

Faith Comes by Hearing Bible Study – 1.7.26 (For 1.11.26)

First Reading: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

⁴"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and

when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

1. Moses gave these words to the people to set them apart from other nations. How does the opening sentence set the people apart? How did these words become their "creed"?
2. How do "heart, soul, and strength" encompass the entirety of our being, and how is this response a reflection of how God loves us?
3. This is not just for us, as Moses shares. How does Moses show us to care about future generations? What are creative ways to do this?

Second Reading: Ephesians 2:8-10, 13-21

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,

¹⁶and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1. Paul reminds us of how we have any standing before God. What does he give all the credit to?
2. God works in us! Paul showcases through these words two important ways God does this. What ways does God work in human beings?
3. God's plan is to build us together into a "dwelling place" by the Spirit. How is this meant to be a "creed" for us as Christians?

Gospel: John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1. John opens his Gospel with some important theological statements about Jesus. What does John tell us about the "Word" (Jesus) in relation to God and creation?
2. How does the imagery of "light" and "life" describe Jesus? What does it mean that the light came into the world and the darkness did not overcome it?
3. What specific benefits or new identity do those who receive "the true light" gain? Why is it so crucial that "the Word became flesh" and what does His dwelling among us signify?