

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for June 5, 2010**

6 June 2010, Gospel, Luke 9:11b-17, **Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**

Jesus spoke to the crowds about the kingdom of God,  
and he healed those who needed to be cured.

As the day was drawing to a close,

the Twelve approached him and said,

“Dismiss the crowd

so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms  
and find lodging and provisions;

for we are in a deserted place here.”

He said to them, “Give them some food yourselves.”

They replied, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have,

unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people.”

Now the men there numbered about five thousand.

Then he said to his disciples,

“Have them sit down in groups of about fifty.”

They did so and made them all sit down.

Then taking the five loaves and the two fish,

and looking up to heaven,

he said the blessing over them, broke them,

and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

They all ate and were satisfied.

And when the leftover fragments were picked up,

they filled twelve wicker baskets.

## QUESTIONS

1. Jesus shares by taking what he has and making it abundant. Do you think of yourself as someone with abundance? (material, spiritual, time, etc.) How do you share your abundance?
2. In this reading Jesus blesses the food before him, in much the same way he does at the last supper. How do you acknowledge your blessings? Do the people important in your life know that they are blessing to you? How?
3. Tomorrow is the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. The Eucharist is a central blessing in the lives of Catholics. How do you view the Eucharist? Does it hold a central place in your faith life?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for June 12, 2010**

13 June 2010, Epistle, Galatians 2:16, 19-21, **11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Brothers and sisters:

We who know that a person is not justified by works of the law  
but through faith in Jesus Christ,  
even we have believed in Christ Jesus  
that we may be justified by faith in Christ  
and not by works of the law,  
because by works of the law no one will be justified.

For through the law I died to the law,  
that I might live for God.

I have been crucified with Christ;  
yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me;  
insofar as I now live in the flesh,  
I live by faith in the Son of God  
who has loved me and given himself up for me.

I do not nullify the grace of God;  
for if justification comes through the law,  
then Christ died for nothing.

## QUESTIONS

1. *“Because by works of the law no one will be justified.”* How do you understand this phrase? Is Paul correct? What does it mean to be ‘justified’? How do you get ‘justification’? What are the benefits of ‘justification’? Do you have a sense of your own ‘justification’?
2. Why do you go to Church on Sundays? Why do you give to charity?
3. Do you identify yourself as a sinner? What is original sin for you? Did Jesus successfully forgive all of your sins? What is the benefit of God’s forgiveness?
4. *“Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me...”* Paul seems to say he has been transformed in some way. How do you understand transformation? How does one become transformed? How is a transformed person different? How does a transformed person behave? Are you transformed?
5. Does your family say grace before meals? What do you say, and why?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for June 19, 2010**

20 June 2010, Gospel, Luke 9:18-22, **12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Once when Jesus was praying in solitude,  
and the disciples were with him,  
he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"  
They said in reply, "John the Baptist;  
others, Elijah;  
still others, 'One of the ancient prophets has arisen.'"  
Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"  
Peter said in reply, "The Christ of God."  
He rebuked them  
and directed them not to tell this to anyone.

He said, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly  
and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,  
and be killed and on the third day be raised."

Then he said to all,  
"If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself  
and take up his cross daily and follow me.  
For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it,  
but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."

QUESTIONS

1. Who do you say he is?
2. If Christ died of cancer instead of crucifixion, would you think of him differently?
3. Does God love Jesus more than you? Did God require more of Jesus than he requires of you?
4. Is there a particular moment in the Gospels that defines Jesus for you?
5. What do you expect from intercessory prayer? Does your faith affect your suffering?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for June 26, 2010**

27 June 2010, Gospel, Luke 9:51-62, **13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled,  
he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem,  
and he sent messengers ahead of him.

On the way they entered a Samaritan village  
to prepare for his reception there,  
but they would not welcome him  
because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem.

When the disciples James and John saw this they asked,  
"Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven  
to consume them?"

Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.

As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him,  
"I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus answered him,  
"Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests,  
but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."

And to another he said, "Follow me."

But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father."

But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead.

But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

And another said, "I will follow you, Lord,  
but first let me say farewell to my family at home."

To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow  
and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God."

