



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

February 1-7, 2021

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

Week 4: Sermon Series from *Grace Still Works* by Pete Moon

Chapter 4: "Discipleship"

Sermon Title: "Lord, Are You Sure We Are the Ones?"

Notes from sermon on 01/31:	To pray for this week:
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Family Focus Question:

How often do you think about life after death?
What do you imagine it to be like? What will you and I be like?

Questions for Small Groups

1. Do you find it challenging to move deeper into your faith? Why or why not?
2. How would you describe your growth as a disciple over the years? Slow? Steady? Fits and spurts? Say more.
3. Do you believe the claim that the world is changed by making disciples of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

Monday, February 1: Read Luke 16:19-31

This week we dive deeper into grace. Much deeper. We will explore the type of grace John Wesley called "Sanctifying Grace," which enables us to go further in our spiritual journey than what some Christian traditions call "being saved" and Wesleyans call "Justifying Grace," and on a path to becoming more and more like Christ. We are called to strive for spiritual perfection – a goal completely out of reach if we try to attain it on our own. As we read many of the scriptures this week, including Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, we think, "I can never be that way." We forget, however, that God is "in the business of changing us." (*Grace Still Works*, p. 49).

So what does Sanctifying Grace have to do with today's passage about the afterlife? The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is perhaps Jesus's most detailed description of life after death in the Bible. As Pete explains on page 50 in *Grace Still Works*, "A look to eternity can inspire a contagious life of discipleship in the here and now." Pete goes on to say that one of the "scary details" of this parable is that the rich man seems unchanged in the afterlife – he is still asking God to make Lazarus serve him. He asserts that, based on Jesus's words, "it is not outlandish to say that what we are in this life somehow continues into the next...what we become in this life matters eternally." (p. 51). Let us start now living that life of full discipleship so we embody the words we pray so often, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Tuesday, February 2: Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-3a

We read in today's scripture that we are to "walk and to please God...more and more." What does this mean? Are we to constantly add more to our "to do" list? Are we to retreat to a high mountain so we can focus exclusively on spirituality? In his book, and in the sermon on Sunday, Pete gives us an unusual analogy for our discipleship: Deception Pass in Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest. This unique body of water is both fast and deep – usually it's one or the other. Likewise, our discipleship must be fast, quickly adapting to change and responding to the needs of the world around us. However, it cannot be shallow; it must take place through deep connection with Christ and pursuit of the means of grace. In what ways can our discipleship as individuals and a church deepen? How could we be faster and more adaptable?

Wednesday, February 3: Read Psalm 1

The first psalm paints an incredible picture of the habits and blessings of a life of discipleship. It can almost seem idealistic; too lofty a goal to realistically reach, therefore not practical. How many of us can say we meditate on God's law, day and night? Does anyone? Pete gives us a resounding "yes" in his story about Bob Boardman, a US soldier severely wounded in Japan during World War II who, having memorized Psalm 1 before his injury, found himself transformed as he meditated upon it, day and night. This ultimately gave him the power and grace to return to Japan to minister to its people. When have you been transformed by scripture? Will you commit to memorizing the entire first psalm, too?

Thursday, February 4: Read Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount)

Let us take the time today to read all three chapters of Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount. As we read Christ's teachings on anger, lust, divorce, oaths, retaliation, loving our enemies, generosity, anxiety, judgment, and more, let us see ourselves not as ordinary humans with no chance of living up to such a lofty ideal, but as imperfect humans capable of attaining this spiritual perfection through God's perfect grace. Let us pray with faith that God transforms us into this image Christ has given us, helping God's kingdom become on earth as it is in heaven. Which part of the Sermon on the Mount seems most difficult to you? What can you start doing today to more fully embrace God's grace to grow in that area?

Friday, February 5: Read Matthew 28:19-20

We are not just being called to be disciples for our own benefit. We are all being called to become disciples *who make other disciples*. Are we doing this? Are we using our actions, attitudes, and words to turn others toward Christ? Are we reaching out to friends and neighbors and inviting them to Reveille? Are we reaching out to fellow members at Reveille and encouraging them in their spiritual journey through small groups, prayer, fellowship, and acts of love? What is one new thing you can be doing in 2021 to increase your ability and opportunity to make disciples for Christ?

Saturday, February 6: Scripture Memorization: Psalm 1

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in due season, and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish" (ESV).

Sunday, February 7: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of Common Confession: *Almighty God, you have given us an overwhelming assignment. As disciples making other disciples, we are called to change the world. We confess that on our own, the task is too much. We cannot get our earthly mind nor arms around our role and calling so we withdraw instead of stepping forward. By your grace offer us your courage, vision, and power. Enable us to take on the mantle of discipleship once again with renewed vigor as you make us into the image of your Son, for we ask it in his name. AMEN*