INVOCATION
L: In the name of the Father
   and of the Son +
   and of the Holy Spirit.
G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 119a
A: Your Word is a lamp to my feet
   and a light for my path.
L: Blessed are they whose ways are blameless,
G: who walk according to the law of the LORD.
L: Blessed are they who keep his statutes
G: and seek him with all their heart.
L: You have laid down precepts
G: that are to be fully obeyed.
L: Oh, that my ways were steadfast
G: in obeying your decrees!
L: Then I would not be put to shame
G: when I consider all your commands.
L: I will praise you with an upright heart
G: as I learn your righteous laws.
A: Your Word is a lamp to my feet
   and a light for my path.

PRAYER OF THE DAY
L: Lord God, in mercy receive the prayers of your people. Grant them the wisdom to know the things that please you and the grace and power always to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION

PRAYER

LORD’S PRAYER
A: Our Father, who art in heaven,
   hallowed be thy name,
   thy kingdom come,
   thy will be done
   on earth as it is in heaven.
   Give us this day our daily bread;
   and forgive us our trespasses,
   as we forgive those
   who trespass against us;
   and lead us not into temptation,
   but deliver us from evil.
   For thine is the kingdom
   and the power and the glory
   forever and ever. Amen.

VERSE OF THE DAY
A: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

BENEDICTION
L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
   and the love of God
   and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
   be with you all.
A: Amen
READING AND MEDITATION:

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany: The Savior’s Sermon: Live a holy life! Jesus came to free us from sin. He did not come to free us to sin. The commands in the lessons today remind us just how holy our God is, and their dire warnings remind us just how holy he wants us to be. After examining our lives, we must despair, but the Verse of the Day reminds us to flee to Christ who has the words of life. Then the Prayer of the Day asks that we might be given the grace to both know and do what pleases him.

THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 5:21-37

Jesus commands us to be holy in our relationships with our brothers, our adversaries, our bodies, our spouse, and our God. Hearing his instructions for the Christian life, we see that God is far holier than we can imagine! How high Jesus sets the bar here: not just acts, but thoughts—not just words, but attitudes, are judged by our God! In the place of a pharisaical form of godliness, Jesus calls for true spiritual righteousness. God’s demands of holiness only highlight the depravity of our sinful nature. Let the preacher bring God’s Law in all its severity and preach his hearers down to hell, until the flesh despairs of itself and can only cry, “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!” Then let the preacher boldly proclaim that the Savior who preaches the holy life is the Savior who lived the holy life as our Substitute. Let him proclaim forgiveness that is greater than our depravity and mercy that far outweighs our wickedness.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

Moses made it clear that the choice between God and sin was also the choice between life and death. He reminded God’s people that Israel had received a two-sided covenant from God: If you are my people, I will be your God. If you are not my people, you will be destroyed. The choice was a no-brainer! Love the LORD your God and walk in his ways. If serving God was a no-brainer for Israel, how much more for us, who have received the one-sided covenant of God’s grace? We know the LORD is our life, and so we listen to his voice and hold fast to him.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-13

In the continuation of the seven-week series, Paul says that godly wisdom comes from the Holy Spirit who does two things: he reveals what God has prepared for us, and he makes us understand it. Knowing and understanding what God has done for us creates true, godly wisdom that will show itself as we live holy lives.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON:

2 SAMUEL 11:1-17, 26-27

Our Savior’s call to holy living leads us to have a healthy fear of sin. What a warning God provides us in David! When the king was at the height of his power and full of God’s blessing, his great fall began. Why? Because he toyed with sin. He let lust fester and morph into adultery. He spoke lies until deception ruled his heart. He let selfishness metastasize into a godless disregard for any life but his own. He thought he could toy with sin, but in the end it was sin and Satan that toyed with him. Jesus’ call to live a holy life is like a mother warning her child to beware a hot stove. It is a call motivated by love and meant for our safety.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:

1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-12

Paul’s encouragement to live a holy life serves as a great model for preaching sanctification to a congregation. He does not speak to them as heathens, but as people who are in fact living in order to please God. Paul’s words, then, instruct and admonish them to do this more and more. The authority behind his preaching of sanctification did not come from Paul’s life but from the authority of Christ himself. This is what Christ wants! The Thessalonians faced the same problem we do: we know what God wants; we understand it; we just don’t do it consistently. Paul applies the warning of God’s Law and the calling of God’s Gospel. Paul repeatedly emphasizes this: You know it, so now we urge you to do it more and more.

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?

Visit www.BreadForBeagars.com for more resources.