## QUESTIONS

1. For you, what was the purpose of Jesus' life and death?
2. What's your cross? Do you need to carry it? Have you ever declined a cross that was yours to carry? Have you stumbled under the weight of your cross?
3. Jesus anticipates and exuberant, happy, unhesitating response to God's invitation. Are you exuberant in your faith? How do you best describe your response to your faith?
4. What Biblical character is most like you? Do you recognize another Men's Ministry member in a Biblical character?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for July 2, 2010**

3 July 2010, Gospel, Luke 10:1-12, 17-20, **14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

At that time the Lord appointed seventy-two others  
whom he sent ahead of him in pairs  
to every town and place he intended to visit.

He said to them,

“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few;  
so ask the master of the harvest  
to send out laborers for his harvest.

Go on your way;

behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.

Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals;  
and greet no one along the way.

Into whatever house you enter, first say,  
‘Peace to this household.’

If a peaceful person lives there,  
your peace will rest on him;  
but if not, it will return to you.

Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you,  
for the laborer deserves his payment.

Do not move about from one house to another.

Whatever town you enter and they welcome you,  
eat what is set before you,  
cure the sick in it and say to them,  
‘The kingdom of God is at hand for you.’”

## QUESTIONS

1. The only message the disciples are directed to deliver is, “*The kingdom of God is at hand for you.*” What does this mean?
2. “*It will be more tolerable for Sodom on that day than for that town.*” Contrast this to last week’s gospel in which Jesus rebuked the apostles for suggesting that they call fire down on the Samaritan village. Sometimes Jesus says very harsh and threatening things. How do you make sense of statements like this?
3. “*Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way*” Why did Jesus impose this restriction?
4. Is it ok that Catholicism seems to place so little emphasis on evangelization?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for July 9, 2010**

10 July 2010, Gospel, Luke 10:25-37, **15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said,

“Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus said to him, “What is written in the law?

How do you read it?”

He said in reply,

*You shall love the Lord, your God,  
with all your heart,  
with all your being,  
with all your strength,  
and with all your mind,  
and your neighbor as yourself.”*

He replied to him,

“You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.”

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus,

“And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus replied,

“A man fell victim to robbers  
as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.

They stripped and beat him  
and went off leaving him half-dead.

A priest happened to be going down that road,  
but when he saw him,  
he passed by on the opposite side.

Likewise a Levite came to the place,  
and when he saw him,  
he passed by on the opposite side.

But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him  
was moved with compassion at the sight.

He approached the victim,  
poured oil and wine over his wounds  
and bandaged them.

Then he lifted him up on his own animal,  
took him to an inn, and cared for him.

The next day he took out two silver coins  
and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction,  
‘Take care of him.

If you spend more than what I have given you,  
I shall repay you on my way back.’

Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?"

He answered,

"The one who treated him with mercy."

Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

QUESTIONS:

1. What Biblical character is most like you? Do you recognize another Men's Ministry member in a Biblical character?
2. We usually focus on the last clause of the scholar's reply. Is it the more important of the two laws? How does one love God? Rate your own performance so far.
3. Was the Samaritan commendable because he was "*moved with compassion*" (felt the appropriate emotion) or because he "*treated [the victim] with mercy*" (acted correctly)?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for July 24, 2010**

25 July 2010, First Reading,

Genesis 18:20-32, **16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

In those days, the LORD said:

“The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great,  
and their sin so grave,  
that I must go down and see whether or not their actions  
fully correspond to the cry against them that comes to me.  
I mean to find out.”

While Abraham’s visitors walked on farther toward Sodom,  
the LORD remained standing before Abraham.

Then Abraham drew nearer and said:

“Will you sweep away the innocent with the guilty?  
Suppose there were fifty innocent people in the city;  
would you wipe out the place, rather than spare it  
for the sake of the fifty innocent people within it?  
Far be it from you to do such a thing,  
to make the innocent die with the guilty  
so that the innocent and the guilty would be treated alike!  
Should not the judge of all the world act with justice?”

The LORD replied,

“If I find fifty innocent people in the city of Sodom,  
I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

Abraham spoke up again:

“See how I am presuming to speak to my Lord,  
though I am but dust and ashes!

What if there are five less than fifty innocent people?  
Will you destroy the whole city because of those five?”

He answered, “I will not destroy it, if I find forty-five there.”

But Abraham persisted, saying “What if only forty are found there?”

He replied, “I will forbear doing it for the sake of the forty.”

