

Weekly Study Guide

The week of September 23, 2012

Daily Readings

Monday	Luke 6:12-19	Tuesday	Psalm 133:1-3	Wednesday	Mark 1:29-31
Thursday	Acts 2:1-3	Friday	Acts 2:42-47	Saturday	Acts 4:23-31

My notes on this week's readings...

Group Discussion

Connect	<p>What's the best experience you ever had being on a team? What made that good? What was hard about it?</p>
Learn	<p>Read Psalm 133:1-3. This Psalm is one of the "songs of ascents." Ancient Israelites used to sing this group of Psalms as traveling music when they would travel up to Jerusalem for festival days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Verse 1 says that it is "good and pleasant" when God's people live together in unity. What makes this so good?•Ancient Israelites understood themselves as one big family. (A more literal translation of v. 1 says that it's good and pleasant when "brethren" live together in unity.) Traveling to Jerusalem for festivals was like a giant family reunion. What are the good things that come from togetherness on a large scale? <p>Read Luke 6:12-19. Jesus prayed all night long before choosing 12 of his disciples for a closer level of relationship with him and for preparation to be sent out as apostles. (The word "apostle" means "one that is sent out").</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Why do you think Jesus prayed before making this decision?•Do you think this kind of prayer and discernment would be wise to imitate in our closer relationships? <p>Read Mark 1:29-31 and Mark 9:2. These are just two episodes that illustrate the close relationships that Jesus shared with Simon Peter, James, and John. They went home together after worship on the Sabbath, and Jesus shared the singular moments of his life with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•In your experience, what kinds of things lead to high levels of closeness within the Christian community?•In your community group is it "ok" for group members to do things together without the whole group? What's good about that? Is it a difficulty at all?
Apply	<p>This week's message suggested that we could think about ourselves like Lego pieces, created individually for different amounts and levels of connection with other people. How do think you're doing as a Lego in the Body of Christ? Do you think there's something that God is calling you to, to strengthen your connections?</p>
Pray	<p>The Christian leader and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote that the visible church on earth is a gift from God, and there are times of trial and difficulty where we might have to live without the joy of this gift. Consider those who are alone and include them in your prayers today.</p>