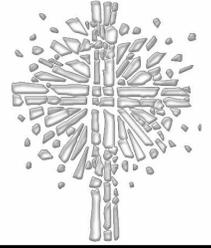




John 15:4 Abide in ME



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

Volume 1 - Number 27
The week of May 15, 2016

A Reasonable Faith Advocating Design to a Skeptical Culture

Genesis 1:1-2; Genesis 2:1-4; Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:19-20; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3

THIS WEEK'S CORE STATEMENT

The Godhead: We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Thomas Clark Oden is an American Methodist theologian associated with Drew University in New Jersey. He is perhaps most recently known for his call for a return to "classical Christianity." Oden has been important in the contemporary ecumenical movement and in evangelical circles. He has adopted the term *paleo-orthodoxy* for his approach to theology. The term is derived from the roots "paleo" (meaning "ancient") and "orthodox" (meaning "correct belief"), so it essentially means "ancient correct belief." Oden believes that Christians need to rely upon the wisdom of the historic Church, particularly the early Church, rather than on modern scholarship and theology, which is often, in his view, tainted by political agendas. The following excerpt is from Oden's book, *The Living God, Systematic Theology: Volume I*.

It is inevitable that the truth about ultimate origins, which lies beyond direct human experience, will remain a mystery. What is known of creation is only partially understood through reason, but known more fully through the Creator's self-disclosure through the revealed Word. Christian faith in God the Creator relies primarily on Scripture's attestation of divine revelation, but partial witness to the truth of revelation may occur through scientific investigation and rational inquiry.

The universal church has always believed that the one true God made all things. God is the ungenerate, original cause of the coming to be, continuance, and destiny of all creatures. The making of the world by God is an article of the Christian faith.

The created order was made out of nothing (ex nihilo), without preexisting materials. This counteracts the pantheistic implication that matter is eternal, as well as the dualistic implication that another kind of power stands eternally over against God. Yet humanity is not made "out of nothing" but out of "the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:19), as wild animals and birds were "formed out of the ground" by God (Gen. 2:19). There is no other source of creation than the will of God...

The activity of God (sometimes called opera dei, the work, energy, or workings of God), as distinguished from the being of God, is now of central interest. For Christian teaching asks not only about who God is, but what God does – how God's power, mercy, and patience are manifested in creative, preservative, redemptive, and completing activities.

Hence Christian teaching does not merely deal with "God in himself" as if God could be viewed abstractly apart from God's works or historical activity. God is known through what God does. . . .

These works of God are stated in summary form under three great headings: creation, redemption, and sanctification. These three terms intend to summarize the whole range of activities of the triune God. These three activities of God correspond generally to the three persons of the Trinity, and find their unity in the one, triune God. The existential effects of creation, redemption, and sanctification are subjectively experienced by the faithful as gracious in three ways: (1) finite creatures are radically dependent for their existence upon Another (i.e., the One who wholly transcends all things, God the Father); (2) when human creation falls into sin it is lifted up by Another (i.e., help comes from afar, from a distant Other who comes close, to the Son born of woman); (3) and when human freedom

seeks to respond to the mercy and love of God it is assisted by Another (God's own Spirit). Accordingly, the one God – Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier – is none other than the One God – the Father, Son and Spirit.

It is our hope that the people of Loudonville Community Church know and experience the triune God personally. He has created each of us and desires for us to experience His redemption and sanctification!

This Week's Complementary Passage

John 1:1-5, 9-18 (ESV)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Marking Guide for Acts (not all words occur in the passage)

- appointed
- baptized
- Caesar
- enemy/demons/Satan
- eternal life
- fathers & children [in one color different from Moses]
- Gospels
- gospel
- grace
- Holy Spirit
- in the name of Jesus Christ
- Jesus
- Jews
- Law (of Moses)
- men of the council
- Moses [in different color from fathers & children]
- prayer
- repent (repentance)
- resurrection (raised up)
- salvation
- suffering
- the Way
- the promise of the Father
- witnesses
- word of God

STEP ONE . . .