Then Abraham said, “Let not my Lord grow impatient if I go on.  
What if only thirty are found there?”

He replied, “I will forbear doing it if I can find but thirty there.”

Still Abraham went on,

“Since I have thus dared to speak to my Lord,  
what if there are no more than twenty?”

The LORD answered, “I will not destroy it, for the sake of the twenty.”

But he still persisted:

“Please, let not my Lord grow angry if I speak up this last time.

What if there are at least ten there?”

He replied, “For the sake of those ten, I will not destroy it.”

## QUESTIONS

1. Can you negotiate with God? Can you change God’s mind?
2. How do you see the sacred, or the image of God, in the fallenness, the injustice, the imperfections etc... in the world around you? How do you see the sacred in those you distrust, dislike, hate? In those who have wronged you? In yourself?
3. In this Old Testament reading, God is willing to spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of only ten innocent people. What does this passage say about justice? Does this passage challenge your understanding of justice?
4. If you were the only other person on the planet earth, would Jesus have died to save you?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for July 31, 2010**

1 August 2010, First Reading,  
Sirach 1:2; 2:21-23, **17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Vanity of vanities, says Qoheleth,  
vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!  
Here is one who has labored with wisdom and knowledge and skill,  
and yet to another who has not labored over it,  
he must leave property.  
This also is vanity and a great misfortune.  
For what profit comes to man from all the toil and anxiety of heart  
with which he has labored under the sun?  
All his days sorrow and grief is his occupation;  
even at night his mind is not at rest.  
This also is vanity.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you value acquiring knowledge, making money, being in control, achieving success etc...? Are any of these things important in your life? Why? Do you believe God wants you to value these things?
2. Do you live life knowing you could lose everything or die at any time? Is this the right way to live?
3. What is vanity? Is vanity immoral? A character flaw? A sin?
4. Is there wisdom for living your life in this passage from Ecclesiastes?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for August 7, 2010**

8 August 2010, Gospel, Luke 12:32-48, **18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock,  
for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.

Sell your belongings and give alms.

Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out,  
an inexhaustible treasure in heaven  
that no thief can reach nor moth destroy.

For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

“Gird your loins and light your lamps

and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding,  
ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks.

Blessed are those servants

whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival.

Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself,

have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them.

And should he come in the second or third watch

and find them prepared in this way,  
blessed are those servants.

Be sure of this:

if the master of the house had known the hour  
when the thief was coming,  
he would not have let his house be broken into.

You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect,  
the Son of Man will come.”

Then Peter said,

“Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?”

And the Lord replied,

“Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward  
whom the master will put in charge of his servants  
to distribute the food allowance at the proper time?

Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so.

Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant  
in charge of all his property.

But if that servant says to himself,

‘My master is delayed in coming,’  
and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants,  
to eat and drink and get drunk,  
then that servant's master will come  
on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour

and will punish the servant severely  
and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

That servant who knew his master's will  
but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will  
shall be beaten severely;  
and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will  
but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating  
shall be beaten only lightly.

Much will be required of the person entrusted with much,  
and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

## QUESTIONS

1. What is your treasure? Do you love your things? Do you cling to them?
2. Do you live life in a certain way because of the promise of heaven and the threat of hell? Should the world beyond life be your primary motivator for how your life here?
3. What sense do you make of the closing stories of the servants? How do you understand the last two lines, "*Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more,*" in terms of your life as a Catholic Christian?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for August 14, 2010**

1 Corinthians 15: 42-56, Chosen Reading

So also is the resurrection of the dead.

It is sown corruptible; it is raised incorruptible.

It is sown dishonorable; it is raised glorious.

It is sown weak; it is raised powerful.

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual one.

So, too, it is written, "The first man, Adam,  
became a living being," the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

But the spiritual was not first;

rather the natural and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the earth, earthly; the second man, from heaven.

As was the earthly one, so also are the earthly,

and as is the heavenly one, so also are the heavenly.

Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one,

we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one.

This I declare, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,  
nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

Behold, I tell you a mystery.

We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed,

in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible,

and we shall be changed.

For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility,

and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality.

