

Growing Deeper *The Way*

Week Five: *The Vocational Way* *Matthew 5:13-16*

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. As you open your week with your FIFTEEN, read Matthew 5:13-16. This message from Jesus is to people who are followers of the Way. What is the purpose of his followers?
2. Describe someone who you have noticed is “salt and light” to their world. Name the qualities they have that reflect that.
3. An old Franciscan proverb states, “Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary, use words.” How do you see this relating to being salt and light?
4. Describe a time when you were more apt to believe the sincerity of a person’s deeds over a person’s words.
5. What role do words play when reading Romans 10:14?
6. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask God to place a person on your heart today who is struggling in their walk with God. Speak blessing and kindness into your prayer over them. Ask God to move his Spirit in shaping your actions and words toward this person.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. Write what first comes to mind when you hear the word “vocation.”
8. Describe a time when you have felt most fulfilled in your work.
9. Read Colossians 3:23-25. How do we work for the Lord?
10. Former pastor of Pathfinder Stephen Hower used to say, “God doesn’t give people to get work done. He gives work to get people done.” How have you found this to be true in your experience with work in regards to your relationship with others and with God?
11. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer regarding your task for the day and ask Jesus to direct it.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

12. Call to mind someone you know that is especially gifted at a talent. How is that person's giftedness matched up with their vocation or career? Do you know someone particularly gifted but not benefiting themselves or others with their gifts?
13. Begin with reading Romans 12:1-8 to remind you of the gifts of the Spirit. Write down all seven mentioned here (v.6-8).
14. Notice how these gifts are different than a physical talent. What barriers or limitations might there be with physical gifts as opposed to spiritual gifts?
15. Which spiritual gift do you gravitate toward or find yourself more apt to display in your life? Describe how.
16. How has your spiritual gift found usefulness outside the body of Christ? (Say, in your field of work or career.)
17. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, ask God to give you opportunity to reveal ways in which you can serve his body with the gifts you have been given.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

18. Read Matthew 25:14-30. When Jesus tells parables, the main character is almost always God. Write down any main thoughts, questions, or themes that come to mind.
19. In the parable, sometimes the word "talent" is used. In the time of Jesus, a talent was a year's wages. What is the most valuable thing that God has given you?
20. Many have interpreted this parable. Most believe it is an admonishment to use your gifts in service to the Kingdom. What is required for the servants to act in the ways that they did?
21. Again, the most valuable thing a person receives is God's mercy and grace (Hebrews 4:16). How does the fate of the third servant compare with the fate of the "unmerciful servant" in Matthew 18:21-35?
22. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer that your work today will be part of God's Kingdom being established in your heart as you affect others with the grace and mercy that you have been shown.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

23. Begin today in recollection of all the jobs you have had in life. Think of the people that made you feel valued and understood. What kind of characteristics did they possess?

24. Call to mind a person who is good at their job. Many times we find that there is something deeper that drives them when we are able to sit down with them and find out “what makes them tick.” How have you found a deeper purpose to be true in your own life? Write down your thoughts.

25. Each of us has gifts given to us by the Father to use in the service of others, to be “salt and light.” Recall ways over the past four days you have participated in God’s plan of healing and redemption.

26. Most of us, if we are truly honest, find times that we have succeeded this week in carrying out the work of the Kingdom, but we can also recall times in which we failed. Find solace in knowing that God’s grace and mercy is endless. Read these words from Paul in Philippians 3:12-14.

27. As you finish your final FIFTEEN this week, pray over these words in Psalm 51:10-17.