

Weekly Study Guide

The week of October 4, 2015

Wish to view the message again? Go to vimeo.com/flcwb. Will you be out of town soon? Watch online at livestream.com/flcwb. Want to ask Pastor Steve a question about today's message? Contact him at 651.429.5349 x215 or sturnbull@flcwb.org.

Daily Readings

Monday	Matthew 5:43-48	Tuesday	Matthew 10:26-33	Wednesday	Matthew 5:13-16
Thursday	Isaiah 1:12-20	Friday	Isaiah 58:1-14	Saturday	Matthew 20:25-28

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *When Good Became Better Than Great*

Next week's readings: Micah 6:8; Luke 18:9-14

What is a truly good life, and what makes a truly good person? Jesus combined these two questions and opened new horizons for humanity. Join us next week as we continue to unlock The Best Kept Secret. Join us for contemporary or traditional worship at 9 and/or 10:30 a.m.

first lutheran church

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Group Discussion

Connect

Did people talk about faith and politics in your family growing up? What was that like?

Learn and Respond

Jesus taught his followers about their response to persecution. Read Matthew 5:43-45 and Matthew 10:26-33.

- What are the big ideas that stand out to you in these teachings?
- Why do you think Christian martyrs have not armed and defended themselves against persecution?
- Persecution of Christians is still active in the world today. The Christian organization, *Voice of the Martyrs* tells the story of modern Christian martyrs. If you have access, you may find their information online at *persecution.com*. If you are able to investigate this, what have you learned?

Jesus saw himself as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophets and quoted often from the prophet Isaiah. Read Isaiah 58:1-14 for an example of the social vision in Jesus' Bible. (You can also read Isaiah 1:12-20 for another example.)

- What are the big ideas in these passages?
- Reasonable Christians disagree about the best strategies and policies to accomplish God's priorities. Don't start with those. Start instead by asking "What can Christians easily agree on?" and "What should we be trying to accomplish together?"

There are people today who value the things that Jesus and his followers started in the ancient world (for example: individual rights, freedom of conscience, religious tolerance, and the equality of all people) without professing Christian faith or knowing that these ideas came from the teachings of Jesus.

- Why does the church's witness to Jesus still matter today?
- How can Christians talk about Jesus' life and Lordship in this context? What makes that hard? What might make it easier?

Pray

Pray today for the things today's study has put on your heart. Here are some ideas:

- Pray for those who still face persecution today.
- Pray for God to create unity among Christians in serving the world.
- Consider praying The Lord's Prayer together, praying for God's Kingdom to come and God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. (You can find this prayer in Matthew 6:9-13.)