were being persecuted out of hatred. This is where our reading for today picks up. Her uncle helped her understand that perhaps she was given her position "for such a time as this," so she could save the Jews in her kingdom. Think and pray on situations when you might be in need of special courage to accomplish God's calling in your life. Think and pray on situations when you may need such courage to be in mission in your community and in the world.

Friday, Read John 4. Many theologians believe the Samaritan woman to be the first missionary in the New Testament. After she encountered Christ, she ran to her village and shared the good news that she found by the well. The Scriptures tell us that they believed because of her. Because of the customs of her times, she was not regarded as the most reliable source. Think and pray about things that might be against you in your efforts to be an agent of God's grace. How can you overcome such obstacles? How can you more actively follow your heart in the ministries of service at Saint Paul's? How can you make of living out your heart in serving others a lifestyle?