

Mindful Colouring

Meeting Nicodemus at night

As we light this candle
And ring the bell
We pray that God is with us this day.

Close your eyes
Place your hand on your belly. Notice your breathe as your belly moves.
Breathe in through your nose and out
Through your mouth.
Breathe in and breathe and out
Repeat for 1 minutes.

Invite participants to begin colouring



Song - How Deep the Father's Love For Us - Austin Stone Worship
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z65YxhqY0_E

Song - Way maker - Leeland
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ov44iPSigA>

Song - CityAlight - Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwc2d1Xt8gM>

Song - Nicole C. Mullen - My Redeemer Lives
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRW-jr_PnbQ

Scripture - John 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

Scripture Reflection

This passage from the Gospel of John (John 3:14-21) is part of a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council. The passage contains several key themes of Christian theology, including salvation, belief in Jesus, divine love, and the contrast between light and darkness. Here's a breakdown of its meaning:

Moses and the Serpent (verse 14-15): Jesus refers to an event in the Old Testament (Numbers 21:4-9) where God instructs Moses to create a bronze serpent on a pole to heal those bitten by snakes, symbolizing sin and its consequences. Just as looking upon the bronze serpent healed the Israelites, so looking to Jesus ("the Son of Man being lifted up" on the cross) and believing in him can bring eternal life. This analogy illustrates the necessity of Jesus' crucifixion for the salvation of humanity.

God's Love and the Gift of His Son (verse 16-17): One of the most quoted verses in the Bible, John 3:16, highlights God's immense love for the world. It states that God gave his only Son, Jesus Christ, so that anyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. This emphasizes the concept of salvation as a gift of love from God, not something earned by humans. Verse 17 further clarifies that Jesus' mission was not to condemn the world, but to save it.

Belief and Condemnation (verse 18): This verse presents a dichotomy between belief and unbelief. Those who believe in Jesus are not condemned, but those who do not believe are already condemned because they have rejected God's only Son. This condemnation is not an active judgment from God but a natural consequence of unbelief.

Light and Darkness (verse 19-21): The passage concludes with an allegory or story of light and darkness, symbolizing good and evil, truth and falsehood. Jesus is described as the light that came into the world. People's response to this light reveals their moral and spiritual condition. Those who do evil reject the light because it exposes their deeds. In contrast, those who "do the truth" are drawn to the light, showing that their deeds are aligned with God's will.

In summary, this passage from John's Gospel conveys the core Christian message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It speaks of God's love, the necessity of belief for salvation, and the moral implications of choosing between light (Jesus, truth, and goodness) and darkness (evil, falsehood). It challenges readers to examine their beliefs and actions in the light of Jesus' teachings and the love of God.

Silent Reflection

Silently reflect on the today's scripture passage and its meaning for us today. Reflect on the questions for reflection.

Discussion

1. Why does Jesus meet Nicodemus at night time?
2. Where do we meet Jesus?
3. What does the serpent represent?
4. How does God love in the world?
5. What does Jesus teach about light and darkness?
6. What does it mean to you personally that God sent His Son not to condemn the world, but to save it?
7. How can the idea that those who believe are not condemned impact your sense of identity and purpose?
8. What are the practical implications of living "in the truth" and coming "to the light" in your life?

Prayers of the faithful

1. We pray for the Church, God's people, that it may be a beacon of light and hope, guiding all people toward the truth of Jesus Christ, who was lifted up for our salvation. May we, as the Body of Christ, faithfully witness to His love and mercy. Let us pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

2. We pray for world leaders and all those in authority, that they may be inspired by the divine love shown through Christ's sacrifice, seeking justice, peace, and the common good in their decisions and actions. Let us pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

3. We pray for those who suffer from doubt or unbelief, that the Holy Spirit may open their hearts to the truth and beauty of the Gospel, leading them to a profound faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Let us pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

4. We pray for our community, that we may always choose light over darkness, truth over deception, and good over evil, living out our faith through acts of love and service. Let us pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

5. Let us pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in any form of distress, that they may find healing, comfort, and strength in the knowledge of Christ's love and presence in their lives. Let us pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

5. Are there any other prayer?

Closing prayer

Loving Father, in Your infinite love, You sent Your only Son to be lifted up on the cross, that all who believe in Him might not perish but have eternal life. Grant us the grace to live in the light of Your truth, turning away from the darkness of sin and toward the radiant glow of Your love. Strengthen our faith, that we may be bearers of Your light in this world, reflecting the love and sacrifice of Christ in all that we do. May our lives be a testament to Your mercy and a beacon of hope to those in need. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.