

Weekly Bible Reading - September 2019

The readings this month will focus on the theme of community. We will also be looking at some of the early churches which provide us with examples of how to be the church or community that God desires.

//Sept 1// - The Church of Antioch of Syria

Acts 11:19-30, Act 13:1-3, Acts 14:21-28 and Acts 15:30-41 and Acts 18:18-23

- I believe that the church in Antioch of Syria was one of the most mission-minded churches in the 1st Century. List all of the spiritual activities taking place in Antioch prior to the sending out of Paul & Barnabas.
- This church focused on the task of reaching the lost in their own community and then God used them to send out Paul on his 3 missionary journeys. Why do you think Paul kept returning to this church after his mission trips?
- They did not all go out on mission trips. But those left behind could pray & fast & offer financial support for those who went out. Are we praying & fasting for those doing the hard work of evangelism in difficult places?

//Sept 8// - The Church in Jerusalem

Acts 6:1-7

This passage is typically used to understand the role of deacons or special servants within the church. Yet there is more to this passage that tells a lot about being a church that meets the needs of its own.

- This passage starts and ends with the same statement - the church at Jerusalem was experiencing exceptional growth.
- But, this growth came with problems - the Greek widows were not being fed. Do you know of someone at HPC that has needs that are not being met?
- Will you care enough about that person that you will make the need known to others? Will you care enough that some may think you are complaining? If you are in leadership, will you see the need rather than the complaint?

//Sept 15// - Paul's Words to the Church at Philippi

Philippians 4 - This chapter starts with Paul dealing with a disagreement between 2 sisters who have been a part of his ministry. He appeals to them to work out their differences. We may disagree at times and need help getting issues resolved, but these should not tear the church apart or prevent the work going forward.

- Do you currently have a disagreement with a brother or sister that needs to be resolved?

- The Philippian church was a key financial supporter for Paul. Are you willing to make a financial sacrifice in order to help others spread the gospel?
- One of the key themes of this passage is that the Philippian church was a partner with Paul in spreading the gospel. Do you view our missions efforts as a partnership or just another program at HPC?

//Sept 22// - John's Letter to Gaius

3rd John

- John describes Gaius as his dear friend in the truth. We are called to love one another, but do you have someone you would call your "dear friend in the truth"?
- Diotrephes tried to stop the church from doing good by offering hospitality to the traveling teachers. Do you offer hospitality to those in need or even more to strangers?
- Vs. 11 tells us that those who do good prove that they are God's children. What have you done recently to prove you are a child of God?

//Sept 29// - To the Hebrew Christians

Hebrews 12:14-29

- Vs. 14 - We are instructed to live at peace with one another and to live holy lives. Over the past several weeks we have discussed that at times we will have disagreements. Yet, that which gets us through these times is our understanding that we belong to Christ and that we can live at peace with each other. Do you need to make peace with someone?
- Vs. 15 & 16 - We are to look after each other so that none of us fails to receive the grace of God. This is just not an elder of leadership function. We all have the responsibility to look after each other - to prevent bitterness from springing up in our lives.
- Vs. 18-26 - The writer speaks of the contrast between the foundations between the Jewish and Christian communities. The writer contrasts the events at Mt. Sinai to those at Mt Zion. We have come to the city of the living God, to the place where countless angels worship in joy. We have come to a new covenant that was put into place by Jesus himself. Does this perspective change how you view your Christian community?

