

GROUNDED “Grounded in Generosity”

Two weeks ago, we began a new sermon series “Grounded.” October is the month at First Church we traditionally focus on stewardship. Now stewardship is how we live and how we share what we have and make the world a better place. In truth, it is something we do every day. However, each year we look ahead to see how as a community of faith we can focus the gifts we receive into the mission and ministry of the Church. It all begins by being “Grounded.” In spiritual terms, being grounded is a way of speaking to our relationship with the Divine. We are centered or grounded in our relationship with God in Christ Jesus. Once we are grounded in God, we have an experience of loving grace that reminds us we are beloved children of God. Being grounded in God and in grace challenges us to offer that grace to others. Generosity is a byproduct of our being grounded in God. May this week we ponder how we can offer ourselves: our prayers, our presence, our GIFTS, our service, and our witness to transform our world into the reign of God on earth. Pastor Cindy

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon: “Grounded in Generosity”

This week's sermon may be viewed at <https://boxcast.tv/channel/f9yfyjzko2esfwfc5vkn>

Prayer for the Week

Loving God, generosity comes out of our grounding in you and in your grace. Knowing our dependence on all your gifts and trusting in your goodness we ask that you open our hearts and spirits to you. Jesus reminds us not worry about anything, but to trust you in all things. As stewards of your good gifts, teach us to open our hands and hearts to the needs around us and the world. May we be generous in heart, mind, spirit offering our gifts to the transformation of your world. We pray in Christ Jesus' name. Amen

Study Guide

Monday, October 18, 2021 Luke 12: 22-24

In this series of sayings, Jesus is pointing out how much human beings tend to worry about things that do not matter, life, clothes, food. The rat race is still filled with “rats” an old saying goes. Jesus asks pointedly how much things change by human beings worrying and striving? Jesus is not advocating laziness or doing nothing at all. Jesus is encouraging his followers to understand what is important, grounding themselves in God, acknowledging God, sharing with others, and making sure one's life is in line with the kingdom. Life IS more than food or clothes, and as Jesus notes: we are worth more than the birds! *Write down one or two things you worry about the most. Ground yourself in the knowledge of God's grace and give those worries to God and allow God's grace and love to fill your heart and mind.*

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 Luke 12: 25-28

These verses focus specifically on whether or not worrying adds anything to life. The past year and a half has given us ample opportunity to worry and be anxious. We have moved from knowing next to nothing about Covid 19 and how it is passed to understanding that it comes through airborne particles. Jesus asks, "Does worrying add an hour or day to our life?" Jesus notes how the lilies of the field do nothing at all yet are taken care of by God. Realistically there are things that worry us; Layoffs occur, accidents happen, illness can take its toll. Worrying about what may happen, does not add to the quantity or quality of life. Some of the news and social media platforms feed into fear and anxiety. Christians trust in God, who has promised to take care of us. *How does your grounding in God and God's grace enable you to let go of your anxiety and worry? How would your grounding in God through prayer, worship and meditation help you be assured that God is with you in all things?*

Wednesday, October 20, 2021 Luke 12: 29-32

Here Jesus lays it out...quit worrying. Quit striving for things that don't matter. God knows what you need. Strive to live out the kingdom values and your needs will be taken care of. Don't be afraid....Don't be afraid. It is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Being grounded in God and grace challenges us to live faithfully in faith not fear. This is NOT prosperity gospel speaking. This is not about riches beyond one's wildest dreams. This is about trusting that one's needs will be taken care of, and that worrying won't solve one's problems. Trust God, work toward the reign of God and all will be well. *As we are moving toward consecration Sunday and the return of our estimate of giving cards, how will you trust God with all that you have and offer a portion back for the ministry and mission of the church?*

Thursday October 21, 2021 1 Timothy 6: 10

This verse from First Timothy has been misquoted again and again. The love of money is the root of all evil, not money itself. Anything can be the root of evil in our lives, even things we consider "good." Anything that we ground ourselves with other than God can be a root of evil. The language in this verse is poignant: "for through it many have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs." When money becomes more important than our grounding in God, we really do become lost and lose our sense of purpose. *Has your relationship with money hurt your relationship with God? How does your grounding in God and grace help your relationship with money and your generosity?*

Friday, October 22, 2022 1 Timothy 6: 17-19

Sunday, we have our consecration Sunday when we bring our estimate of giving cards. Sometimes it is hard to see ourselves as "rich." Yet, compared to the rest of the world, we are rich indeed: we have a roof over our head, food on our table, clothes to wear. Paul is encouraging us to ground ourselves in God, not in what we have. "To be rich in good deeds." As you pray over your giving for 2022, how is your grounding in God building the groundwork for your generosity? God's grace is sufficient for all our needs and Jesus invites us to trust that it is God's good pleasure to offer us the kingdom. *How will you respond to God's generous grace in Christ Jesus in the gifts of time, treasure and tithes you offer? Pray today over your estimate of giving card and prepare to return with a grateful heart.*