

“ Why not follow the Plan ? ”

As we move forward into March and the season of Lent, what are you preparing for ? Many people will make a plan to “Fast” (give up) something that they “usually” enjoy or do, or a food that they like, but are willing to live without for a short period. What does this prove if you go back to the old ways after the season ? This may seem important to them, but it really does not mean much to God. As I looked forward to this season and prepared myself, I noted a special theme in the Lectionary Readings that seems worth pointing out.

(Matthew 17:1-9) Jesus and some disciples on top of the mountain, when God speaks, “***This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!***” Jesus says to the disciples, “***Get up, and Do not be afraid***”.

(Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21) Jesus says, “*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up your treasures in heaven. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.***” Jesus said to: 1) **Pray**, 2) **Serve in righteousness**, 3) **Forgive others**, 4) **Fast** – “*You cannot serve both God and Money*” (nothing is as important as God).

(Matthew 4:1-11) Jesus **led by the Spirit** said, “*It is written; **Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.***” Do not just read the Word of God, but live in the Word of God !

(John 3:1-17) Jesus said, “*You must be born again*” - ***the Spirit gives birth to spirit***”. Not committees, or fundraisers, or good intentions will get us or anyone else “born again” (or change hearts) – only the Word and the Spirit can do that !

(John 4:5-42) Jesus to the woman at the well in Samaria said, “*whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty...the water I give will become in him a spring of water, welling up to eternal life.*” Jesus said to the disciples, “*I tell you, **open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefit of their labor.***”

Please go back and re-read the highlighted passages and see that God has a plan !

What is stopping us from growing ?