

FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD 7.25.2021

Let's look at the Bible readings for Sunday, July 25, to prepare for on-line, drive-in, and in-person worship (at 9:00 am) with Abounding Joy.

1ST READING: Genesis 9:8-17 God's promise to all living creatures

⁸God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹²And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future

generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO GENESIS, CHAPTER 9

1. What is a covenant? Look it up on-line (or in a dictionary).
2. What promise does God give to Noah and his sons?
3. To whom and to what does the promise apply?
4. What sign of the covenant does the Lord give? Generally, what's the purpose of signs?
5. In the Bible, usually the word “remember” means not “call to mind, not forget” as much as it means “keep, or be true to.” Does that help you understand vss. 15 and 16?
6. If God is not going deal with our sin via direct punishment anymore, how will He deal with it in the future? (See John 1:29)

2ND READING: Ephesians 3:14-21 Strengthened, rooted, grounded, and filled

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith — that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the

breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO EPHESIANS, CHAPTER 3:

1. Vs. 14: what does it mean to say that families are named from God?
2. What gifts are given to us according to this passage?
3. Vs. 17: what does it mean to be “rooted and grounded in love”?
4. Vs. 19: what does it mean to be “filled with the fullness of God”?

THE GOSPEL: Mark 6:45-56 Jesus comes to His disciples in the storm

⁴⁵Immediately (following the feeding of the 5,000) Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

⁴⁷And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night (3-6 am) he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, ⁵⁰for they all saw him and were terrified.

But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” ⁵¹And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵²for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

⁵³When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him ⁵⁵and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO MARK, CHAPTER 6:

1. Jesus came to the disciples in the midst of a windstorm. What storms do we face as Christians and how does Jesus come to us?
2. What do you make of the last 6 words of vs. 48?
3. In vs. 49, why do you think they thought they were seeing a ghost?
4. In vs. 52, who or what do you think hardened the disciples' hearts?
5. The crowds had heard, and believed, and knew, that Jesus was the source of life, healing, and salvation. Why do we sometimes not run so quickly and eagerly to Jesus for help?
6. We can't touch the fringe of Jesus' garment. In what ways do we today tap into the power of Jesus' saving and healing grace?