



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

July 27-August 2, 2020

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

Sermon Title: "Learning the Secret"

Notes from sermon on 7/26:

Things to Pray For This Week:

Family Focus Question:

Can you think of a time when you can say you were content? How long did it last?

Questions for Small Groups

1. What did Augustine mean when he prayed "Lord, our hearts find no rest till they rest in you"?
2. Paul said the he "learned the secret of being content." What is the secret?
3. In the miracle of feeding the crowds, what is the relationship between physical hunger and spiritual hunger?

Monday, July 27: Read Philippians 4:10-13

This week we will study contentment, which may seem like an unusual, or even irresponsible sentiment right now. With so much wrong in the world, with so much to worry about, how can we be content, or even justify being content? Yet in today's scripture, Paul, who was alone in a jail cell, fighting against many injustices in the world and desperate to spread a gospel of love, healing, and peace, says, "I have learned the secret of being content...."

Many of us find ourselves searching in vain for this secret. We won't find it in our society, which tells us we must be more, have more, do more. We will not find it in our circumstances, for there is real pain and need in the world, and when there is not, our circumstances still do not satisfy us. So what is the secret? As we sit in the "jail cells" of quarantine, can we find the contentment Paul found 2000 years ago through

him who gave him strength? Can we take the advice of St. Augustine who over 1600 years ago wrote to God, “our hearts find no rest until they rest in you...”?

Tuesday, July 28: Read Matthew 14:13-21

Throughout the world, we are hungry. We worry there will never be enough to satisfy us, so we compete for resources and hold out our hands to be fed. For most of us in America, our hunger is metaphorical. For too many places in the world, it is literal and real. The crowds following Jesus in today’s gospel were hungry for so much – love, meaning, respect, and, by the end of the day, food. “Send them away,” the disciples said. “This is a remote place [so there is nothing for them here].” But Jesus didn’t see scarcity; he saw abundance. A very ancient interpretation of the miracle of the fish and loaves is that as the basket was passed around, people found they actually did have resources to add to the original offering of Jesus and the disciples who were willing to share and trust it would be enough. The scarcity everyone saw was actually abundance when partnered with generosity and faith. What abundance is right in front of us where we only see scarcity today? How can our faith in God and the love of Christ help us turn it into a feast where all can be content?

Wednesday, July 29: Read 1 Timothy 6:6-8

What is the relationship between godliness and contentment? Perhaps a clue is in the beginning of the second verse of today’s scripture, “For we brought nothing into this world...” Beginning every day with a sense of complete gratitude and humility in recognition that everything we take for granted - our lives, our world, our food, the solid earth on which we stand, the lives of those who love and support us – is a gift we did not earn or create, we can go through our day in complete awe and joy, which draws us closer to our Creator. Let’s try that today, in the midst of all the places we’re no longer allowed to go, the vacations we can’t take, the corporeal freedoms we no longer have – and just see gifts. Creation. Life. Love. Joy. All gifts, for us to enjoy, and for us to share.

Thursday, July 30: Read Isaiah 55:1-2

Today’s words from Isaiah teach us that coming to God for contentment is not an act of self-sacrifice where we settle for something less in order to be “godly.” Rather, when we come to God to have our thirst and hunger satisfied, we find wine without cost, food that satisfies, and the “richest fare.” Where are we laboring and spending our money in pursuit of things that do not actually satisfy? What free gifts from God are we surpassing that will satisfy us so much more?

Friday, July 31: Read Psalm 63

Today, let us choose poetry over television. Scripture over scandal. Living water over sugar, alcohol, and carbonation. Praise over complaint. Peace over pursuit. Sanctuary over FOMO. Let today’s psalm wash over us and connect us to the peace that surpasses understanding, the contentment that connects us to the abundant life Christ lived, died, and rose to give us.

Saturday, August 1: Scripture Memorization: Isaiah 55:2

“Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.”

Sunday, August 2: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of

Common Confession: *Lord, so often we strive to satisfy our spiritual hunger with so many other things than you. We turn to the things of this world to fill our souls, but we soon find ourselves empty, unfulfilled, and exhausted. Forgive us for seeking ultimate wholeness in things other than you. By your grace, break the bread of life for us once again and fill our souls with this elusive gift of satisfaction and contentedness. We ask it in the name of Christ.*