

3/9/22 Midweek Service for St. Peter Lutheran Church, Doss, TX

*Matthew 13:3-9. 18-23 Jesus said, "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. 5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. 8 Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! 9 Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand." 18 "Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: 19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. 20 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 21 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. 22 The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. 23 The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"*

The next Mark of Discipleship is abiding in God's Word. There are many passages about God's Word, listen to a few of them. Paul wrote Timothy (2 Timothy 3:16-17) 16 *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

Paul said to the Romans (10:8) *But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim.*

To the Corinthians, Paul wrote, (1 Corinthians 1:18) *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

To the Philippians (2:14-16), Paul wrote: *14 Do everything without complaining and arguing, 15 so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. 16 Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless.*

To Timothy (2 Timothy 2:8-9), he said, *"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered."*

The writer to the Hebrews (4:12) said, *"For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires."*

Jesus prayed, *"Sanctify them with the truth; Your Word is truth."* (John 17:17)

Rick Warren in Purpose Driven Life says, "God's Word is spiritual nourishment you must have to fulfill your purpose." Jesus said, *"If you abide in My Word, then you are truly my disciples."* (John 8:31) Warren says, "In day-to-day living, abiding in God's Word includes three activities:

- 1) I must accept its authority
- 2) I must assimilate its truth – the five ways to do this are to receive it, read it, research it, remember it, and reflect on it. Let God speak to you through it.
- 3) I must apply its principles

God's Word has been called a love letter from God. I begin my day reading a portion of His Word. Then I find a verse or two to put up on Facebook at the Verse for the Day. I also put it up on Linked In and Me We -also two social media platforms. I do this in hope that the Holy Spirit might encourage or challenge those who come across it. Some may never have seen a Bible. Warren reminds us of the 5 -R's about God's Word in the Bible: receive it, read it, research it, remember it, and reflect on it. Will you build on what you are already doing or just start? That's my challenge to you this evening. Amen