



HOMEWORK FOR OCTOBER 3

Kings: The Price of Unrepentance

Readings: Joel 2:1-20; Luke 15:11-24; 2 Chronicles 7:11-22; 12:1-8; 15:1-7; 19:1-7; 20:1-12; 23:16-21; 24:17-25; 29:1-10; 33:10-13; 33:23; 34:24-28; 36:15-21; Jeremiah 7:22-28; Matthew 23:37-38; Matthew 4:17; Luke 4:43; 2 Corinthians 5:13-21; Revelation 21:1-8; 22:17

QUESTIONS

- 1) Read Joel 2:1-20 and describe "The Day of The Lord" in your own words. _____

Why does the Lord say He may relent of this disaster? What would they have to do? _____

What does this tell us about God's character? _____

- 2) Reflect on the phrase, "return to me." What does this tell us about the nature of repentance? How does this affect the way you think about what "repentance" means?

- 3) Read 2 Chronicles 7:11-22 and describe what God said the people needed to do for Him to forgive their sin and heal their land. _____

What does this tell us about the nature of repentance? The character of God? _____

What does the Lord say will happen if they don't repent? _____

What does this tell us about the character of God? _____

- 4) Read the summary of how God responded to His people's lack of repentance in 2 Chronicles 36:15-21. Why did God allow them to be taken into exile? How did He try to warn them to repent? _____

Why is it significant that the Babylonians destroyed the Temple? _____

5) Read Jeremiah 7:22-28. How often did God send prophets to warn the people? _____

What does it tell us about God's people that they repeatedly did not listen? What does this tell us about human nature? Ourselves? _____

6) Read Matthew 23:37-38 and describe Jesus's heart for the people of Jerusalem. What does this tell us about God's heart for the lost? _____

7) Read 2 Corinthians 5:13-21. What is our role as citizens of the kingdom, who have already been reconciled to God? _____

What was Paul's heart attitude towards those with whom he shared the good news of the Gospel? How does this compare to when you typically hear the warning to "Repent!?" _____

APPLICATION

Psalm 139 says, *"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

It is so important for us to consistently reflect on our need for repentance in our lives. This requires time of self-examination, prayers of confession to God, and setting our vision on how to amend our ways. A helpful tool for this process is a prayer from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola from the 16th Century. Attached are the steps for engaging in this prayer process. Find a time of silence and solitude in the next week when you can follow the steps of the prayer to examine your heart before God.

PRAYER OF EXAMEN

The prayer of Daily Examen, is a contemplative prayer excerpted from an extensive series of “Spiritual Exercises” developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century. St. Ignatius required his companions (now known as the “Jesuits”) to practice the Examen daily at noon and before going to sleep. During an Examen, one reflects on the current day, focusing on memories from the events of the day as a way of recognizing God’s Divine Presence.

Often, the Examen awakens one to the Divine through routine or ordinary moments to illustrate the subtle and surprising ways God speaks. This prayer practice helps cultivate and refine discernment as well as an awareness of God’s presence. It also assists in taking a spiritual assessment of oneself.

This practice often works best at the end of a day, when you can reflect on the last 24 hours (or first thing in the morning when you can remember the events of the previous day). You can also look at the last few days. Here are the steps in this practice:

1. Give thanksgiving.

Begin by giving God thanks for all the things you’re grateful for today. Reflect on the ways God has blessed you on this particular day (or the past few days). Allow big things and small things to arise.

2. Ask for the Spirit to help.

Look at the moments in your day when you did not act so well. However, before doing so, ask God to fill you with his Spirit so that the Spirit can lead you through this soul-searching.

3. With God, review the day.

Review the day from one activity to another...the times spent in prayer; with family or community; at work; all the principal moments of our activity in the day.

Where was God in these activities? Were there inclinations and thoughts this day that were not of God? Was I able to change my thoughts? Do I need God to help me rethink aspects of my day? What kinds of feelings did I have over the day? What kinds of choices and decisions did I make – ones that turn me closer to God, or any that were based on some self-centered ambition? How did I use my body today? Did I care for my body and respect the bodies of others?

4. Ask for forgiveness and healing.

If there is something you would like to ask God for forgiveness for, do so. Ask God to help you set things straight. Ask for healing of any harm that might have been done. Ask for help to get over it and move on. Ask for wisdom to discern how you might better handle such tricky moments in the future. Ask God if there are any actions of restitution you might need to take (e.g., apologize to the person?).

5. Pray about the next day.

Ask God to show you how tomorrow or the immediate future might go. Imagine the things you’ll be doing, the people you’ll see, and the decisions you’ll be mulling over. Ask for help with any moments you foresee that might be difficult. Ask for help in moments when you might be tempted to fail in the way you identified in your prayer time with God.

Close your prayer time with a gesture of the sign of the cross or by reciting the Lord’s Prayer.