

**What's the Point?**

**Monday, 10/5/09 – Read Ephesians 1:3-12**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: This week we let the Bible take us more deeply into the question posed by Sunday's sermon suggestions. What's the purpose of our life on earth? What are true values & priorities? ... We begin with a passage we studied last year. The language is difficult so take it slow. In Christ God has disclosed the mystery of God's eternal plan: to unite (to "gather up") all things in Christ. So much of life now is fragmented and discordant. The purpose of our lives is to participate in God's eternal purpose of re-unification.... Where do you see fragmentation and discord in your life these days. What's one thing you can do this week to bring harmony?

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**Tuesday, 10/6/09 – Read Ephesians 4:14-15**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: As individuals God needs us to become fully-grown-up people, capable of standing on our own two feet. The mystery of God's plan for us is that the more we become ourselves the more we resemble Christ. Or to say it differently: when we become more like Jesus, we don't lose ourselves; in fact, we become more fully ourselves. ... Is there some need for growth in your life right now? Is there some way you need to become more fully yourself? What is it? If you took that growth step, how would that make you more like Christ?

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**Wednesday, 10/7/09 – Read Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: Today's reading is one of the foundational passages in the Hebrew scriptures. What is the purpose of our life on earth? The Hebrews would always answer that question in terms of **relationship**. The purpose of our lives is always about our relationships. ... What does this passage say about our relationship with God? ... How can you today keep these words in your heart (verse 6)?

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**Thursday, 10/8/09 – Read Exodus 20:1-17**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: Sometimes we think of the Ten Commandments as demanding and threatening. But look at them carefully. Read through them slowly. Notice that each of the commandments is about relationship -- our relationship with God, our relationships with other people. Our human purpose is not some mystical abstraction. Our purpose is discovered in relationship with God and with others. ... Which of your relationships most needs attention right now? Which of these commandments helps you think about how you can do better in that relationship?

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**Friday, 10/9/09 – Read Leviticus 19:9-18**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: The early Hebrews certainly did have lots of rules, didn't they?!! But their rules were simply a way of thinking about relationships. The rules were their understanding of how God wanted them to live with each other. ... Notice especially verses 9-10. How we relate to poor people -- the marginal and vulnerable people among us -- is part of our purpose. ... How would you translate the

instructions in verses 9-10 into our lives today? Most of us don't harvest fields, so we can't leave some behind for those who don't have enough. How can we today make sure that those who don't have enough are provided for?

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**Saturday, 10/10/09 – Read Luke 10:25-37**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: The lawyer in today's reading was asking Jesus the question we're thinking about all week: What is the purpose of life? How does living now flow into eternal life? ... They agree that the answer begins with that foundational passage from Deuteronomy 6 that we read on Wednesday -- and picks up the last verse we read yesterday in Leviticus 19. The conversation then becomes: Who is my neighbor? ... How would you answer that today? For you today, very specifically, who is the neighbor? Who is that one who needs you to show kindness and mercy?

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**Sunday, 10/11/09 – Read John 17:6-24**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Today's reading returns to the place where we began on Monday. On his last night, just minutes before he was arrested, Jesus prayed for the unity of all his followers. It is God's eternal plan to unify all of us in Christ. And Jesus prayed for the same thing. ... What's the purpose of our lives on earth? What should be our priorities? ... Actively participating in God's project of gathering up all things (and all people!) in Christ! ... Are there ways that you resist that purpose and perpetuate fragmentation and discord? Name a specific way you can align yourself with God's eternal purpose of unifying all things in Christ.

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*My Faith Journal*, October 4, 2009

You Asked for It, #5

***What's the Point?***

**What do I hear God saying to me today?**

Ephesians 1:3-12

John 17:6-24

**What action do I intend to take this week?**

*Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.*