

Day 1

Dayne- WCC

Read

Matthew 18:1-4

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2 He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. 3 And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Think

It always blows my mind to hear who is elevated in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is so intentional about showing what type of kingdom God has in mind, and it's usually different than what we might expect. Jesus' disciples were asking Jesus "who is the greatest in the kingdom", and were probably expecting something like "the one who gives the most money to the church..." or "the one who spends all day praying". But Jesus' answer is a child... Why?!? Probably because what children have is this thing called "humility". Humility is the idea that you aren't better than anyone. When we have humility, that's when God is ready to use us.

Reflect

So, the challenge for today is to live with humility. See your siblings as better than you. See your parents as better than you. See your neighbor as better than you. And by doing so you will be among the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Pray

God,

You modeled perfect humility, through Jesus. Jesus came to earth, and served us rather than ruled us. I pray that today you would give me humility, and teach me to serve and love those around me. Help me lower myself today, in order to raise others up.

AMEN

Day 2

MARTY - BCC

Read

“God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.” - 1 Peter 1:2

Think

Have you ever stopped to think just how much you are loved by God? God doesn't just put up with you, or tolerate you. He made you uniquely you, and chose to set his love on you. And when you trusted in Jesus, God gave you His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has made you holy, meaning you are accepted, clean, pure, new and set apart for God's purposes. Now, because God chose you and made you holy, you can obey God by helping and loving others.

Reflect

Whatever obstacles, battles or insecurities you face today, God has made a way, and his timing is right. God chose you, and gave you His Spirit. Because of that, you are ready to walk in every good work God has prepared for you, to love and help others.

Pray

God, thank you that you chose me and love me. Thank you for giving me the Holy Spirit to lead me to obey in loving and serving others. Give me confident hope in your love for me and your plans for my life. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 3

Chrissy Davis- HCC

Read

James 3:13-18 “13 If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. 15 For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. 16 For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

17 But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. 18 And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.”

Think

James, the brother of Jesus, and also a Jewish man, knew and believed that salvation comes from belief in Jesus. He also knew that the way you lived directly reflects how closely you are walking with Jesus. James unpacks the idea that many people think they are wise, goldy wisdom however is not much like the wisdom of the world. The big difference is found when we examine our motives. Do we think we know best because it is what helps us get ahead? Or do we know best because we are looking at the behaviors of Jesus? God will grant us wisdom when we search for it in him. The simplest way to do that is to look at Jesus’ life. Jesus planted seeds of peace, he was pure in his motives always and he was full of mercy.

Reflect

Where are you going in order to gain wisdom? Is it the news? Is it social media? Is it someone who thinks just like you? Or are you going to God and asking him for wisdom? Are you looking at the way Jesus lived his life on earth as your source for wisdom? In a world full of information we must learn to weigh all that advice and knowledge up against godly wisdom. We have to ask how does this line up with what Jesus says and how he lived?

Pray

Lord help me be humble, to seek true wisdom from you. Not to just take in every voice in culture and in my circle as truth but to actually look at how Jesus lived and align my life up with his. Holy Spirit guide me in godly wisdom and true humility. Amen.

Day 4

Jamie Zimmerman HCC

Read The Fall/The First Sin

“The serpent was clever, more clever than any wild animal GOD had made. He spoke to the Woman: “Do I understand that God told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?”

The Woman said to the serpent, “Not at all. We can eat from the trees in the garden. It’s only about the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, ‘Don’t eat from it; don’t even touch it or you’ll die.’”

The serpent told the Woman, “You won’t die. God knows that the moment you eat from that tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil.”

When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she’d know everything!—she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.” Genesis 3:1-6 MSG

Think

Earlier in Genesis, when God pointed to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he said, “You shall not eat” but here we see Eve say, “You shall not touch”. Eve was tricked into believing God was withholding something good from her partially because somewhere along the line she had either been told or had created a new rule. This is called fence-building. It’s the idea that God says not to do something and we as people take it a step further, creating a fence around the rule so that we have an even smaller chance of breaking the rule. God said, “Don’t eat.” Humans said, “Whelp, we can’t eat it by accident if we don’t even touch it.” So Eve said, “Don’t touch” as if it was God’s law.

Right at the end of this passage, we find out that Adam was there as Eve and the serpent were talking and he said nothing. Adam didn’t correct Eve’s thinking, he didn’t challenge the serpent’s trick. The power of words, the power of speaking and making things happen, was passed down from God the Creator to Adam the Animal Namer to Eve the Helper but that power was twisted by the serpent who used words to trick and create doubt.

Reflect

Are there rules that God made that you build a fence around?

Do you ever get upset when other people break the rules you made for yourself?

How do we keep ourselves from believing tricks?

What could Eve have done differently? What could Adam have done differently?

Pray

God, I see the power of your words every day. They created the world and everything in it, the universe and all the laws of nature. I believe in the power you have given me to use language. Please help me use that power carefully when I am talking to myself, when I talk to others, when I need to decide if it is time to speak up about something. Teach me to use words to create, to name, to help. Please remind me not to use words to hurt or mislead or trick. I love you God. I trust you God. Thank you for your love.

Day 5

Braden Curalli- WCC

Read

James 5:7-8

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

Think

Let's start by asking a question, where are you? Not your physical location, but your spiritual formation. Where are you? I will start by saying that I am struggling to maintain hope.

I think it is fair to say that we live in an uncomfortable time right now. As this time has drawn longer and longer I have found myself struggling to be hopeful. We always tell people to "keep hope" or "be hopeful, it is just a season," but what happens when the season lasts longer than expected? The reality is, it is hard to have hope. It is difficult to believe in a time when things get better. But maybe this is why we struggle to actually have hope in the first place.

Fundamentally, we sometimes see hope as a thought or a state of mind. I would contend that hope is not a passive way of thinking. Hope is understanding that God prevails no matter the circumstance, but then, uses this understanding to live differently in the present.

To the person like me, who is struggling to find hope in their current circumstances, remember to be patient, for someday it will rain and the crop will grow.

Hope always has been and always will be found in Christ alone.

Reflect

This is a very simple reflection that I often use and I would love to share it with you.

Where are you?

Who is God to you today?

How is hope in the future going to shape the way you live today?

Pray

God,

I'm scared of the future

I'm scared of the present

May you rise up and deliver me

Be my shield and rescue me

Help me in my time of silence

Be my liberator