



Making Disciples Who Make Disciples

Aug. 8, 2021



Out Word – Unpopular Topics

Lectionaries can be very useful tools. On one hand, they force pastors over a three-year period to use a wide expanse of biblical passages, forcing them to discuss or preach about some topics they otherwise may have avoided or not thought about. On the other hand, the lectionary leads many people to believe the whole Bible is covered in those three years. It's not.

The typical three-year Sunday lectionaries cover only **3.7** percent of the Old Testament, and portions of just **111** of the 150 Psalms. The New Testament readings cover only **25.4** percent of the epistles and **57.8** percent of the Gospels (<http://www.catholic-resources.org/Lectionary/Statistics.htm>). You can see why we need to read our own Bibles at home to ensure we get exposed to all the other passages that aren't included in the lectionary!

Some passages (such as the long genealogy listings in some Old Testament books) are left out because there's not much story to explain or illuminate. But sometimes it seems a certain section is left out because it touches on aspects of theology that we prefer not to discuss. This week seems to be an example of the latter.

Sunday's passage from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (4:25-5:2) begins with an

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Worship Service Times

Sunday 11:30 a.m. & Wednesday 5:30 p.m.

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A Christian Community

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Next Parish Council Meeting

Aug. 25, 2021 6:30 p.m.

encouragement to speak the truth to each other.

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. ... ²⁸ **Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.** ²⁹ **Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear...** ¹ **Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children,** ² **and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. — Eph 4:25–5:2 (NRSV)**

Paul is powerfully urging disciples of Jesus Christ to behave in a godly way; not just to believe in Jesus as our savior, but also to submit to him as our Lord — changing our behavior. We should be *imitators of God*.

When we imitate someone else, we take on their mannerisms. We talk like them, walk and move like them. Picture Rich Little imitating a famous celebrity. He would take on the swagger of John Wayne or the confrontational stance of James Cagney as he began to talk like them. (If you don't know any of those people, feel free to Google them). It's that same sort of intentionality that Paul calls us to have as we imitate God. And then, as Paul often does after his call to behave a certain way, he gives us examples of what not to do.

But the lectionary leaves out the next five verses, comments from Paul mentioning certain specific behaviors we should avoid.

These are important comments that Christians in most denominations never hear read from the pulpit on Sunday morning:

But sexual immorality, and all uncleanness, or greediness, must not even be named among you (as is fitting for saints), ⁴ and obscenity, and foolish talk, or coarse jesting (which are not proper), but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For this you know for certain, that every sexually immoral person, or unclean person, or greedy person (who is an idolater), does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be sharers with them, — Eph 5:3–7 (LEB)

It may be a coincidence, but this passage would be extremely bothersome to the itching ears of folks looking for happy, feel-good scripture passages. I'm pretty sure these verses don't show up on the coffee mugs or bumper stickers we see at Christian gift stores. This probably won't be a common Facebook meme either.

Paul isn't saying that if we commit these sins, we can't be forgiven. He's not saying that anyone who does any of these things will definitely go to Hell.

He's reminding us that grace changes us. If we are truly following Jesus, we will be different from the way we were. If we're following the Holy Spirit's guidance, our old bad habits will be replaced by good ones. That's what becoming new creations does to us.

If we're still doing the things he mentions, then we haven't really repented (turned away) and are still languishing in our sins. And, just as a toddler in a mud puddle would not be allowed to run into the house and jump onto the white sofa, we cannot enter God's kingdom having rejected his grace.

The notorious gangster, Mickey Cohen, heard Billy Graham speak at a meeting and expressed some interest in the message he heard. So, Graham and some other ministers talked to him. Sometime later, at the urging of a friend, Cohen invited Jesus into his life. But his behavior showed no evidence of repentance.

When his friend confronted him about it, Cohen was furious. "You didn't tell me that I'd have to give up my work and my friends!" Cohen believed that since there were Christian cowboys, Christian actors, and Christian senators, he could be a Christian gangster.

As R.C. Sproul wrote, "Judas chose to follow Jesus; he made his own decision to enter the school of Jesus, and he stayed with our Lord during his earthly ministry for three years. Yet we are told he was a devil (John 6:70). It wasn't that Judas was genuinely converted and then fell out of grace and was lost; rather, although he was close to Jesus, he was never a converted man. That ought to give us pause as we consider the states of our own souls."

We tend to miss Paul's intent in much of his writings. He is not providing a list of bad behavior that we should avoid doing so that God will let us into Heaven. He is describing the type of behavior that people who have truly accepted God's grace and are trying to imitate him don't do.

He is describing the symptoms of an underlying sickness, not telling us to avoid the symptoms so we won't get the disease. We recognize that a fever, vomiting, and body aches are indications of having the flu; but we don't think we can avoid the flu by not getting a fever, upset stomach, or sore muscles.

We don't earn our way into God's kingdom by not sinning. Our obedience is a reaction to our salvation in Christ, not a purchase price. The behaviors that Paul mentions are quite common in our culture.

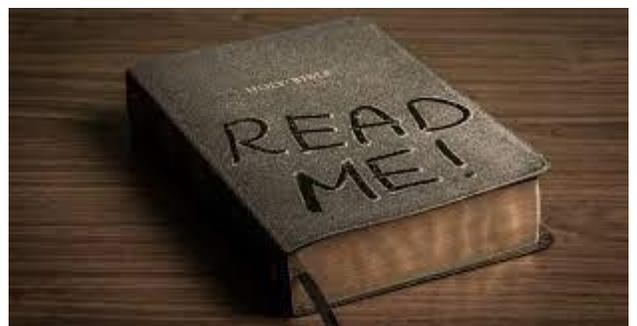
So, if Paul is correct, there are many people in our lives who will not be entering God's kingdom.

