

**“VACATION FOR THE SOUL”**  
**“Putting on God: Wearing Christ”**

We have begun a new sermon series, “Vacation for the Soul.” As a child, I always looked forward to summer vacations. I still feel that sense of relaxation when summer hits. I spend long evenings on the deck, ride my bike for both exercise and enjoyment, find more moments to be with family and friends. I believe we need vacations, we need time when the pace slows down and we can savor life a bit more. In scripture, that is called “Sabbath.” Our lives have become so complex and driven, that this summer is a good time to focus and reflect on a vacation for our souls, that we might deepen in our spiritual walk and learn to find the paths which to connect with Christ. Our study guide will help us focus on one of the classical Spiritual Disciplines and on Wednesdays there will be a prayer time from 12:10-12:40 in our chapel to practice that discipline and have a prayer pause in the week. Last Sunday we looked at Confession. This week our spiritual practice is “guidance.” How are we guided? Who guides us? What guides us? How is it that our relationship with Christ guides and directs us in our discipleship? This week, may Christ clothe us in love and guide us in grace. Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Putting on God: Wearing Christ”**

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**Prayer for the Week**

*It is not you who shapes God, it is God who shapes you. If then you are the work of God, await the hand of the artist who does all things in due season. Offer the Potter your heart, soft and tractable, and keep the form in which the Artist has fashioned you. Let your clay be moist, lest you grow hard and lose the imprint of the Potter’s fingers.* “Psalm Prayer (139)”, adapted from Irenaeus, 2<sup>nd</sup> century, in Upper Room Worship Book, #348

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This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

**Study Guide**

**Monday, 7/2/18 Colossians 3: 12-14**

These verses are so profound. Often used at weddings, love becomes a garment, a piece of clothing in which Christians are wrapped. Paul uses this metaphor of “putting on” values of compassion, kindness toward others as part of putting on Christ. As Christ was clothed in these gifts of grace, so are Jesus’ followers. It is not just the virtues and values with which we are clothed, it is the Divine Self. The love and grace of God clothing us, is a means of guiding us as followers of Jesus. Compassion, kindness, love, patience and gentleness like directions on a map point us in the direction of God. *How do you allow the love and grace of God to direct and guide your life?*

**Tuesday, 7/3/18 Mark 5: 21-24**

Again, Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee and a crowd awaits him. A religious leader comes forward and pleads with Jesus to come to his home and heal his daughter. People are surrounding him on his way to Jairus' house. Did they hope for an argument? Did they think it was a set up to make Jesus look bad? The author of Mark doesn't say. He only notes that Jesus goes with Jairus who is so concerned for his daughter. Jairus is willing to do whatever it takes for the sake of his daughter. Do you think it might have been hard for Jairus? Jairus was used to guiding others and having others listen to and respect him, what a turn this must be to listen and to be guided by Jesus. If we are open to the Spirit's guidance, we can be led in ways that are amazing and astounding. *How do you find ways to allow God's Spirit to guide you in new ways? Where is the Spirit leading you now? Pray this week's Prayer Psalm and ask God to shape you.*

**Wednesday, 7/4/18 Mark 5: 25-34**

A surprise comes in this story. On his way to Jairus' home, someone new comes for healing. She has no intention of allowing anyone to know why she was there. She had suffered for 12 years! Twelve years!!! She had gone to all the experts (you know the guides in the medical field) and had gotten worse. She heard about Jesus and thought "if I could just touch the hem of His robe." When she did she was healed. Jesus knew something had happened. Everyone else said, what you mean "Who touched me?" Look at how many people are here? The people surrounding and supposedly guiding Jesus didn't have a clue. The woman comes forward and Jesus blesses her with the fact she is healed from her disease!! The spiritual practice of guidance is important, because it can be easy to be distracted. Jesus refused to believe what he was being told. He knew something important had happened. *Are there things or people in your life that may be guiding you in the wrong direction? Are there websites or information sources that you check that seem "off" and pointing you in the wrong direction? Today, check in with Jesus. See where Christ is guiding you that you might know peace and be made whole.*

**Thursday, 7/5/18 Mark 5: 35-43**

Here the story becomes heart breaking. While Jesus is speaking with the woman, messengers come to tell Jairus his daughter has died. It's no use. Jesus wasn't going to pay any attention. "Have faith!" Jesus limited who would travel with him and when they reached the house the crying and wailing had begun. Jesus rebukes the mourners who laugh at him. What does he know? He sends them out and takes his disciples and the child's parents into her room. There he takes her hand and has her stand up. She is made whole. All the experts in the room were wrong. How easy it is to believe the other voices, the louder voices. God comes to us in Jesus to guide us and direct us in our spiritual and prayer practices. *What voices are guiding you? Do you have a bible study or small group or Sunday school class in which to check in and find out how you are doing in your walk with Christ? If you don't have a group ask God to help you connect to one, or create one in order to be guided on your path to great discipleship.*

**Friday, 7/6/18 Colossians 3: 12-17**

I extended this reading today because verses 15-17 speak of the community of faith being there for each other. The community helps us grow in wisdom, in gratitude and in a deeper love of Jesus. The community guides believers into great discipleship. One can't be a Christian by one's self. From the beginning, the early Christians understood in order to follow Jesus they would need help. As God's chosen people, love is to be the garment of choice. Love is the basic guide to the life and behavior of Christians. *How do we look at our words and behavior through the lens of love? Pray again our prayer psalm for the week. Ask the Spirit to guide you and shape you that your life might be a witness to Christ.*