

Growing Deeper

The Cost of 6ft

Week Two: ***Survival at the Cost of Life*** ***Acts 10:9-28***

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. As we dig deeper into what it means to live a God-directed journey, read and reflect on Acts 10:9-28. Why would Peter feel hesitant about including the Gospel message to Gentiles?
2. When have you been hesitant to feel that the message of the Gospel might not apply to certain groups? Why might we think that some people might not be “Gospel material”?
3. Why do the writers of the New Testament refer to the message of salvation as “Good News”? What makes the message good? (Read Romans 8:1-10.)
4. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in leading Peter to an understanding of the Gospel?
5. How can the Holy Spirit lead you in understanding that God desires to draw close to all people?
6. Through the birth of his Son, Jesus, God has come close to us. He saw our helplessness, and while we were sinners, Christ died for us. Take the closing of your FIFTEEN to thank God for the people he used to bring you and keep you close to him.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. Today we will continue to read in Acts. As you read, reflect on what Peter witnessed in Acts 10:27-48.
8. What was the convincing sign that made Peter accept Gentiles as children of God without going through outward acts such as circumcision or dietary restrictions?
9. What would you characterize the life of a follower of Christ to look like?
10. Was the list of characteristics you made more inward-focused or outward-focused? Why do you think it was so?
11. What is the benefit of being both introspective and outward-focused?

12. Now read 1 John 2:7-11. How does our light shine brightest? In your life, how does this love look, not just in theory but in practice? Brainstorm a list of ways you can show love to others.
13. God starts his sanctifying work with people who have a contrite heart. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, pray over Psalm 25.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

14. Read Psalm 51:15-17. Yesterday on our journey we considered the introspective nature of the follower of Christ. Why would a “broken and contrite spirit” be pleasing to God?
15. At times we wait, ready to be filled, and at other times we tend to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. How does humility play a role in reaching out to others in need?
16. As we reach out to others, what is the mindset we need in order to know that God is committed to us? Read Romans 8:38-39 to remind yourself of God’s love for you.
17. Read Matthew 27:50-51. Do you think the significance of the temple curtain being torn has more to do with us drawing close to God or God drawing close to us? Why do you think that?
18. On our journey this week, we will be examining the cost of drawing close to people in their strife, pain, and sin. Use your final part of the FIFTEEN to identify those in your circle of influence who need you to draw close to them with the redeeming power of God’s love.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

19. Today we will take a look at Jesus’ last night before he was betrayed, specifically how he showed us the fullest extent of his love. Read John 13:12-17.
20. Who or what comes to mind when you read about Jesus’ act of service? In what ways can you consider drawing close to others?
21. Look again in John. Read John 15:9-17. Jesus commands us to love one another. What does “love your neighbor” mean to you?
22. Jesus alludes to a necessity for us to love in John 14. Read John 14:15-21. What does he promise?

23. Read Luther's explanation of the Third Article to the Apostles' Creed. *What does this mean?* I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church he daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

24. How does the Spirit enable us to live a Christ-directed journey?

25. Finish your FIFTEEN by asking God's Spirit to grant you the power to love as he loves and to fill you with security in your status with God so that you can serve others as he directs you. Listen for his promptings today and through the next few weeks as you look for opportunities to draw close to others.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

26. Today we are going to look at what it looks like to live a God-directed journey as we love others. Read Luke 6:32-36.

27. Why is it so hard to love those who are different from you?

28. What is needed in your mindset and spirit to love those who are difficult to love?

29. According to the passage, how are you most like God when you love in this way?

30. As you finish your final FIFTEEN this week, consider all that it means to draw near to people. Paul says that we are being poured out like a "drink offering" (read Philippians 2:12-18). May you never lose heart and be constantly filled by his Spirit so that you may know what this means: "... to live is Christ, and to die is gain."