



Daily Meditations

June 22-27, 2020

The Biblical readings are taken from the Daily Office in the Book of Common Prayer for Year 2 and written by the St. Stephen's Meditation Writing Team: Dave Boyd, Becky Denton, Pat Gillory, Traci Maxwell, Jay Nickel, Bob Reed, T.Cay Rowe, and Carroll Wilson.

Click on the scripture reading for each day to go directly to link.

COLLECT, PROPER 7

O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Righteousness

Monday, June 22, 2020

Romans 3:21-31

"...the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe." - Romans 3:21-22

Righteousness is another of those "churchy" words we use often without really understanding what it means. To be "righteous" is to be in a right relationship with God. But that is not something we can achieve on our own, because none of us based on our own actions can claim to be worthy of being in a relationship with God. Fortunately, God doesn't care about our view of our relationship with him. The great "good news" is that Jesus has already taken care of that for us. We are all involved in a right relationship with God because that is what God desires, no matter how messy our lives have been. As Fr. Phil puts it, "God is infinitely more concerned with our future than with our past."

Faith

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Romans 4:1-12

Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness. - Romans 4:9

In many places in scripture, Abraham is held up as the great exemplar of faith. But we should note that based on the stories in Genesis, we know absolutely nothing of what Abraham believed. All we know about Abraham is what he *did*. God spoke to Abraham at the tender age of 75 and told him to go to an unknown land where he would be a complete stranger. And Abram went, trusting in what God promised him. This makes it clear that faith is not a matter of intellectual assent or statement of a creed; it is rather action...acting in trust.

Trust

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Romans 4:13-25

No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. - Romans 4:20

I have often thought how fascinating it would have been to be a fly on the wall in Abram's tent that night to hear the conversation Abram had with Sarai, when he told her that he was trusting the promise of this unknown God, who told him to pack up and leave all his lands, neighbors, and familiar surroundings to travel to the foreign land of Canaan. It must have been a tough sell!

Suffering

Thursday, June 25, 2020

Romans 5:1-11

And not only that, but we also boast in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit what has been given to us. - Acts 6:15

Paul's message to the Romans emphasizes endurance through suffering. Suffering is very much present in our own time as well: suffering, death, and grief caused by this terrible COVID-19 virus that has already killed over 100,000 Americans and many tens of thousands more around the globe. This week's massive national and global demonstrations against the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis have exposed how deep and wide is the frustration over the legacy of systemic racism that has continued to exist in this country for more than 400 years and regrettably is still with us today. I hope all of us have had the opportunity to read and hear the prayerful and powerful responses of our Presiding Bishop Curry, Bishop Budde of the Diocese of Washington DC, and our own Bishop Reed. Paul says we should only boast in our sufferings, but these fine bishops make me proud to be an Episcopalian.

Grace

Friday, June 26, 2020

Romans 5:12-21

...where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, just as sin exercised

dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. - Romans 5:21

Paul gives us some reassuring words to carry with us in the midst of the double anxiety of pandemic and nationwide protest; Grace abounds! No matter how terrifying each day's events may seem to be, no matter that it sometimes seems that the world is going to hell in a handbasket, as the old hymn reminds us: "God is the ruler yet." Love is stronger than death!

More Grace

Saturday, June 27, 2020

Romans 6:1-11

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. - Romans 6:5

Paul continues his rhetorical balancing, this time with life and death. He reminds us that we have all been baptized into Christ's death, and baptism is a symbolic drowning, a dying to our old way of life. The symbolism continues when the one being baptized is raised up from the water into a new life. If grace abounds, especially when we least expect it, then surely that grace extends beyond the grave. Again, love is stronger than death!

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