READING what the passage says
(Read it at least three times)

Genesis 1:1-2 (ESV)

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Genesis 2:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

Psalms 19:1-4a (ESV)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ² Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. ⁴ Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Romans 1:19-20 (ESV)

¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Colossians 1:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 11:3 (ESV)

³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

STEP TWO . . .

OBSERVING how the passage moves

Return to the passage and **mark key words, phrases and movements:**

- Circle all of the words in these passages that speak of the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit, etc.).
- Underline the significant verbs/action words in these passages.
- In Genesis 1:1, underline the phrase “In the beginning, God created.”
- In Genesis 1:2, underline the phrase “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”
- Highlight Genesis 2:2-3.
- In Psalm 19:1, underline the phrase “The heavens declare the glory of God.”
- Highlight Psalm 19:2-4.
- Highlight Romans 1:19.
- In Romans 1:20, underline the phrases “For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived” and “So they are without excuse.”
- Highlight Colossians 1:16-17.
- Highlight Hebrews 11:3.

STEP THREE . . .

Ask the five “W” questions and the one “H” question:

1. **WHO** is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? And, to **whom** is it speaking?
2. **WHAT** is the subject of the passage? What does the passage say about the subject?
3. **WHEN** do or will the events occur? When did something happen to a particular person, people, or nation?
4. **WHERE** did or will this happen?
5. **WHY** is something said or mentioned? Why would or will this happen? Why at this time? Why this person?
6. **HOW** will it happen? How is it to be done? How is it illustrated?

STEP FOUR . . .

UNDERSTANDING what the passage means

This commentary is intended to enhance your own study of the text.

Commentary on Genesis 1:1-2 (ESV)

1:1 - "In the beginning." This is the beginning of history but not of God's activity.

"God" *Elohim* is a plural form of the general name for God in the ancient Near East, *El*. When referring to the God of Israel the verb is usually singular. The rabbis say that it speaks of God as creator, provider and sustainer of all life on planet earth. Notice how often this word is used in Chapter 1. The Bible does not discuss or reveal the origin of God. He has always existed. There is surely mystery here. Mankind simply cannot grasp the fullness of God!

"Created" *Bara* is the Hebrew verb that is used exclusively for God's creative activity. Its basic meaning is to fashion by cutting. God willed into being everything but Himself. The Scriptures present creation (cosmology) by God's spoken word (*fiat*) from nothing (*ex nihilo*). Greek (gnostic) and Mesopotamian philosophies emphasize an eternal dualism between "spirit" and "matter." Whatever *bara* implies it accentuates God's activity and purpose! The Bible asserts that creation has a beginning point.

"The heavens." The word "heavens" may be used in several senses: it refers to the atmosphere of the earth; it may refer to the entire cosmos (i.e. all material existence); or it may refer to the creation of all things visible (material) and invisible (angels, heaven as God's throne).

"The earth." The Hebrew term can refer to a specific land, country or the whole planet. Remember that the Bible is written in the language of description for theological purposes.

1:2 - "Without form and void." This state of creation shows that God used a progressive process to an inhabitable earth. These two words describe, not the beginning of matter, but a state of undeveloped non-functioning orderly system. It is not yet ready for humanity!

"Darkness" This term does not represent evil, but original chaos. God names the darkness as He does the light. These two terms, though often used in the Bible to denote spiritual realities, here are representing original physical conditions.

"The deep." The Hebrew term is *tehom*. The Hebrews believed that water was the beginning element of creation. It is never said to have been created. Water is a crucial aspect of creation.

"The Spirit of God." The Hebrew term *ruach* and the Greek term *pneuma* can mean "spirit," "breath" or "wind." The Spirit is often associated with creation. The Old Testament does not clearly define the relationship between God and the Spirit. In the New Testament Jesus is said to be God's agent in creation. As in redemption, so too, in creation, all three persons of the Godhead are involved.

"Was hovering over." This Hebrew term developed the connotation of "brooding" or "active hovering." This is an image of a mother bird. It is a feminine metaphor for God's active parental care, as well as the development of His creation at this early stage!

