



THURSDAY 06.24.10

John 15:1-9

Today we return to those four important chapters we find in the Gospel of John which we referenced on Monday. In preparation for their brief time of separation, Jesus instructs his disciples to “remain in me.”

- What does Jesus promise for those who “remain” in him? What do you think “remaining” in Jesus looks like? What kind of fruit would you expect to receive in your life if you faithfully “remained” in Jesus?
- The imagery that Jesus uses in John 15 reminds us that Jesus is the source for all of life. He is the vine who shares the essential nutrients with the branches that depend on that vine. What do you think some of those essential nutrients are? What part does the church play in ensuring that you get the nutrients you need to bear fruit in your life?



FRIDAY 06.25.10

Hebrews 10:19-25

Yom Kippur was a day when Israel was to seek forgiveness from God. To atone for their sins, the High Priest would enter the place designated as the “Holy of Holies” in the Temple to make an animal sacrifice on behalf of all of Israel. The writer of Hebrews uses this imagery in the tenth chapter to illustrate what Jesus has done for us in his death and resurrection.

- What is the writer trying to illustrate about Jesus by referring to him as “our High Priest”? How does seeing Jesus in this way allow us to have “confidence” to come before the throne of God?
- Verse 22 encourages us to draw near with “full assurance” that we have been made pure. Have you claimed that assurance in your life? How have you seen that confidence give birth to hope? How might your hope be an encouragement to someone else today?



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A RESOURCE FOR DISCIPLES SEEKING TO LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS & SERVE THE WORLD ...

Series: *Why People Leave Church*
Sermon: *I've Stopped Connecting with God*
Scripture: *Philippians 3:7-16*

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon:



Introduction

The church exists to connect people to God and God's purposes. Losing that connection is why some people find themselves drifting away from their faith. Their desire to be re-engaged in that relationship is a big part of what leads them back. Every significant relationship in our lives requires us to consistently invest in the health of that relationship. Staying connected to God is no different.

During our readings this week we will be focusing on the Holy Spirit as the partner that God gives to lead and direct the church. On the day of Pentecost we find the Holy Spirit filling the first disciples and inspiring them to proclaim the gospel in a new and vibrant way. Throughout the book of Acts, it is the Holy Spirit that guides these first leaders in their work to share the good news of Jesus. Consider this week how the Holy Spirit is working in your life and what part the church plays in helping you stay connected to God.

May this prayer guide you.

Holy and loving God, within my heart is a deep desire to be connected to something bigger than myself. Help me this day to channel that desire and energy into my relationship with you. Remind me today that you have called me by name, and you have claimed me as your child. Help me to live this day as response to the love and grace you have poured into me. AMEN.



TUESDAY 06.22.10

Acts 2:1-4

The church was born on the day of Pentecost which would have taken place 50 days after the Jewish celebration of Passover. On this day the Holy Spirit enables the disciples to speak in "tongues" which is another way of saying that they were able to communicate the story of Jesus in the native tongue of all those who had gathered that day.

- When you think about the Holy Spirit coming and the disciples being given the ability to share the gospel will all who were gathered, what do these few verses say to you about what it means to be the church?
- Throughout the book of Acts you get the sense that the phrase "as the Spirit enabled them" is a pretty key idea. Why is the Holy Spirit's guidance such an essential part of being the church? How do you see the Holy Spirit leading our church today?



MONDAY 06.21.10

John 14:15-19, 25-27

John 14-17 contains the last instructions that Jesus shares with his disciples before he is betrayed and ultimately condemned. Within these four chapters we find the words of comfort and grace that Jesus extends to his disciples in preparation for the trials that they will soon endure. Life will soon change dramatically for each of them, but Jesus promises that they will not enter this new future alone.

- In John's Gospel, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as "the counselor" who "will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." How would you describe your understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- "Peace I leave with you," Jesus says. Lasting peace seems like an elusive reality. What part do you see the Holy Spirit playing in bringing peace and removing fear in your life?



WEDNESDAY 06.23.10

Acts 4:23-31

This section of Acts chapter four follows the showdown between Peter and John and the same religious leaders who months earlier had condemned Jesus to his death. Peter, who had fled the scene of Jesus' trial out of fear for his own life, proclaims with boldness before these same leaders that Jesus was the Messiah they had all been hoping for.

- Peter and John had just completed the first major test of their leadership of this young movement. How did Peter and John mark this occasion? What does this text tell us that they do in response to this major accomplishment?
- Though they have just passed a major hurdle, the prayers of these two men are for God to continue to help them speak with boldness. Today, consider this question: Are you willing, like Peter and John, to pray for God to continue to inspire you to proclaim with great boldness?
