

Vision and Values Sermon Series (Fall, 2015)

Summary of Brendon's Sermon, September 27, 2015:

Text: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Values: **Scripture**, Prayer, Generosity, Diversity, Community, Creativity, Outreach, Justice, Love.

We Value Scripture: We are committed to living under the authority of Scripture, allowing it to form our imagination, inform our identity, transform our living, and to communicating its truth and relevance in our current context.

Why do we value Scripture?

Because we value God. God reveals himself in Scripture. We would not know the Triune God without God's revelation in Scripture.

Paul says all Scripture is inspired by God. Those who composed Scripture did so under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Scripture reveals truth about God and ourselves and our world. Scripture rebukes and corrects and instructs .

The basic message of Scripture is accesible and understandable. But Scripture is also a complex collection of documents. Historical distance and cultural differences makes it challenging to interpret Scripture well.

We therefore approach Scripture in humility, acknowledging our limitations. We come dependent on the Holy Spirit and open to the opinions of others who have wrestled with the text. Scripture is meant to be read in community, in conversation with others. As we do so, we learn to be gracious and generous toward those who differ from us.

"Inhabiting the Scriptures" - immersing ourselves in them, in order to be formed and informed and transformed by them.

Our cultural systems, advertizers and producers of media, compete daily for our attention. Who/What forms our imagination? Who/What informs our identity? Who/What determines how we live?

Paul insists that we be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Resistance to cultural forces requires work. It requires sustained engagement with, and immersion in, Scripture. Jesus in the Gospels, the psalms and prophets and the letters of Paul and others.

We read chunks of Scripture. We spend extended time with smaller portions, lingering over them, inhabiting them. We study and engage in conversation with others. We memorize portions so we can ponder and ruminate on them. And slowly, over time, our imaginations are formed, our identity informed and our living transformed.

Questions for Discussion (For Small Group and Others):

1. What are your thoughts and feelings regarding the value of Scripture?
2. What in your life would indicate that you live under the authority of Scripture? What in our community would indicate that?
3. What have you found frustrating or challenging about Scripture? What do you find comforting about it?
4. How has Scripture formed your imagination, informed your identity and transformed your living? How do you respond to the idea of "inhabiting Scripture?"
5. What practice(s) have you found most helpful in engaging Scripture?