Commentary on Genesis 2:1-4 (ESV)

2:1 - "The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Here the term "heavens" refers to the atmosphere above the earth. In some contexts it refers to the starry heavens beyond the atmosphere. God's physical creation had reached maturity. It was now ready for human habitation. Each level of creation has its proper inhabitants. This does not specifically refer to the creation of angels (unless 1:1 includes it). This text is dealing with physical creation. The Hebrew term "hosts," in some contexts, refers to the Mesopotamian idolatry connected to the heavenly lights (i.e. sun, moon, planets, comets, constellations) or the Lord's angelic army, but here it refers to all the different kinds of created life.

2:2 - "On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done." This statement does not imply that God was tired or that He ceased permanently from His active involvement with creation and mankind. This is a basic pattern set for mankind who needs regular rest and worship.

"He rested." This is the same Hebrew root as "Sabbath." This term is used in several different ways, particularly in the New Testament book of Hebrews. In Hebrews this term "rest" applies both to the Sabbath rest, the Promised Land, and fellowship with God (heaven). God sets the example for His special creation, mankind. Regular fellowship between God and mankind is the unstated, but contextually central, purpose of creation!

"The seventh day." Days one through six begin with evening and close with morning, but the seventh day's morning is never mentioned. Therefore, the rabbis and also the New Testament author of Hebrews use this to conclude that God's rest is still available.

2:3 - "So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy." The term "holy" is used in the sense of setting something apart for God's particular use. Very early God established a special, regular day for Himself and humanity to commune. This does not mean that all days do not belong to God, but one is uniquely set aside for communion, worship, praise, and energizing rest. The origin of the seven day week is shrouded in antiquity and mystery. One can see how the month is related to the phases of the moon and how the year is related to seasonal changes, but a week has no obvious source. However, every ancient culture that we know of seems to have known about it when their written history began.

"All his work that he had done in creation." God's creative acts continue. God created organic creatures to develop. The repeated phrase "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" reflects God's design and plan. God created living creatures

(including mankind) which reproduce themselves after their kind. The very act causes variations.

2:4 - “These are the generations.” This phrase is the author’s way of dividing Genesis into literary segments (i.e. this is the author’s way of outlining his book). Some scholars see it as introducing a new section while others see it as closing the previous section. It seems to do both.

“Day” The Hebrew term *yom* is usually used of a 24-hour period of time. However, it is also used to represent a longer duration of time as a metaphor.

“The Lord God.” This is literally *YHWH* (Yahweh) *Elohim* which combines the two most common names for God. This is the first time they are used together. Hebrew rabbis assert that these two names refer to the characteristics of deity: *Elohim* as creator, provider and sustainer of all life on this planet and *YHWH* as savior, redeemer and covenant-making deity. It theologically implies the ever-living, only living God. The Jews became afraid to pronounce this holy name lest they break the commandment about taking God’s name in vain. So, they substituted the Hebrew term *Adon* (husband, owner, master, lord) whenever they read the text aloud. This is why in English *YHWH* is translated LORD.

Commentary on Psalm 19:1-4a (ESV)

19:1 - “The heavens declare the glory of God.” The heavens are praising God. They report in scribal fashion, as if reading from the book of divine creation, because God has written His word there and they cannot refrain from proclaiming it.

“The sky.” This term is parallel to the term “heavens” earlier in this verse. The lights in the sky allude to the splendor and glory of God’s presence.

19:2 - “Day to day pours out speech.” The metaphor is the bubbling of a spring which speaks of the Creator.

19:4a - “Their voice.” This Hebrew term is often translated as a “measuring line,” which points to the Creator setting the boundaries of the created order.

Commentary on Romans 1:19-20 (ESV)

1:19 - All humans know something of God from creation. In theology this is called “natural revelation.” It is not complete, but it is the basis of God’s holding responsible those who have never been exposed to God’s “special revelation” in Scripture or, ultimately, in Jesus Christ. The term “know” was used in two senses in the New Testament: its Old Testament sense of intimate personal relationship and its Greek sense of facts about a subject. The gospel is both a Person to be welcomed and a message about that Person to be received and believed! In this verse it was used only in the second sense.

