

## Devotional

## The Church

March 28, 2021

### Monday

Read Ephesians 1:3-10

The Church – the Body of Christ – is holy. Jesus prayed for the sanctification – the “making holy” process of all his disciples as he says in John 17:17, “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” He died on the cross “in order to present you holy and blameless” before God (Colossians 1:22). God chose us before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love (Ephesians 1:4). And just to make sure that we know that Jesus praying for our holiness, his dying for us, and God choosing us before time has nothing to do with us or how great we are as individuals, 2 Timothy 1:9 reminds us that God saved us and gave us a holy calling, not because of any works or deeds or nice thoughts we have had, but because of God’s own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.

*Our holiness is God’s gift to us by the work of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. You may not feel holy often, and may not want to be seen as holy, or think of yourself as holy, but God has made you holy for God’s glory. Pray to accept your identity as part of God’s holy church today.*

### Tuesday

Read 1 Peter 1:1-12

God makes us holy through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we would be a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5). We are a chosen race, a holy nation, God’s own people (1 Peter 2:9). We are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God as a holy temple (Ephesians 2:21). While scripture uses words like house and temple to talk about the Body of Christ, scripture is not talking about physical buildings on earth, but Jesus followers as they are united together in love and devotion to Jesus Christ and being a witness to Jesus wherever they are and wherever they go.

*How has your image of what “church” is changed over the past year? What should you celebrate? What would you like to see transform in your understanding of church?*

## Wednesday

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-17

This passage doesn’t just apply to the people in the city of Corinth 2,000 years ago, it is a description of all the members of the Body of Christ. You and me. You are a saint. You might not get a statue or a day named after you, but you can claim the greatest title one can hope for: redeemed saint made holy by Jesus Christ.

And we saints are to gather in community for we are indeed united by the Holy Spirit that Jesus has graciously given us to bind us together as one. As the Body of Christ, the communion of saints, unity is our default setting. We are the fellowship under the banner of Jesus Christ, participating in the blessings of Jesus’ death and resurrection, sharing in the mission of Christ, caring for other saints, and showing God’s grace to those who are not yet part of the Body of Christ. When we are united, we are Christ’s Body. When we are not united we are going against how Christ made us to be.

*Considering the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1, what does it mean for us in this moment to be united for the sake of Jesus Christ?*

## Thursday

Read 1 Corinthians 15, with special focus on v. 17

“Easter, with the joy of the coming spring, with all the happiness with which the sun warms our hearts, has become for each of us since childhood a festival dear to our hearts, a festival filled with warm memories from which we do not want to part. Who among us would want to lose even a single spring from our lives? But to say that our entire life depends on Easter, that our existence would be threatened if there were no Easter – who among us would want or even could bear such a thing? But Paul did indeed say it. And because he reflected a bit more thoroughly on this question that we tend to do, we may assume that such a statement does indeed harbor a certain meaning about which one might perhaps reflect further. ‘If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile.’” – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Easter Sunday 1928

*Why does your entire life depend on Easter?*

## Good Friday

It is finished. Take this day to reflect. Join us in worship this evening at 7:00 in-person or on the livestream. Audio recording will be played Saturday morning at 10:00am.