

LIVING THE LENTEN CHALLENGE: TODAY AND TOMORROW-“NEW HABITS”

OPENING PRAYER: HOSEA-LENTEN HYMN 1. Come back to me with all your heart, Don't let fear keep us apart

Trees do bend though straight and tall, So must we to others call

REFRAIN: GOD SAYS: Long have I waited for Your coming home to me And living deeply our new life

2. The wilderness will lead you,-To the place where I will speak

REFRAIN: GOD SAYS: Long have I waited for Your coming home to me And living deeply our new life

3. Integrity and justice, With tenderness, You shall know.

REFRAIN: GOD SAYS: Long have I waited for Your coming home to me And living deeply our new life

THE HOSEA STORY: God wanted Israel to know how he felt about their wicked behavior and worship of idols. So he told Hosea to marry an unfaithful woman (Gomer), Leaving God out of our lives is also dangerous. He is the light, and when we walk in the dark we stumble. The only safe and rewarding place to be is near God, because not only does He know what's best for us, He will provide it if we are near Him. God said Israel's destruction came from a lack of knowledge about God. The eventual reconciliation of Hosea and Gomer is treated as a hopeful metaphor for the eventual reconciliation between Yahweh and Israel. What is a better strategy? Give Up? Give In? Strategic plan and action? Know-how and discipline?

TOUCHPOINTS: CHALLENGE: CALL FOR DISCIPLINE AND CHANGE

1. Lent is the time for desert challenge. What are you ready, or getting ready for? All Your heart -asks much!
2. Knowing better, doing better, intentions and change. Fear of yet another failed attempt. Weakness-imperfection.
3. Motivation, attitude will not change/create new habits: “Know-how and discipline” shift: TRANSITIONS. (Map-step-by-step guide)
4. The Hosea story is the story of all God's people, and for us to-Desire and fear separate us. (Broken promises)

Focus: Lent-change-Best Version of Our Self-Strategically?

And sometimes when people want to change something in their life, they'll focus and focus and focus on the behavior they want to stop doing. And that tends never to work. Bad habits need to be crowded out of our lives with good habits. So if there is something you want to stop doing, you've got to crowd it out with other good things that do actually help you become the-best-version-of-yourself.

STUDY: DISCUSSION: “Joy is a byproduct of a life well lived. It's much bigger than happiness.”

1. Joy and Happiness-what makes you happy in your faith and relationship with Christ?
2. What are some changeable impediments to increasing your chosen goal for self -improvement? (Desire? Motivation? Know how? (Rank order these)
3. In your group list 3-4 steps toward being on a ramp to living more deeply our new life.

THE 8 PILLARS OF JOY-NEW HABITS CROWD OUT AND EMBRACE NEW LIFE?

Perspective – Changing the way we see the world changes the way we feel and the way we act, which changes the world itself.

Humility – Humility allows us to celebrate the gifts of others, but it does not mean you have to deny your own gifts

Humor & Laughter – Laughter and a sense of humor is a universal index of spiritual development.

Acceptance –Our responsibility is to pursue the goal with all the dedication we can muster, do the best we

Forgiveness – Without forgiveness, we remain tethered to the person who harmed us.

Gratitude – Every day, think as you wake up, 'I am fortunate to be alive, I have a precious human life. I am not going to waste it.'

Compassion feeling of empathy to acts of kindness, generosity and other altruistic tendencies.

Generosity – In giving we receive. Generosity is actually hard wired into our brain to make us feel good.