1:20 - This verse mentions three aspects of God: His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and His divine nature (seen in His acts and motives of creation).

“Divine nature.” This term could be translated “divine majesty.” This is seen supremely in Jesus. He uniquely bears the divine image. He is God’s full revelation in human form. The wonderful truth of the gospel is that fallen mankind,

through faith in Christ, will share Christ-likeness. The image of God in humanity has been restored.

“Have been clearly perceived.” This phrase implies a true perception. God has written two books: nature and Scripture. They are both capable of human understanding and demand a response.

“Ever since the creation of the world.” The invisible God is now seen in physical creation, Scripture, and ultimately in Jesus.

“So they are without excuse.” This literally means “no legal defense.” The theological purpose of this section of Romans is to show how spiritually lost all mankind is. Humans are responsible for the knowledge they do have. God holds humans responsible only for that which they know or could know.

Commentary on Colossians 1:16-17 (ESV)

1:16 - “For by him all things were created.” Jesus was God’s agent of creation, both of the visible and invisible, earthly and heavenly spheres. It was Jesus who spoke the cosmos into existence. It was Jesus who formed man and breathed into him the breath of life. The verb “created” is used twice in this verse. The thrust is that Jesus is the agent in creation but the Father is the primary cause. Creation was in Jesus, through Jesus and for Jesus!

“Whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.” These terms could refer to earthly governmental leaders, but in the context of Colossians they refer to the false teachings about angels. The ancients saw the world not only in physical cause and effect relationships, but as a spiritual realm as well. It is impossible to have a biblical worldview and deny the spiritual realm.

“And for him.” Jesus was not only God the Father’s agent in creation, but He was the goal of creation as well.

1:17 - “He is before all things.” There has never been a time when Jesus was not! Jesus is preexistent deity! The use of “He” in this phrase is emphatic and could be rendered: “He, Himself, is before all things.”

“In him all things hold together.” This phrase means literally “to stand with,” which implies “to continue, to endure, or to exist.” This is the doctrine of providence and it is personal! “All things” refers to creation - material and spiritual. Jesus is the sustainer as well as creator of all things. In the Old Testament these functions describe the work of *Elohim* (God).

Commentary on Hebrews 11:3 (ESV)

11:3 - “The universe.” This is one of two Greek terms used to designate this present physical realm. This “*aiōn*” refers to spiritual times and seasons including both physical and spiritual realms.

“The word of God.” This is not the Greek term *logos* but *rhēma* which is used of the spoken word. This then refers to creation by *fiat*, the spoken word. From other Scriptures we know that the *logos* of God was the Father’s agent of creation. This faith affirmation becomes the worldview out of

which believers live their earthly lives. This does not reject scientific research, but puts it within a faith perspective. Believers allow science to discover the mechanisms of the created order (natural revelation), but affirm ultimacy to God alone, Who is revealed in the Bible and supremely in Jesus Christ.

“So that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.” This is not primarily an affirmation of creation *ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing), but an example of the reality versus the unreality. Believers affirm what they have not personally seen or experienced based on the revelation of God. This is not so much a creedal theology as a life of faith and hope.

Resources for Commentary: Robert James Utley's *Study Guide Commentary Series* from Logos software and C. Hassell Bullock's commentary entitled *Psalms, Volume I, Psalms 1-72*.

STEP FIVE . . .

SUMMARIZING the message

We live in a predominately secular culture that is highly influenced by members of the academy who, for the most part, function from the point of view of scientific naturalism. This view asserts that the natural or physical world is all that exists. Therefore, it claims that there is no supernatural realm. Even more, there are no nonphysical things. For instance, Sean Carroll recently stated, regarding the existence of God, “The evidence is pretty incontrovertible that he doesn't exist.” Obviously, this is an important issue for Christians.

What is the relationship between Christianity and science?

