

Weekly Study Guide

The week of May 1, 2016

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

SOUL TRAINING EXERCISES

Option 1:

Christian growth takes practice. Nobody runs a marathon with their first step out the door. Use these weekly "soul training exercises" to help you practice cooperating with the Holy Spirit so you can hear and walk by the Spirit's leading all throughout your life.

In your times of quiet prayer this week, reflect on the people close to you who aren't Christians. Ask God to help you see them with his eyes and feel for them with his heart. Pray for them as you feel led to pray and allow these reflections to affect how you see other people in your world who also need the love and hope of Jesus.

Option 1 & 2:

Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.

Daily Readings

MONDAY

Matthew 9:18-34

TUESDAY

Matthew 9:35-38

WEDNESDAY

Matthew 10

THURSDAY

Matthew 11:1-19

FRIDAY

Matthew 11:20-24

SATURDAY

Matthew 11:25-30

Group Discussion

CONNECT

If you had a time machine that would only work once, what point in history (or the future) would you visit? Why?

THIS WEEK'S LEARNING GOAL

This week we are learning the Biblical picture of God's constant mission to reach those who do not know him and considering the meaning of God's mission for the name of our church.

LEARNING FROM THE BIBLE TOGETHER

Read the whole chapter of **Luke 15** together.

- The chapter begins with a group of religious leaders called Pharisees complaining about Jesus' closeness to sinful people outside their group. Try to understand the Pharisees. What do you suppose they were afraid of?
- What are the natural dangers which could arise when pursuing or prioritizing people far from God?
- In our message this week we learned that God's movement toward the unbelieving world is characteristic of the whole Bible story. God's people were/are often resistant to this. What makes us prone to "settle" instead of "move"?
- Jesus told three stories to answer the objection of the religious leaders in Luke 15:2. What do these stories have in common? Make a list.
- What main point do you think Jesus was trying to make?
- Do you think everyone accepted his point? If not, why not?
- How do you think he wanted his listeners to respond?

- How would the living Jesus want us to respond today?

The process of seeking a new name for First Lutheran is driven by a concern for communicating to people who aren't part of our church family yet. As a group, discuss the following questions from this week's message. We want you to share your thoughts, so please write down your answers and return them (or email them) to Linsey Petersen, our Community Groups Coordinator, at lpetersen@flcwb.org or leave them at the Welcome Center to be passed along to her.

- What first impressions do you hope people outside our church would have about our church community?
- What words or images might communicate that message? Write down as many ideas and/or name suggestions as you would like.

SOUL TRAINING EXERCISES

As a group, recall last week's soul training exercise (times of silence and honesty). Did you learn or experience anything you'd like to share with your group? Now, look at the soul training exercises on the front of this study guide and get ready to practice them this week. Is there a particular time of day or some other specific commitment which would help you succeed in doing these exercises?

PRAY

Share your prayer concerns with one another. Pray especially for those who don't know the heart of their Heavenly Father yet and for God's leading for our whole church family together.



FirstLutheran
WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA