



theme: Scripture #2 (Discipleship) – Psalm 119

materials: Bibles

The theme for the month is Scripture. How might we be challenged in our perceptions of what the Bible is and is meant to be? Should we always put ourselves in the position of the scripture writer or is it possible to uncover meaning blind to context or history? What new ways could we use the Bible?

Certainly, proof and argument vs. dialogue, conversation and search – which is the best way to approach the Bible? What is the Bible? Have we under or over-estimated the Bible's importance in the Christian life?

welcome

Is there anything you are “obsessed” with? That is, is there a sport, a tv show, a type of food, a computer game, a band etc... that you enjoy so much it is bordering on the unhealthy?

If you are not actually “obsessed” with anything, is there one particular thing you would say you like above anything else (besides God, clearly)?

interact

Read out all of Psalm 119 together. Yes, it is long, but reading the whole thing will give your cell an idea for how much importance and reverence the author – and the community it was written for – gave to the word of God. Reading large chunks of Scripture together is also an ancient form of worship, one which the Church does not engage in anymore.

If you are certain that your group cannot handle this (and do not make this decision lightly, nor without giving them an opportunity to have a say in the matter) then perhaps read out the first three sections and the last three sections of Psalm 119.

read

How did you feel about reading the whole thing together? Have you ever done that kind of thing before? What did you learn from the reading? What was the author trying to get across? What are some of the recurring phrases and ideas in Psalm 119?

Why do you think the author would write all this about the word of God? What was the point?

Have you ever felt the way the author clearly does about Scripture?

How serious are you about trying to obey the words of Scripture?

What part, if any, do the words and statutes and laws of the Lord have in your daily life?

What part do you want Scripture to play in your life?

think

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Try to set a time for the public reading of Scripture. This may take some boldness, but go as a group outside somewhere and read (or sing!) a passage of Scripture together where others can hear. Choose what Scripture you want to read, make sure you all have the same translation, and go for it. You will get some funny looks and probably comments as well. So what?



live & pray

What is your plan for reading the Bible? Is it to read whatever comes up when you flip the book open on occasion, or do you have a plan for reading and studying it?

Try and work out a reasonable plan for your cell to read through the Bible, and keep each other accountable to this plan week by week. If some people aren't good readers, arrange to have others come and read with them, or get an audio Bible.

useful resources

Book: Tom Wright has done a series of books called "Matthew (or Luke, or Mark, etc...) For Everyone." You can find them at: www.amazon.ca/Matthew-Everyone-Tom-N-T-Wright/dp/o66422862

CD: If you want to get a copy of Johnny Cash reading the New Testament, you can find it here: www.amazon.com/Johnny-Cash-Reads-Complete-Testament/dp/071806771

leader's guide

The public reading of Scripture is one of the charges Paul lays on Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13. It has been one of the ways an illiterate population has had access to the words of Scripture. Bibles are very prevalent now, but perhaps still not any more widely read.

Obvious recurring themes in Psalm 119 are devotion to the word of God (statutes, law, precepts, commands, ordinances, decrees, promises); a realization of sin; the importance of discipline; and the consequences for not obeying the word. The author was expressing his love for the word of the Lord, and calling the community to share that understanding as well.