For Christians, the relationship between Christianity and science is impacted by two commitments. First of all, we live in the age of science and are committed to taking science seriously. Secondly, we are also committed to the Bible and taking our faith seriously as well. As believers we have nothing to fear from science because the God of the Bible is the God of creation. Every factual scientific discovery illuminates the world God has made. In other words, science and Christianity are friends, not enemies. In fact, modern science emerged out of a Christian worldview.

The idea behind the scientific principle was the belief that God created everything with an intricate design that made sense and could be studied. Our universe was a working universe with laws and principles that could be discovered. But science has its own limitations. Since it is based on empirical evidence and providing testable explanations, not everything fits into that category. You cannot put God in a test-tube and determine His existence.

It's important to recognize that where this apparent chasm between Christianity and science is said to exist, it's not the scientific method that conflicts with the Bible but rather the philosophy behind modern science. Modern science doesn't even want to consider God. This is not because science has disproved God, but due to a specific mindset known as reductive naturalism. As stated earlier, naturalism is the idea that everything that exists is physical and it can all be empirically verified. If it cannot be examined in a scientific manner, it is simply unknowable. Ronald Numbers, a professor of the history of science has written, “Nothing has come to characterize modern science more than its rejection of appeals to God in explaining the workings of nature.”

The Bible refuses to yield to that unfair and unwarranted reduction. The Bible has a lot to say about the universe, its meaning, purpose, and most of all, its Creator. The reality is, Christianity and science are not in conflict, they are just asking different questions about the nature of reality. Science asks the “how” question. Christianity asks the “why” question. Both questions are needed. However, science doesn't try to answer the latter question nor is it equipped to do so.

Hasn't Evolution Replaced the Existence of God?

Evolution is the theory that all the living forms have evolved from a single, inorganic source. From that primordial source emerged a single cell that with a combination of time, chance, and energy came human life as we know it. The theory of macroevolution is another area of tension between Christianity and science. As we saw last week, the Bible says that we were personally created by God (cf. Genesis 1:26-27). We have been wonderfully and carefully designed (cf. Psalm 139).

Evolution is accepted by most scientists as the explanation for how humanity came into being. We exist by mere chance. The Bible, however, tells us that God did it. God was behind it all. There was no chance at all. The real tension that exists in this area is again, not scientific, but philosophical. Christianity doesn't have a problem with what science truly discovers – the problem lies with how many scientists interpret what they find. Scientism claims there is no God. The Bible teaches that science points you to God. The Bible, while affirming the scientific method, also points to two reasons why God should be seen as the architect and cause behind everything that exists.

Reply #1: The Marvel of Order and Design

The first reason is the intricate design of the universe. There is an amazing design and order to the universe. This reasoning extends not only to the cosmos, but the splendor of the human body too. We are intricately designed machines. The idea that we

came about by chance, over time, is hard to fathom. Our bodies and the complex interrelationships that exist in our universe, point to a Designer. The alternative claims that time plus chance, in the context of chaos, created a universe of incredible order and creatures of stunning design.

Reply #2: The Power of the Human Personality

The second reason why a purely naturalistic view of things breaks down is human personality. Where does human personality come from? What makes you, you? There is in each of us the reality of a voice inside our head, a personality, a living spirit that we know exists and that is tangible and real.

Related to the reality of our personality is the recognition of our spirituality. One of the persistent realities throughout history is the deep spiritual hunger of men and women everywhere. We are incurably religious and conscious of the idea of God. Many have referred to this as the "God-shaped vacuum" in every human being. If there isn't a God, and we evolved naturalistically, such an enduring belief would not make sense. Why would creatures, who have evolved by chance as a result of naturalistic causes alone, desire and hunger after God? The Bible has an answer. We were created by Him and for Him, in order to know Him. As King Solomon put it: "He [God] has put eternity in man's heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

STEP SIX . . .

EXPLORING the passage through discussion

Disclaimer: It is likely that members of your group will have come to different conclusions about specific issues like the length of the days of creation in Genesis 1, or the age of the earth. Please focus your discussion, not on the minor issues where disagreement is permitted, but on the major issues that encourage our faith.