And that irritates us, though not enough to get us to share the Gospel with them, but enough that we stop reading that part and pretend Paul didn't write it.

Grace changes us; if people don't see a change in us, we need to seriously consider whether we're really disciples. And then set our minds on being imitators of God.

Grace and Peace,

Fr. Austin





Arizona Anglican Men's Retreat

This year's retreat will be at Emmanuel Pine Retreat Center in Prescott, Sept 10-12. The anticipated cost will be \$95 for the weekend and a few scholarships for people with hardships will be available. The retreat begins at 4 p.m., Friday, Sept. 10 and continues until about noon Sunday. For more information, please contact Jeff Bisgrove (jeffmbisgrove@me.com, 602-653-9996) or Teke Sankey (Tekes2@hotmail.com, 303-884-3651).



Season after Pentecost Sunday's Lessons

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:4-8
Psalm 34:1-8

Second Reading: Ephesians 4:25-5:2
Gospel John 6:35, 41-51



Please note:
The deadline for newsletter submission is 9 a.m. Wednesday. Thank you.



Lord, we ask you to comfort and sustain all who in this transitory life are in sickness, or any other adversity. Open the hearts to know your love and feel your presence.

We pray for Diane Manning, Dale, Corney, Scotty Haskell, Julie Corral, Bill and Judy Fletcher, Zachary Kircher, Katy Mize, Lina,

Bruno Hildebrandt, Kara, Eric, Ella & Timothy, Gerry Pyper, Sandra Pyper, Steven Fischer, Ann Traverso, Neil, Lauren, Pat Galloway, Dorothy Green, Denise, Connie, Sue, Bishop Keith, Abbie Bundy, Betty (Bo Peep) Penny, Donna, Dcn. Linda, Lorraine Chavez, Steve Chacon, Merle Shyne, Laura, Darlene O., Maddy, Lauren, Steven, Elena, Officer Shay K. Mikalonis, Niki, Roni, Bob, Carol, Kathy Watson, Jim Music, Lety, Bryan, and Linda.

To submit or update prayer requests for this newsletter, please contact the church office at 928-343-9551, or ctryuma@gmail.com

CTR Prayer Project

But Joseph said to them {his brothers}, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." – Gen 50:19-20

When life deals you a hard blow, when you feel out of sorts, when you can't seem to see through the fog, when you don't understand why you are feeling the way you are, when you are in tears and can't see light at the end of the tunnel...

Remember, your Creator is right here with you. Remember the unconditional love He has for you. Remember, there is nothing you can do on your own. Remember, all your sins are already forgiven. Remember, God isn't finished with you yet. Remember to focus on Christ, not on your circumstances. Remember, it's all about God, not about you. Remember, the enemy has no power over you. Remember to use God's eternal perspective, not your own. Remember, earth is only your temporary home. Remember, the battle is against spiritual forces of evil. Remember, God's highest priority is an intimate relationship with you. Remember, every decision you make has its consequences. Remember that God's Word is a light in times of darkness. Remember, God is living His life in you. Remember, prayer changes you.

Remember, there can only be one will at work in your life. Remember that God's waiting room is a classroom. Remember that faith involves believing the unseen. Remember that God has

unlimited resources. Remember that peace comes from God, not the world. Remember that brokenness is God's greatest teaching tool. Remember that God speaks to you in a still, small voice. Remember that God's provision requires obedience. Remember, God has prepared a place for you in heaven. Remember that you worship a sovereign God.

Feel better? Keep this for future reference. All you need is a reminder.

Praying in One Accord God put His Holy Spirit in us so that we can be reminded of His goodness and be in one accord with His plan for our life.

Accord Prayer Lord Christ, You are God. Everything about You speaks of everything about Your Father in heaven. When the going gets rough, help us remember those things that will help us persevere and make it to the finish line. The world is spreading evil everywhere. Please help us stay focused on You, instead of our circumstances. In Your Name we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving Loving Father, thank You for Your arms being open wide to welcome us into them when we are in need of comfort. Thank You for being the Great I AM, the One Who was, Who is, and Who will always be there for us. Amen.

Old Behavior, New Behavior, and Motivation (Eph 4:25-32)

H F C D E V I L F M H S K
 E C B N B L F L Y C Y O S
 N E I G H B O R A L T M L
 A N O T H E R E F O R E B
 V U E R R C G G P N U T L
 S T E A L A I A B G T H B
 G I H S D U V N E E H I G
 E S L O N S E G S R Y N S
 L R O T T E N R I T I G A
 A G F G V I E Y H K E H S
 B N E I T B I D R C T A I
 O G G T M D D O A K I N D
 R M U E G Y W L P N M D E
 F P M N R S P E A K R S U

ANGER	ANGRY	ANOTHER
ASIDE	BECAUSE	DEVIL
EACH	FORGIVEN	GIVE
GOOD	HANDS	INSTEAD
LABOR	LONGER	MEMBERS
NEED	NEIGHBOR	PLACE
PUTTING	ROTTEN	SHARE
SOMETHING	SPEAK	STEAL
THEREFORE	TRUTH	WORKING



Mark Your CALENDAR

Sunday, Aug 8

11:30 a.m. Worship Service

Tuesday, Aug 10

6:30 a.m. Bible Study (Acts)

6:30 p.m. Grief Share – CtR Library

Wednesday, Aug 11

2 p.m. Bible Study (1 Peter)

5:30 p.m. Worship Service

Sunday Aug 15

11:30 a.m. Worship Service

“In your anger do not sin”:
 Do not let the sun go down
 while you are still angry,
 and do not give the devil a
 foothold.
 Ephesians 4:26-27