Brothers and sisters:

When that which is mortal clothes itself with immortality,

then the word that is written shall come about:

*Death is swallowed up in victory.*

*Where, O death, is your victory?*

*Where, O death, is your sting?*

The sting of death is sin,

and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be firm, steadfast,

always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is your own theology of the spirit? What is the spirit to you? How do you identify it? Size it up? Account for it? What do you do for it, if anything?
2. Are you more a being of spirit or flesh? Or some balance of both? Do you have a “spiritual body”? Is there a battle in your life between spirit and flesh? A harmony?
3. Saint Paul writes “the sting of death is Sin.” What aspects of your life bring you the sting of death – for example, what aspects of your life partake in death or a culture of death, are not life-affirming, or kill other more positive aspects of your life? Can you think of a story in your life when you’ve been smothered by death? Or by the same token risen to a new life?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for August 21, 2010**

22 August 2010, Gospel, Luke 13:22-30, **21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Jesus passed through towns and villages,  
teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem.  
Someone asked him,  
“Lord, will only a few people be saved?”  
He answered them,  
“Strive to enter through the narrow gate,  
for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter  
but will not be strong enough.  
After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door,  
then will you stand outside knocking and saying,  
‘Lord, open the door for us.’  
He will say to you in reply,  
‘I do not know where you are from.’  
And you will say,  
‘We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.’  
Then he will say to you,  
‘I do not know where you are from.  
Depart from me, all you evildoers!’  
And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth  
when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob  
and all the prophets in the kingdom of God  
and you yourselves cast out.  
And people will come from the east and the west  
and from the north and the south  
and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.  
For behold, some are last who will be first,  
and some are first who will be last.”

## QUESTIONS

1. Who is this person who asks Jesus if “only a few people” will be saved? Is he one of the evildoers who will be locked out? Who are these evildoers?
2. Place yourself into this story. Where do you see yourself in it?
3. “For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.” React to this statement by Jesus.
4. Is God, in your mind, more exclusive or inclusive? Jesus suggests both a narrowness and openness of access to God.

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for September 4, 2010**

5 September 2010, First Reading,  
Wisdom 9:13-18b, **23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Who can know God's counsel,  
or who can conceive what the LORD intends?  
For the deliberations of mortals are timid,  
and unsure are our plans.  
For the corruptible body burdens the soul  
and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind  
that has many concerns.  
And scarce do we guess the things on earth,  
and what is within our grasp we find with difficulty;  
but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?  
Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given wisdom  
and sent your holy spirit from on high?  
And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight.

QUESTIONS

1. How much of what God intends can you, personally, conceive or perceive?  
What does God intend for you?
2. How do you conceive or perceive God's counsel? Through Scripture? Sacred Tradition? A direct experience of God? What ways are available to you? What is the best way for you?
3. Why does God remain hidden from you?
4. Have you received any counsel from God? What was it?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for September 11, 2010**

12 September 2010, Gospel, Luke 15:1-10, **24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus,  
but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying,  
“This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them he addressed this parable.

“What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them  
would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert  
and go after the lost one until he finds it?

And when he does find it,

he sets it on his shoulders with great joy

and, upon his arrival home,

he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them,

‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’

I tell you, in just the same way

there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents

than over ninety-nine righteous people

who have no need of repentance.

“Or what woman having ten coins and losing one

would not light a lamp and sweep the house,

searching carefully until she finds it?

And when she does find it,

she calls together her friends and neighbors

and says to them,

‘Rejoice with me because I have found the coin that I lost.’

In just the same way, I tell you,

there will be rejoicing among the angels of God

over one sinner who repents.”

#### QUESTIONS

1. Are you the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son? In what way are you lost? In what way have you been found?
2. Is the lost sheep or the lost coin abandoned if it does not repent?
3. How do you make sense of “original sin”?
4. Should the ninety nine sheep be offended by God’s celebration of the return of the one that wandered off?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for September 18, 2010**

19 September 2010, First Reading,  
Amos 8:4-7, **25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy  
and destroy the poor of the land!  
“When will the new moon be over, ” you ask,  
“that we may sell our grain,  
and the sabbath, that we may display the wheat?  
We will diminish the ephah,  
add to the shekel,  
and fix our scales for cheating!  
We will buy the lowly for silver,  
and the poor for a pair of sandals;  
even the refuse of the wheat we will sell!”  
The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:  
Never will I forget a thing they have done!

