

Weekly Study Guide

The Week of August 18, 2013

Daily Readings

Monday	Read Isaiah 44:16-22 This passage might seem ridiculous to us– the idea of worshipping something as a god that we have made with our own hands. But in our own society, we have new ways of doing this. People pick and choose from philosophies and religions and put together their own collage of attributes and claim this is their god. However, God is not created by us, we are created by Him. A God we create cannot save us. We must take God as He is to truly see who we are. What hope do you see in the last line of this verse?
Tuesday	Read Acts 19:23-27 Demetrius had an argument here that sought to inspire his audience to action through two different tactics– hit them in the pocketbook, and hit them in the community pride. Making idols was their trade, and the worship of Artemis was what their city Ephesus was famous for around the area. Pilgrims to the shrine brought a big part of their economic and cultural identity. Do you think financial things keep people away from exploring the truth of faith today? Are there cultural things that keep people from God?
Wednesday	Read Acts 19:27-34 This dangerous scene shows how human nature can act rashly according to how we fill in the blanks of a situation. The friends of Paul wisely would not let him speak to the mob. There are some situations in which it is best not to even try to defend oneself. Have you ever been in a situation where you chose not to answer an attack by defending your reputation, but had to trust the situation to the example you've previously set? Is it difficult for you to let go, or freeing?
Thursday	Read Luke 6:27-36 Jesus teaches us in situations where we are clearly being wronged that we are not to return anger for anger, or violence for violence, but 'turn the other cheek'- diffuse the situation with our peace that does not depend on the approval of the world. Have you ever been in a situation where love shown to an enemy has changed what could have been a bad course of events? What does it cost you to choose to 'turn the other cheek'? When you take a step back from this situation, can you see God's wisdom in this?
Friday	Do not be afraid of them; the LORD your God himself will fight for you." Deuteronomy 3:22 "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands." 1 Samuel 17:47 In Acts this week, we see God's people in an extremely vulnerable position. They can do nothing but give this situation to the Lord. Honestly, that position is the place where the greatest things can happen, not because of us, but in God's power. Pray for God's power in your life today.
Saturday	Read Acts 19:35-41 God saved his people through a secular source. The only one who could address an angry mob like this one with any success would be one of their own. The only thing that could diffuse this situation would be calling to attention the Christians' absolute lack of malice. They had not robbed the temples or blasphemed their practices. Respect, true respect of those who have different views, paves the way for interaction that will allow the Holy Spirit to draw them closer. How might we show that kind of respect?



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