

Monday, October 8 – *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” (John 14:27)* Peace is what you are seeking. Peace is the one thing you need in order to transform your brick wall into a bridge. It sounds trite to say that the peace you are seeking is found in Jesus, but it is true. The trouble comes with understanding what that peace means. Notice Jesus promises peace in today’s passage, but it isn’t the peace that the world gives. Peace isn’t about anything you can earn, make or achieve in this world. Peace is about a relationship with Jesus in the midst of the stuff of life regardless of what you earn, make or achieve. Peace is knowing that even if this ship goes down, you will be alright. Peace is knowing that there is something so much bigger than you at work in your life and no matter what hand life deals, you will be alright.

Tuesday, October 9 – *“But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)* We tend to live with the opposite perspective. I will take care of all of these things and then I will strive for the kingdom of God. God becomes our last resort option. God is the pain reliever when the headache sets in, the insulin shot when the blood sugar gets out of whack or the post sex pill to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. We are a culture of doing what feels good in the moment and dealing with the consequences later. A culture of buying what we want right now and paying for it later. That is the opposite of the peace that God promises. God’s peace comes by striving first and foremost for the kingdom of God and then everything else will fall in line.

Wednesday, October 10 – *“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel will save it.” (Mark 8:36)* The upside down way of Jesus: Lose your life in order to save it. The question that each of us must answer is this: Do I want to save my life? If your answer is yes, then the only choice that you have is to give up your life. This is why so many people put their hands up in worship. This is the universal sign for surrender. Surrender not only brings peace in the form of no more fighting, surrender also brings peace in the form of a life lived under the care and control of God. Living your life for the sake of God as opposed to living your life for the sake of yourself brings with it the peace that surpasses all understanding. This is the peace of knowing that there is a God and you ain’t him!

Thursday, October 11 – *“As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear, but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life and their fruit does not mature.” (Luke 8:14)* What is choking you out today? What cares or riches or pleasures of life are causing you to worry? What is preventing you from being fruitful in life? Can you make a list? Would you make a list? Living among the thorns prevents you from experiencing all that God has for you to experience. The thorns represent anything that gets in the way. A thorn can be a very good thing like a promotion or a new friend or a budding romance. What makes it a thorn is if it catches you up and you get stuck. This causes you to start living for the thorn. This is when a thorn becomes dangerous because it becomes the thing you worship and serve.

Friday, October 12 – *“Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)* How do we understand “boldness”? This isn’t arrogance or rudeness, this is simply claiming, without a shadow of a doubt, that which belongs to you. What belongs to you? Being able to approach the “throne of grace” and expecting to “receive mercy and find grace”. Do you believe this? Or are you afraid to go to God with your needs out of a fear that you will be judged, condemned, criticized and rejected? It doesn’t get any clearer than this. God has told you to come to him in boldness. The only thing stopping you is you. If you want your brick wall to be transformed into a bridge you must be bold. Go to God knowing that your fears are just that, your fears. They are not based on the truth, they are based on what you have been taught, how you have been treated and the lies that the enemy wants you to believe. Isn’t it time you got bold?

Entry Ticket: Last week we learned that God promised us something. What was it?

Prayer. What is it good for?

Put your _____ on God!

How do I transform my brick wall into a bridge?