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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

MARCH 10-11

“Marking Sacred Time”

By Rev. Keith Herron

What Is This?

This brief guide is intended for use individually, or in small groups. It's your chance to dive deeper into the issues raised in the weekend sermon and to connect a Biblical story with your daily life.

Revisit the Text

Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22; <https://goo.gl/a8hFJY>

Big Ideas Raised

- In Succoth, the Jewish Feast of Booths, Joachim Jeremias recognized “the whole of life” as he called it. “We come from God & we go to God & in between we live in tents.” All time is sacred time & all experiences are sacred experiences because God is with us helping us redeem it all as a part of “a life lived with God.”
- Gratitude is a way of marking sacred time. It is a way of being that recognizes God's active presence as we make meaning out of our lives.

Questions Meant to Dig Deeper

- Life moves back & forth from experience to reflection. First an experience, then a time to reflect upon what that experience might mean. All in all, there's a rhythm in life that help us reflect on how we see experience & make meaning of our lives. Is this observation meaningful to you?
- The psalmist gives 4 examples covering the full range of human experience.
 - “Some wandered in the desert wastes ...” Have you suffered in the desert & felt your life would come to a desolate end? Have you spent time wandering & felt you could not take another step? How do we mark sacred the time in the desert?
 - “Some sat in darkness & in gloom, prisoners in misery & in irons” There are experiences that feel like prison. They are shadowy places & we suffer as if we were physically locked behind doors bound in shackles. How do we mark sacred the time spent in prison?
 - “Some were sick through their sinful ways & because of their iniquities endured afflictions” Whenever we are sick in our souls, there is always the possibility that the toxins of that anger & bitterness will infest our bodies with sorrows that we turn into physical ailments. How do we mark sacred the time spent driven by our anger?
 - “Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the mighty waters” There are experiences of life that can be symbolized by the fragile presence of ships on the immense seas of life. Events of incredible magnitude crash down around us in such fury

& unexpected damage that we can be caught off-guard in a moment of tragedy. How do we mark sacred time lost on the seas?

¹ Fred Craddock, "From God, to God," *The Christian Century*, 3/22/03, 18

Revisit the Sermon

For a recording or a manuscript of this weekend's sermon, please visit:

<https://www.stlucasucc.org/sermons-resources>