1. Perhaps a member of your group is a Christian with a scientific or engineering background. If willing, take a moment and invite him/her to share their story of faith. Can Christians also be good scientists? Why should we encourage scientific inquiry?
2. Take a moment and list some of the "apparent" discrepancies between Christianity and science? How have you sought to reconcile them with your faith? What do you do with any persistent doubts you have about science and your faith?
3. What is the built-in limitation to the scientific inquiry? Why is science insufficient to answer the big questions of life?
4. What are some of the reasons why naturalistic evolution cannot adequately explain the nature of the universe?
5. Why is a mere materialistic universe ultimately devoid of true satisfaction?
6. Read Psalm 19. The Psalmist speaks of two books, the book of creation and the book of Scripture. What is the purpose of both books in the life of a Christian?

THE MISSION OF LOUDONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

We are committed to reaching and teaching people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, connecting them to one another and sending them to serve their families, communities and world.

10 CORE BELIEFS OF A DISCIPLE

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

The Godhead *2 Corinthians 13:14*

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Deity and Sinlessness of Christ *Colossians 2:9*

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life.

The Sufficient Atonement of Christ *2 Corinthians 5:19-21*

We believe in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood.

The Resurrection and Return of Christ *Acts 1:3, 9-11*

We believe in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential and that a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit *John 14:16*

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

Unity in Christ *Ephesians 2:14-17*

We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Eternity *Revelation 21:22-27*

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

We believe that everything we have or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE

Undiluted Worship *Matthew 22:37-40*

Loving the Lord God with all of our physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual vigor and, my neighbor as myself.

Constant Abiding *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

Reading the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for daily life.

Desperate Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

Praying to God to know Him, laying requests before Him and, finding direction for daily life.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

Fellowshipping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and, in the world.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

Using my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Total Forgiveness *Ephesians 4:30*

Practicing forgiving others as God has forgiven me in Christ.

Tangible Compassion *Matthew 25:31-46*

Showing compassion to those in need and so minister to Jesus Himself.

Generous Giving *2 Corinthians 8:7*

Giving away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

God Space *Ephesians 6:19-20*

Increasing the quantity and quality of our gospel conversations.

10 CORE VIRTUES OF A DISCIPLE

Love - a sincere affection for others *1 John 4:10-12*

Love is acting in someone else's interest no matter who they may be, no matter how you feel, and no matter what it costs.

Joy - a delight unaffected by circumstances *John 15:11*

An inner delight in God that is sustained in spite of the changing seasons of life.

Peace - an abiding sense of harmony *Philippians 4:6-7*

Relationships are free from friction. Positively, it describes harmonious relations with others in the church.

Patience - a willingness to stick with things *Proverbs 3:3-4*

Being willing to live with a difficult situation for a long time—even if things are slow to change or never change.

Kindness - a sense of compassion in the heart *Job 6:14*

An inner disposition that puts others at ease and out of which kind actions flow.

Goodness - a goodness that flows outwardly *1 Thess. 5:15*

Choosing to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Faithfulness - an unwavering loyalty *Psalm 26:3*

Being the kind of people who keep our word to one another.

Gentleness/Humility - an attitude of humility without any entitlement; a lack of self-awareness *Philippians 4:5; 2:3-4*

Gentleness is power and strength under God's control.

Humility is considering others above myself, if I consider myself at all.

Self-Control - an ability to direct your energy wisely

Titus 2:11-13

The strength to restrain our desires, emotions, and actions has to come from within rather than from some outside source.

Hope - a certainty of what is to come *Hebrews 6:19-20*

Coping with the hardships of life and with death because of hope in Christ.

Each week this Bible Study will feature either a core belief, practice or virtue vital for growing disciples.

OT in 52
(52 weeks through the Old Testament)

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING IN A YEAR

Monday, 15 thru Saturday, May 21
2 Samuel 24-1 Kings 1, 2-3, 4-6, 7, 8, 9-10

Loudonville Community Church
374 Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

www.lcchurch.org