

Bible Study: Creation reveals God's nature

You will get more out of this study if you read the verses and ponder the questions several times a day. You'll also get more out of the study if you discuss it with others. Jesus says where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is there with them.

Monday Romans 1:16-17 (NRSV)

I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 that "the righteous live by faith." What do you think it means to live by faith?

What are some ways you live by faith?

Paul wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." Paul talked to people about Jesus wherever he went – even when he was in prison for talking about Jesus, he spoke to the other prisoners and to the jailers about Jesus.

How often do you talk to others about the good news of God and Jesus?

How often do you initiate the conversation?

What does this say about whether you are ashamed of the gospel or not?

Where would you like to be in communicating the good news compared with where you are now?

How will you get there?

Tuesday Romans 1:18 (NRSV)

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth.

What Paul announced in this verse is not always readily apparent. Many prophets and people in the Bible cry out to God because the wicked appear to be prospering and because justice does not seem to come. One example is Psalm 10:4-6 (NRSV):

In the pride of their countenance the wicked say, "God will not seek it out"; all their thoughts are, "There is no God." Their ways prosper at all times; your judgments are on high, out of their sight; as for their foes, they scoff at them. They think in their heart, "We shall not be moved; throughout all generations we shall not meet adversity."

What do you think Paul means?

Wednesday Romans 1:19-20a (NRSV)

What can be known about God is plain to [people who suppress the truth], because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made.

Paul says God's eternal power and divine nature can be understood by looking at creation.

What do you notice when you look at creation?

If you hadn't heard about God from the Bible, what would you think about God based on what you can see in creation?

Thursday Romans 1:20b-21

[People who suppress the truth] are without excuse; for though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened.

Paul indicates that the appropriate response to looking at creation and thinking about God's attributes is to honor God as God and give thanks to God. If you don't, Paul says, your thinking becomes futile and more dark. (Not good!)

How often do you honor God as God?

How often do you give thanks to God?

What do you want to thank God for today?

Friday Romans 1:22-25 (NRSV)

Claiming to be wise, they became fools; and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Every vacuum gets filled. If you aren't worshiping the Creator, you'll probably start worshiping some part of creation. If you aren't honoring God, you'll start to honor something else instead, and will probably elevate it beyond what you should.

It's hard to keep in mind how wonderful the glory of God is when you can't see God. We're visual people, so it's easy to give top priority to something we can see. As a result, people often honor (ahead of God) a person or some other part of nature or an ambition they have or some idea or ideal. When anything comes ahead of God, it's not good.

What are some of the things you think are wonderful?

When you think about them, do you remember to thank and honor God who created them?

Saturday

What have you done this week because of Jesus?

What do you want to do next week because of Jesus?

What do you need help with?

For more great Bible Studies, go to <http://www.LaJollaLutheranChurch.com>

The Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV), copyright, 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S. A. Used by permission. All rights reserved.