

God is Calling Clergy

Talk #2

Friday

Length of Talk: 20 Minutes

PURPOSE:

God is calling serves as the "keynote" address for the message REC wants to highlight for the weekend. The speaker emphasizes we must die to ourselves by unselfishness and self discipline before we can grow in our love for one another and God. "Wheat Letters are introduced and explained as concrete evidence of the care, concern and sacrifice of fellow Christians for the benefit of the residents.

OUTLINE:

Scripture Reading: John 12: 23-26 (Emphasis: **Verse 24**) "A grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies."

I. God offers us a relationship.

1. The history of God's dealing with humankind is one of God constantly offering us a covenant relationship.
 - a. The Covenant of Noah (Gen. 9: 8-13)
 - b. The Covenant of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3)
 - c. The Covenant of Moses (Exodus 19: 3-6)
 - d. The Covenant of David (2 Samuel 23:5)
 - e. The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31: 31-34)
 - f. The Jesus Covenant (Mat. 26: 26-29)
2. The relationship is offered to us by God's infinite grace and love.
 - a. Everlasting love (Ps. 136, Jeremiah 31:3)
 - b. Seeking Love (Ezekiel 34: 11-16:
3. God takes the divine initiative in the relationship and continuously pursues us throughout our lives.
 - a. He calls us before we are born (Isaiah 49:1)
 - b. He is with us throughout our days (Psalm 23:6)
 - c. We have His divine support in our fragmented and powerless lives.
4. Grace is the divine love that God has provided for us.
 - a. Grace in Jesus (John 1: 16)
 - b. As a gift (Romans 3:24)
 - c. Sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9)
5. Grace is God's activities in calling us from the moment of our conception into a loving relationship with Him. Grace is all that prevents us from moving so far from God that we cannot respond to His offer of true love.
6. We have the opportunity to respond to God's offer of grace and place our trust in Him.
 - a. Jesus came to earth seeking (Luke 19: 10)

- b. God gave us a promise of love. (John 3: 16)
- c. Faith is a gift, a free response from God. (Galatians 5: 1-6)

II. God offers a unique relationship.

1. God said: "Let us make humans in our own image." (Gen. 1: 26)
 - a. We are made in God's image means we are similar and it paves the way for higher revelation.
 - b. Jesus told us to pray: "Abba" (Father) which means we are sons and daughters of God.

III. How can we experience God's Grace?

1. Now is a good time to share an experience when you were aware God was pursuing you. (Jeremiah 1: 5)
2. Grace can be experienced in many ways and we will share a few.
 - a. Grace can be experienced through friends, relatives, parents, and even events in our lives.
 - b. God's grace can be felt through a body of believers.
 - c. The church shares by faithfully administering the Word and the Sacraments.
3. The Holy Spirit has tried to influence us by speaking to our hearts and minds in our everyday lives.
 - a. He uses our conscience, our prayer time and His Word.
4. Grace is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives before and after we accept Him. (Romans 6: 23)
 - a. He calls us to repentance and accept the free gift of salvation.
 - b. He calls us to mend broken relationships and be obedient to Him.
5. God has influence our lives and draws us closer to the time when we accept totally a relationship with Him.
 - a. We must die to ourselves to receive this grace.
 - b. Give examples of how we die and receive grace.

Explain and present wheat letters and prayer chart.