

November 5th Readings

[1 KINGS 2:1-3:2](#)

[ACTS 5:1-42](#)

[PSALM 125:1-5](#)

[PROVERBS 16:25](#)

“As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people”

Psalm 125:2

Around six years ago I heard these words for the first time. I was at closing campfire at Camp Blue Haven and we were all gathered around, looking over a campfire at the smooth lake reflecting the dusk light and pine trees when the staff circled around the campers and led a song that contains this scripture. It was one of those still moments. “As the mountains surround Jerusalem,” they sang, and I looked up and saw the glory of the mountains we were in and thought of a foreign land tucked in the middle of strong mountains, as we were. “So the LORD surrounds his people,” the counselors continued the verse, and goose bumps appeared on my arm. “HE surrounds us with this might, power, and strength,” I thought as I heard the beautiful metaphor and saw it so clearly before me. That is our God. He is strong and protecting us. He is our Mighty God.

November 6th Readings

[1 KINGS 3:3-4:34](#)

[ACTS 6:1-15](#)

[PSALM 126:1-6](#)

[PROVERBS 16:26-27](#)

Acts 6:1-7

Careers in society always remind me of a puzzle. Each piece is uniquely different yet still each is valued to complete the picture. I think this is a very important idea to remember when looking at our purpose and tasks in comparison to those of our peers.

Sometimes we may feel accomplished in what we do, but more often than not we seem to think someone else is doing the thing of value. However, that is just not true. We are all needed to play our role. The disciples were wise enough to recognize this and humble enough to ask for help in fulfilling the growing need of ministry to the widows. Imagine if the disciples stopped preaching to dedicate their time to feeding the hungry. Although it is a noble cause, it would have prevented the salvation of many souls that would never hear the word. So, instead of being hypocrites of saying “love others as you love yourself” but letting these people starve, the disciples found individuals that could help minister in this way. These verses are a great example of how we should value our roles, but also value the help of our brothers and sisters. We are meant to be a community that works together, not individuals doing it all alone.

November 7th Readings

[1 KINGS 5:1-6:38](#)

[ACTS 7:1-29](#)

[PSALM 127:1-5](#)

[PROVERBS 16:28-30](#)

“Better a patient person than a warrior,
One with self-control than one who takes a city.”

Proverbs 16:32

Man, do I wish this verse was the other way around. How much more exciting to be a warrior than to be a patient person, and how much more empowering to take a city than to say, “I have self-control.” There does not seem to be any zest and charm to the discipline of patience and self-control, but that is what we are called to. It is so easy to let our emotions take control of us instead of taking control of them. When this discipline is practiced, the fruit is always sweeter but the cost is much greater. Patience takes a lifetime resolve where a fight is a quick response that escalates and ends. Self-control requires awareness, humility, and restraint. I do not know anyone who likes to work more than they need to, but I also do not know anyone who likes to invest in something

they know will fail. I believe this is the difference here. Letting our emotions run us is easy but destructive to the lives of those around us and ourselves. However, when we practice this discipline we live in the way we have been called and enjoy the peace of this discipline in our entire lives.

November 8th Readings

[1 KINGS 7:1-51](#)

[ACTS 7:30-50](#)

[PSALM 128:1-6](#)

[PROVERBS 16:31-33](#)

ACTS 7:30-50

This world is not our home; we are just passing through.

When I think of Stephen I think of this line. He knew who God was and he was willing to spread the truth at any cost. Even the cost of his own life. It is so easy to get wrapped up in the things of this world. We desire good jobs, happy families, delicious food, and so much more, but this is bread and circuses to what God desires. He calls us to live for Him, to love for Him, and for our fellowship to be complete when we finish our race. This is no sacrifice, this is our undeserving gift. Life eternal. Don't waste this life, so you won't miss the next. Have the courage and wisdom of Stephen to see our true home.

November 9th Readings

[1 KINGS 8:1-66](#)

[ACTS 7:51-8:13](#)

[PSALM 129:1-8](#)

[PROVERBS 17:1](#)

“Better is a dry morsel with quiet
than a house full of feasting with strife.”

PROVERBS 17:1

Who has experienced this truth? To live is so much more than to have. We build our lives out of our actions, relationships, and things. We choose where to spend our time and money. Priorities form the walls of who we are and who we will become. These walls are always available to change, yet always affected by past decisions. I know I need to practice investing in relationships instead of things. It may not be as easy, or simple, but when push comes to shove no object can comfort like the hug of someone you love. If we spend our time and energy in people the rest will not matter, but we will feel so much better. Today, think of what you are investing in... is it worth it?

November 10th Readings

[1 KINGS 9:1-10:29](#)

[ACTS 8:14-40](#)

[PSALM 130:1-8](#)

[PROVERBS 17:2-3](#)

PSALM 130:1-8

Psalms 130 is one of my favorite chapters. It is the heart of man crying to our comforting, loving Father. These scriptures remind us that in difficulty, whether due to our circumstances, actions, or the actions of others, we can have hope. It reminds us that we can be vulnerable and God will comfort us. It reminds us that we can be guilty and out of God's power he can forgive us. It reminds us to keep hoping in our Lord, because he is our redemption. He loves us. Don't be afraid to cry when times are hard, but never forget you are not alone. The good King is always at work.

November 11th Readings

[1 KINGS 11:1-12:19](#)

[ACTS 9:1-25](#)

[PSALM 131:1-3](#)

[PROVERBS 17:4-5](#)

PSALM 131:1-3

David was an example of how to live with humility in easy or difficult times. He may have had his slip ups, but from living in caves and on the run for his life, to living in a palace as king, David knew he was in the hands of God. Whether David was receiving a reward or punishment for his actions he always accepted the Lord's choice. To me, this sort of mindset is easier than we think: stop fixing, worrying, and justifying and just let go. To hand over all that was, is, and will be to God and to trust Him. This leads to peace, not preoccupation and worrying. This is hope, not fear. We cannot change what we cannot change, but we can accept God to be sufficient for whatever comes. So decide, would you like to spend your life with stress or with a "calmed and quieted" soul?