

Devotional Commentary on the Lenten Readings for Week 5

Lent Theme: Healed and Transformed by Grace to Re-imagine the New Church

Weekly Theme: Transformed and Restored by Grace – Healing through Forgiveness

Overview

Paul writing to the Romans chapter 3 verse 23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”. We are reminded of our sinfulness especially during Lent when we embark on a journey of repentance leading to Jesus’ death on the cross. We remember Him dying in our place taking on our sins. His sacrificial act means that we are forgiven of our sins and pronounced not guilty. We no longer carry the burden of our sins but are restored to enjoy fellowship with God. The weight of sin in our lives is an obstacle to our relationship with Jesus. He has removed this weight by His death and by His Grace we are forgiven and restored to enjoy fellowship with Him.

Week 5 (Day 25) Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Psalm 107: 1– 16, Isaiah 60: 15 – 22, John 8: 12 – 20

The Psalmist reminds us that we are to thank God because when we are in trouble, we cry out to Him and He rescues us. Isaiah tells the nation of Israel that even though they were despised and rejected He will restore them bountifully. This is also true for us today. There is hope in this message as God promises to rescue us and restore us. In John’s message Jesus tells his listeners to step out of the darkness of their lives and into His light. We are asked to acknowledge the dark areas of our lives, repent of them and to follow Jesus. When we do this, we step into His light which offers us life (restoration) through Him.

Week 5 (Day 26) Thursday, March 18, 2021

Psalm 51: 1 – 12, Isaiah 30: 15 – 18, Hebrews 4: 1 – 13

The Psalmist David is overwhelmed by guilt due to his sin. He knows that he cannot hide his sin from God and confesses to Him asking that he will be washed clean, forgiven and set free from his guilt. The Israelites were being faced with punishment due to their disobedience. However, God through Isaiah tells them that He is merciful, kind and will save them if they turn back to Him. The same is true for us today, God is merciful and will save us when we are obedient to Him.

The writer to the Hebrews tells us that there is a Sabbath rest for God’s people. God rested from His work of creation and Jesus rested when he had completed His work of redemption. We enter the Sabbath rest when we stop working at our own righteousness and accept Jesus’ offer of salvation and forgiveness.

Week 5 (Day 27) Friday, March 19, 2021

Psalm 51: 1 – 12, Exodus 30: 1 – 10, Hebrews 4: 14 – 5: 4

The Exodus reading describes the building of the altar of incense in the tabernacle. The tabernacle was the meeting place of God with His people and the incense offering represents the prayers of the people continually going up to God. Once a year the high priest offered a blood sacrifice for the atonement of sins. The incense offering was a place to remember atonement and enjoy it.

Jesus is our High Priest and He is our blood sacrifice for the atonement of sins. Due to His sacrifice blood sacrifices are no longer necessary. He died, one offering for all the sins of people. Through God's mercy and grace, we are healed and forgiven.

Week 5 (Day 28) Saturday, March 20, 2021

Psalm 51: 1 – 12, Habakkuk 3: 2 – 13, John 12: 1 – 11

In Habakkuk's prayer he says that although God is angry with the people please would God have mercy on them as He had previously done and save and restore them. Habakkuk trusted God for restoration and praised Him for it.

Mary's extravagant gift of anointing Jesus' feet expressed her love for Him and her appreciation for the restoration He had performed in her life.

We too can extravagantly worship Jesus as a demonstration of His mercy and grace in our lives.

Week 5 (Day 29) Monday, March 22, 2021

Psalm 119: 9 – 16, Isaiah 43: 8 – 13, 2 Corinthians 3: 4 – 11

The Psalmist says that being rooted in God's word it will help him to be obedient to God and keep him from sinning against Him.

Through Isaiah God reminds His people that they are to keep their eyes on Him as the one and only God. They are to trust Him as only He can save them.

The Law condemns people of their sin which leads to death. However, the new covenant assures us that the law is written on our hearts by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which leads to righteousness and eternal life.

Week 5 (Day 30) Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Psalm 119: 9 – 16, Isaiah 44: 1 – 8, Acts 2: 14 – 24

Once again Isaiah reminds the Israelites that they are God's chosen people and He will restore them by pouring out His Spirit on them and future generations. We too have this promise that God will pour out His Spirit on us and restore us.

In Acts we are reminded of Pentecost when God fulfilled His promise and poured out His Spirit on to all people who receive Jesus as their Saviour.

Summary: Our readings for this past week have centred on our sinfulness. We do not need to be burdened by guilt but we repent and are reassured that by God's mercy and grace we are healed and forgiven.