

Small Groups Curriculum

Week of October 25, 2020

OPENING PRAYER

Shine in our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, the pure light of Your divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our mind that we may comprehend the proclamations of Your Gospels. Instill in us also reverence for Your blessed commandments so that, having trampled down all carnal desires, we may lead a spiritual life, both thinking and doing all those things that are pleasing to You. For You, Christ our God, are the illumination of our souls and bodies, and to You we offer up glory, together with Your Father, Who is without beginning, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer Before the Reading of the Gospel
Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

THIS SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

For the 6th Sunday of Luke

SUNDAY EPISTLE

St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19

SUNDAY GOSPEL

The Gospel According to Luke 8:26-39

All readings are available at goarch.org or the Daily Readings app.

EPISTLE READING

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

GOSPEL READING

At that time, as Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.)

Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed.

Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

Discussion

INTRO NOTES

1. The revelation of God

- A. In his epistle St. Paul stress that he preaches “not man's gospel” but rather the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- B. Jesus revealed Himself and the salvation He offers when He healed the demoniac, but only the demons acknowledged Him as Lord

2. Stillness

- A. St. Paul’s conversion was followed by a period alone in the wilderness (“I went away into Arabia”)
- B. After the demoniac was healed, the people found him sitting at the feet of Jesus
- C. Time spent alone with God is important, especially after big moments

3. Sacrifice for the Gospel

- A. St. Paul readily gave up his “former life in Judaism,” even though he was an important man in the community (“I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age”)
- B. The swineherds were not willing to part with their herds; they decided, instead, to “ask Jesus to depart from them”
- C. We are not all willing to give up our old lives for the sake of Christ

For more on this Sunday’s Gospel reading, watch:

[Live the Word #5 | Encountering Jesus Christ](#)

Discussion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How are you feeling right now?
2. What in your life holds you back from receiving the revelation of God? What is it that consumes your awareness, keeping you from beholding the Savior who stands before you?
3. What do you struggle to sacrifice for the Lord's sake? Is it wealth? Comfort? In fact, the Scriptures tell us that there are things we are called upon to sacrifice, but when the Lord asks for them, even if it means freedom from demons, we instead ask Him to go away. What part of you is asking Jesus simply to go away?
4. What is your experience of stillness? Is it uncomfortable? How do you make time for stillness? If you don't, how can you start?

If you don't get through all the questions, that's ok!

Discussion

WRAP-UP NOTES

Each Wrap-Up should be personal and based on your time together as a Small Group. These three questions can help you, as a Small Group Leader, wrap up your weekly meeting:

1. What are you grateful to have learned or heard in the conversation?
2. What simple statement or question from the conversation can you share again that would be most helpful to hear again three years from now?
3. If you could share up to twelve words on the topic of “sacrifice” what would you say?

AT THE END OF MEETINGS

We give thanks to You, invisible King, Who by Your boundless power fashioned the universe, and in the multitude of Your mercy brought all things from nothing into being. Look down from heaven, O Master, upon those who have bowed their heads before You; for they have not bowed before flesh and blood, but before You, the awesome God. Therefore, O Master, make smooth and beneficial for us all, whatever lies ahead, according to the need of each: Sail with those who sail; travel with those who travel; heal the sick, Physician of our souls and bodies. Through the grace, compassion, and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer Following the Lord's Prayer
Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom