

St. John's EBCs, Everyday Bible Conversations!

For the week leading to worship, Sunday, August 4th.

This summer, St. John's sermon series is "The Gospel According to. . .?," with modern day personalities and Bible readings forming the basis for discussing a theme of the week. EBC is using the verses and theme, but not the personalities – for that, come hear the Sunday sermon!

This week's Theme: The Human Race

Reading: Hebrews 10:4-10; Romans 12:1-5

Summary of the Reading

Hebrews 10 focuses on a contrast between the old and the new relationship with God. In the old relationship, repeated ritual sacrifices were expected. In them, the people demonstrated their own "commitment," but the sacrifices functioned more as a "reminder" of sin than as a means of taking our sins away. In the new relationship, Jesus is the once-and-forever sacrifice to take away all of our sins. Romans gives us a new "purpose" for our material, earthly selves. Paul encourages us to use ourselves as a living sacrifice. We are all part of God's earthly team, and while we do not all have the *same* talents or purpose, we do all *have* awesome talents and purpose. "Sacrifice" then, is simply this: Put our God-given talent to our God-given work.

A Discipleship Question:

It is the core of discipleship: applying your gifts for the good of your neighbor. So EBC this week asks the easiest and hardest of questions: What do you consider your God-given talents? (You definitely have them!) How do you use them for God-given work? How can you use them more?

An Everyday Question:

What is the "risk" God takes in permitting us each to define our own gifts and our purpose? Why? Have you ever had a friend or family member you silently hoped would do "this one" specific nice thing for you – without being asked? What is the blessing when it happens? What is the difference when you have to ask?

An Action Step:

Write down two God-given gifts. Then ask yourself if you are "sacrificing" them for God.

Don't like any of these questions? Do Hebrews 10 and Romans 12 say something different to you? Great! What is it?

Find a friend (or two or many) and take an EBC coffee break! Find 15-25 minutes somewhere in the week and come to share or just listen and enjoy the company. Have fun finding God this week in your Everyday Life!