

Thoughts & Exercise for the Week-Passages to Ponder

Monday

Romans 12:1-2

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

What does it mean to “offer your body as a living sacrifice?”

What can you do today to not conform to the world but transform your mind?

Tuesday

Ephesians 5:15-20

"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul is not saying not to drink, he is comparing being “drunk” with being filled with the Spirit. What are the similarities between the two?

How can we understand what the Lord’s will actually is in our life?

Wednesday

John 14:15-21

"If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

What does Jesus mean by “Because I live, you also will live?” Aren’t we already alive?

How do you understand that Jesus “[is] in [His] Father, and you are in [Him] and [He] is in you?”

Thursday

Colossians 1:9-12

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light."

How does being filled with knowledge of God’s will help you to live a “life worthy of the Lord”?

Does that mean if we don’t have Godly wisdom from the Spirit, that we will live a life worthy of the world?

Friday

James 1:22-25

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do."

Is it difficult to do what the bible says? When you hear wisdom, do you put it into practice? Why or why not?

Consider cutting this day’s verse out and bringing it with you. Every time you see a mirror take it out and read it and consider it’s deeper meaning for your life.

Saturday

1 John 2:15-17

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."

What are some examples in your life you have seen of “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life”, what is meant by choosing these specific phrases?

Sunday

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit."

If the “pagans” of the NT are unbelievers of modern times, are there things that they do that Christians shouldn't? Are there things that you do that makes you seem more like them? Would someone look at your actions and choices and say “that person is more like a pagan than a Christian.”

Quotes

"Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right." - Max Lucado

"God never made a promise that was too good to be true." - Dwight L. Moody

"The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement. I have to go to God in prayer with tears in my eyes, and say, 'O God, forgive me,' or 'Help me.'" - Billy Graham

"Obedience to God is the pathway to the life you really want to live." - Joyce Meyer

Title: Learning God's Priorities for Our Lives

Free thought area: What are my “must haves”? Throughout the sermon, use this area to jot down areas in your life that God might be telling you to release or pray about:

Sermon Notes:

If we have willing _____, God will test us in the small things before trusting us in the bigger things.

We may not like what _____ God reveals to us but we still have to be obedient in responding

We must constantly _____ our lives to see where God wants us to prioritize

Sermon thoughts:

Stephen showed how Israel rejected God's anointed by focusing too much on rules. Are there things in our lives that are taking up too much time or space and keeping us from hearing from God?

Joseph, like Jesus, was rejected by those he would end up saving. What was unique about their hearts? What was unique about how they lived their lives?

God draws people into a deeper relationship through His Holy Spirit but we have to respond with obedience. What could that look like in your life?