QUESTIONS

1. Is observance of the Sabbath an antiquated notion to you? How will you observe the Sabbath tomorrow? What do you, personally, get out of the Sabbath that was made for you? (A demerit will be issued to anyone who talks about how others observe the Sabbath.)
2. Some would contend this reading demonstrates God's loving concern for the cheated, rather than anger at the cheater. Do you agree? Which way do you relate to God? Are you and God in conflict? In a word, how would you characterize your relationship?
3. To what practical steps could you genuinely commit yourself today in order to be a better man of faith?
4. How would you characterize your answer to #3? Ascetic? Moralistic? Ritualistic? Practical? Relational? Are they steps that are self-improvement, service, or evangelical? What does your answer say about you as you are?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for September 25, 2010**

26 September 2010, Gospel,  
Luke 16:19-31, **26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Jesus said to the Pharisees:

“There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day.

And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table.

Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.

When the poor man died,

he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham.

The rich man also died and was buried,

and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

And he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me.

Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.’

Abraham replied,

‘My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.

Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.’

He said, ‘Then I beg you, father,

send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.’

But Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets.

Let them listen to them.’

He said, ‘Oh no, father Abraham,

but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

Then Abraham said, ‘If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.’”

## QUESTIONS

1. This is an exceptionally harsh story. Is Jesus confirming the actual existence of hell in this story? Do you believe in hell? Is it likely that you or your children be consigned to hell? How do you reconcile the concept of hell with the concept of a loving God? In what way did Jesus die for our sins? If there is a heaven, must there be a hell?
2. This story is addressed to the Pharisees who are infamous in the New Testament for observing and enforcing the law dogmatically and stopping there. Why does that anger Jesus? What are they missing? How firmly do you have a hold of whatever that is?
3. If you are successful financially or socially, or if you live your life in good health and reputation, is it as a result of you being blessed by God? Is Joel Olsteen a Pharisee?
4. Fundamentally, how does your Christianity express itself? Is it something of which you are aware daily? Is it something of which your closest friends are aware? How do you distinguish yourself from non-Christians?
5. The protagonist of this story is Abraham. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are called the 'Abrahamic' faiths. Why is Abraham such an important figure?

## BONUS ROUND

6. What, precisely, is the message of the prophets that would serve as a warning to the rich man's brothers?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for October 2, 2010**

Luke 5:33-39, Chosen Reading

The scribes and Pharisees said to Jesus,

“The disciples of John the Baptist fast often and offer prayers,  
and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same;  
but yours eat and drink.”

Jesus answered them, “Can you make the wedding guests fast  
while the bridegroom is with them?

But the days will come, and when the bridegroom is taken away from them,  
then they will fast in those days.”

And he also told them a parable.

“No one tears a piece from a new cloak to patch an old one.

Otherwise, he will tear the new

and the piece from it will not match the old cloak.

Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins.

Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins,

and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined.

Rather, new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins.

And no one who has been drinking old wine desires new,  
for he says, “The old is good.””

## QUESTIONS

1. Are you in a period of fasting or a period of celebration? Neither? How does that manifest itself? Do you choose when you fast and when you celebrate or do circumstances dictate that for you?
2. What are your old wineskins? Do you cling to them and say “the old is good”?
3. Have you been poured new wine? How do you preserve it?
4. Do you admire asceticism? What is its purpose? How do you use it?
5. How does your faith differ from your parents’? How will your children’s faith differ from yours?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for October 8, 2010**

9 October 2010, Epistle, 2 Timothy 2:8-13, **28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Beloved:

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David:  
such is my gospel, for which I am suffering,  
even to the point of chains, like a criminal.

But the word of God is not chained.

Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen,  
so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus,  
together with eternal glory.

This saying is trustworthy:

If we have died with him  
we shall also live with him;  
if we persevere  
we shall also reign with him.

But if we deny him  
he will deny us.

If we are unfaithful  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot deny himself.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Paul says, "But if we deny him, he will deny us" and right after that he says, "If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful". What the heck?! Are these two statements reconcilable? Which one better describes God for you?
2. How do you disappoint God? How do you please God? How does that affect how God feels about you? How does that affect how you feel about yourself?
3. Do you feel like you're 'in it' with God, or is God is a spectator or judge? How about Jesus?
4. When you arrive in heaven, what will God's first words to you be? By what name will He address you?

