

READ the following passage. **Mark what stands out to you.**

"And I tell you, **make friends** for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions), so that when it fails, they [those you have favored] may receive and welcome you into the everlasting habitations (dwellings)."

"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteousness also in much." (Jesus, Lk. 16:9, 10)

REFLECT Write your thoughts regarding what Jesus says in Luke 16:9, 10. (above) Think in terms of how you can practically act upon what He says.

3) Start a Heart-4-Heaven list – people in your life that you can begin praying for, asking God to be drawing to Himself, and looking for opportunities to spend time with them that will develop a relationship that will bear the weight of the truth of the Gospel over time. Next to their name write what you can do to get to know them better.

Look up the following passages and write a key thought from each one.

Matthew 9:36-38 _____

Romans 1:16 _____

Acts 1:8 _____

RESPOND (Application for this week) **WHAT** were the significant scriptures for you this week? (Write them out.)

WHY are those scriptures *significant to you* at this time in your life?

HOW can you practically apply what God spoke to you about this week?

[Try to respond in terms of specific action steps, specific people, long-term plan.]

WHAT will be the time frame for your application?

(1) Start Date _____ (2) **Progress** Check Date(s) _____ (3) Finish Date _____
/ / /

WHO I can ask to hold me accountable for my application: _____

Sermon-Based Devotional

Lawrence Free Methodist Church

(Based on a Sermon by Pastor Larry Baldrige on July 29, 2018)

Series: The Book of ACTS: WE ARE THE CHURCH

This week: God Chose Me For a Reason

Acts 16:16-34

***vision: An inner purpose or goal that directs a person's manner of life and work.** [I.E. Who I am, how I live, what I do, and how I do it.]

READ Acts 16:16-34 **Mark everything that stands out to you.**

¹⁶ One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a demon-possessed slave girl. She was a fortune-teller who earned a lot of money for her masters. ¹⁷ She followed along behind us shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." ¹⁸ So this went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and spoke to the demon within her. "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her," he said. And instantly it left her. ¹⁹ Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities ... ²³ They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. ²⁴ So he took no chances but put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ Around midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. ²⁶ Suddenly, there was a great earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! ²⁷ The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. ²⁸ But Paul shouted to him, "Don't do it! We are all here!" ²⁹ Trembling with fear, the jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with your entire household." ³² Then they shared the word of the Lord with him and all who lived in his household. ... ³⁴ Then he brought them into his house and set a meal before them. He and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from Acts 6:16-34.

I.E. – from verse 17, Paul rebuked the demon – not the person.

Vs's 27 & 28 -- They could have left – but they chose to stay. There is a truth and principle here → God does not want me to leave a situation that I may not like – there may be people there who are in need of my staying. In fact, their lives are at stake and and God may have to be a voice for Him! I shouldn't make decisions based merely on my personal preferences & comfort.

Paul was purposeful and acutely intentional in how he related to and treated others! There is a passage that gives us some great principles that can help us to win a hearing for the gospel – things that will help us to build bridges in relationships that will win a hearing and that will **bear the weight of the truth** of the gospel message.

READ 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 Mark what stands out to you.

¹⁹ For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. ²⁰ And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law; ²¹ to those who are without the Law, as without the Law, though not being myself without the Law of God, but under the law of Christ, that I might win those who are without law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. ²³ And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow-partaker of it. ²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵ And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. [I.E. I am pursuing something of ETERNAL VALUE!] ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without AIM; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷ but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

7 PRINCIPLES for Relating to Anyone

- (1) v. 19 → ATTITUDE (of a servant)
- (2) v. 19 → ATTENTIVE (to their needs)
- (3) v. 20 → ADAPTATION (to their convictions)
- (4) v. 21 → ACCEPTANCE → not judgmental – not their referee in life – tolerance
- (5) v. 22 → ADJUSTMENTS → (sacrifice personal preferences & freedoms)
Note: ADAPTABILITY & ADJUSTMENTS = FLEXIBILITY
- (6) v's 23-26 → AIM → (Lifestyle of Discipline, purpose & intentionality in relationships)
I.E. – I want my life to have an impact in the lives of others for the glory of God!"
- (7) v. 27 → ACCOUNTABILITY → (I.E. How I relate to and treat others either gives credibility and credence to us being an effective representative and ambassador of Jesus – OR hinders my effectiveness!)

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.

I.E. – Paul uses the phrase "that I might win" 5 times in this passage. That strikes me as the importance of how I should be relating to those around me – all the time. I need to be attentive and intentional in how I might be able to better relate to the diversity of people God brings into my life.

READ 1 Corinthians 1:26 -29 Mark what stands out to you.

²⁶ “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, ²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish things of the world, and God has chosen the weak things of the world, ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, ²⁹ that no man should boast before God.

I.E. – God chooses those who don’t have it all together or have everything figured out.

REFLECT Write your thoughts from 1 Corinthians 6:26-29.

3 SUGGESTIONS for ANYONE WHO WANTS to be USED BY GOD in the LIVES of OTHERS for ETERNAL PUPOSES.

[Look up the passages & write your thoughts.]

1) WALK with Jesus

- Mark 3:14 _____
- Matt. 4:19 _____
- John 15:5 _____
- John 15:8 _____
- John 15:16 _____
- Prov. 11:30 _____
- Prov. 13:20 _____

Principle: You become like those you spend time with and that will also form your vision for your life and what you give your life to.

2) Be READY & WILLING do whatever God says

- 1 Peter 3:15 _____

Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.

Ecclesiastes 9:10“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.”

Colossians 3:23-24 _____

Write a brief summary of your thoughts from the above passages. Keep it in the context of who you should be as a person who represents Jesus to others.