#### BONUS ROUND

5. The First Reading and the Gospel are about healing. Is there someone whose presence you seek out when you need to be healed? Is there a place you go when you need to be healed? How do you heal or re-center yourself? Can you share with us of what do you need to be healed?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for October 16, 2010**

17 October 2010, Gospel, Luke 18:1-8, **29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Jesus told his disciples a parable  
about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary.  
He said, "There was a judge in a certain town  
who neither feared God nor respected any human being.  
And a widow in that town used to come to him and say,  
'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.'  
For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought,  
'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being,  
because this widow keeps bothering me  
I shall deliver a just decision for her  
lest she finally come and strike me.'"  
The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says.  
Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones  
who call out to him day and night?  
Will he be slow to answer them?  
I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily.  
But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

## QUESTIONS

1. The first and second reading and the Gospel are about persistence in praying – praying unceasingly. The Men's Ministry has struggled with the concept of prayer since the day it was founded. Is prayer important? How do you pray? How do you want to pray? In your imagination, how do 'holy men' pray?
2. How often do you pray? Does God care about quantity? Quality? Do you care about quantity or quality?
3. What are your goals when you pray?
4. When you pray, do you visualize God? What does He look like? What is He doing?
5. Do you encourage prayer in your household? Do you succeed? Why or why not?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for October 23, 2010**

24 October 2010, First Reading,  
Sir 35:12-14, 16-18, **30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

The LORD is a God of justice,  
    who knows no favorites.  
Though not unduly partial toward the weak,  
    yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.  
The LORD is not deaf to the wail of the orphan,  
    nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint.  
The one who serves God willingly is heard;  
    his petition reaches the heavens.  
The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds;  
    it does not rest till it reaches its goal,  
nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds,  
    judges justly and affirms the right,  
    and the LORD will not delay.

QUESTIONS

1. This concern for the widow and orphan is God expressing that He loves you, individually, more than you'll ever know. Do you feel it?
2. Who models faith for you? What qualities, precisely, do they model for you? Who taught you faith?
3. The Beatitudes say the poor are blessed. Here they are blessed too, but God is "not unduly partial to the weak." How are you rich? How are you an orphan? How does God relate to you in each condition?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for October 30, 2010**

31 October 2010, First Reading,  
Wisdom 11:22-12:2, **31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

Before the LORD the whole universe is as a grain  
from a balance  
or a drop of morning dew come down upon the earth.  
But you have mercy on all, because you can do all things;  
and you overlook people's sins that they may repent.  
For you love all things that are  
and loathe nothing that you have made;  
for what you hated, you would not have fashioned.  
And how could a thing remain, unless you willed it;  
or be preserved, had it not been called forth by you?  
But you spare all things, because they are yours,  
O LORD and lover of souls,  
for your imperishable spirit is in all things!  
Therefore you rebuke offenders little by little,  
warn them and remind them of the sins  
they are committing,  
that they may abandon their wickedness  
and believe in you, O LORD!

## QUESTIONS

*For what it's worth, I love this reading. It succinctly expresses what I think are the two great messages of Revelation: We ought to be beneath the notice of God, and yet He loves each of us beyond reason. Wow.*

1. Do you envision God as the "lover of souls"? Do you agree with the prophet that God loathes nothing that He has made? How do you come to your conclusion? Really – how? Through analysis of Scripture? Upbringing? Catechism? The Passion story? Personal Experience? How?!
2. Recall the parable of the vineyard. Would it be acceptable to you if people escaped justice and received equal treatment in the afterlife no matter what they did in this life?
3. What do you offer than no one else on Earth has?
4. Does God palpably love you?
5. Who in your life has loved you best?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for November 27, 2010**

Mark 2:1-13, Chosen Reading

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days,  
it became known that he was at home.  
Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them,  
not even around the door, and he preached the word to them.  
They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.  
Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd,  
they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let  
down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.  
When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic,  
"Child, your sins are forgiven."  
Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves,  
"Why does this man speak that way?  
He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?"  
Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves,  
so he said,  
"Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?  
Which is easier, to say to the paralytic,  
'Your sins are forgiven,'  
or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'?"  
But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"--  
he said to the paralytic,  
"I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home."  
He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone.  
They were all astounded and glorified God, saying,  
"We have never seen anything like this."

QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe in a God that heals?
2. Has Jesus ever healed you? How?
3. The men had a very difficult time getting to Jesus. What keeps you from Jesus?  
Do your obstacles prevent healing in your life? How?
4. Can forgiveness bring healing? Are you able to forgive? Are you able to receive  
Forgiveness? Have you been healed through forgiveness? How?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for December 4, 2010**

Matthew 3:1-12, Chosen Reading

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea  
and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert,  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel's hair  
and had a leather belt around his waist.  
His food was locusts and wild honey.

At that time Jerusalem, all Judea,  
and the whole region around the Jordan  
were going out to him  
and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River  
as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees  
coming to his baptism, he said to them,  
"You brood of vipers!

Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?  
Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.  
And do not presume to say to yourselves,  
'We have Abraham as our father.'

For I tell you,  
God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones.  
Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees.  
Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit  
will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

I am baptizing you with water, for repentance,  
but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I.  
I am not worthy to carry his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.  
His winnowing fan is in his hand.  
He will clear his threshing floor  
and gather his wheat into his barn,  
but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

## QUESTIONS

1. Talk about your ability to forgive and be forgiven? Is it difficult to “acknowledge” your sins and faults? Does forgiving or being forgiven bring on a healing or cleansing for you?
2. What does repentance mean to you? Is it hard to repent? To admit you are wrong? Why? Can you think of an example of the need for repentance in your life? Does repentance play any role in your life?
3. Who is your John the Baptist? In other words, who is the person in your life who shoots from the hip about your flaws, brings out your best self, is painfully honest about your strengths and weaknesses etc... Or perhaps it is someone who calls you to God? Prepares you for God in some way?
4. Are you a John the Baptist in some way?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for December 11, 2010**

12 December 2010, Gospel, Matthew 11:2-11, **3rd Sunday of Advent, Year A**

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ,  
he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question,  
“Are you the one who is to come,  
or should we look for another?”

Jesus said to them in reply,  
“Go and tell John what you hear and see:  
the blind regain their sight,  
the lame walk,  
lepers are cleansed,  
the deaf hear,  
the dead are raised,  
and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.

And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.”  
As they were going off,

Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John,  
“What did you go out to the desert to see?

A reed swayed by the wind?  
Then what did you go out to see?  
Someone dressed in fine clothing?  
Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces.  
Then why did you go out? To see a prophet?  
Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.  
This is the one about whom it is written:

*Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;  
he will prepare your way before you.*

Amen, I say to you,  
among those born of women  
there has been none greater than John the Baptist;  
yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

## QUESTIONS

1. Last week, many of us talked about reconciliation with others and about anger. What role does pride play in your life – in your conflicts, relationships etc...?
2. Near the start of this passage, the followers of John have a tough time recognizing Jesus as the Messiah. Talk about how and where you see Jesus. In church, in the Bible, in others, etc....?
3. Does the experience of a challenging relationship bring you closer to Jesus or God? Can you see Jesus in others with whom you have a rough relationship?
4. Is there anyone in your life who is your prophet, that is, someone who reprimands your worst self and calls you to your best self?

**St. Jerome's Men's Ministry Meeting**  
**Reading and Questions for December 18, 2010**

19 December 2010, Gospel, Matthew 1:18-24, **4th Sunday of Advent, Year A**

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about.  
When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph,  
    but before they lived together,  
    she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.  
Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man,  
    yet unwilling to expose her to shame,  
    decided to divorce her quietly.  
Such was his intention when, behold,  
    the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,  
    “Joseph, son of David,  
    do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.  
For it is through the Holy Spirit  
    that this child has been conceived in her.  
She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus,  
    because he will save his people from their sins.”  
All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:  
    *Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,*  
    *and they shall name him Emmanuel,*  
    which means “God is with us.”  
When Joseph awoke,  
    he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him  
    and took his wife into his home.

QUESTIONS

1. In this week's reading, Joseph is able to overcome his anxieties through the help of God. When you experience anger or conflict with others or oneself, how does or how can God help you let go of things? Talk about letting go?
2. With whom and/or where are you most at home? Is God present in your home?
3. Is hospitality a virtue in your life? How does God or Jesus dictate your sense of hospitality?
4. Are there ways that you can think about your home differently during the Christmas Season? What role does God play in your experience of Christmas?