**Lifting Our Church Family in Prayer**

**Prayers of Praise**

* Baptism of Akani Grace Giles

**Prayers of Comfort**

* Family and friends of Adrienne Ferrin

**Prayers of Healing**

* Rik Dejong
* Alta Peekstock
* Debbie Still
* Noelle Froelich
* Adlin Francis Lee
* Mike Dixon
* Bill Skinner
* Becky Elliott
* John Hall
* Hazel Gray
* Jim Humphrey
* Jimmy Meeks
* Mary Jane Sickle

**Extended Care Facilities**

* Dot Stone
* Donna McFadden
* Alta Peekstock
* Bill Breckel

**Prayers for Military, Law Enforcement, and**

**Fire Department**

* Tyler Fix
* Nick Imperiale
* Mark Kazee
* Kyle Knottnerus
* Mike Morales
* Ryan Mugridge
* Brian Vautin



**Sermon**: Don’t Settle for Less than God’s Best

**Date**: Sunday January 15, 2017

**Scripture**: Matthew 5:8

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

**Sermon Notes**

**CREATING A CULTURE OF PURITY**

1. **GET YOUR OWN HEART RIGHT.**

*Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.* Proverbs 4:23

1. **SPEAK TO THE HEART OF THOSE YOU LOVE.**

*…The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* 1 Samuel 16:7

1. **PURSUE PERFECT PURITY OF THE HEART.**

*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.* Ephesians 5:3

*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.* Ezekiel 36: 26

**Daily Study Guide**

**Monday January 16, 2016 – Mark 2:1-12.**

What is the role of each character in this story—the paralyzed man? the four friends? Jesus? The teachers of the law? Now think about your life. Who do you most identify with? Are you a caregiver? If you are, do you realize that through your efforts God is at work to care for that other person? Are you like the person on the mat, in need of others to care for you? Are you willing to trust your pain to others, and will you allow your friends to go to great lengths to see you healed? Too often we hide our pain, our grief, and our frustration from others, and we miss the blessing of being encouraged and cared for by a community. What else is Jesus teaching in this passage? What do we learn about the character of God by reading these verses?

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**Tuesday January 17, 2017 – Luke 5: 17-16**

This is a parallel passage to the one we read yesterday. It is thought that Mark was the first gospel written and that Matthew and Luke were familiar with many of the same events as recorded in Mark. Notice the way that much of this text is identical to the Mark passage. Luke may have had access to the Mark text or a common document. In this passage, there is a relationship between the forgiveness of sins and physical healing. Notice what Jesus says in verse 5. Jesus does not suggest that our sin needs to be forgiven before physical healing can happen, rather that the forgiveness of sins is a bigger deal than physical healing. Read James 5:13-16. Notice again the relationship between forgiveness and healing. How do you notice this relationship in your life and current situation? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Thursday January 19, 2017 - Romans 5:1-5**

The reality is that sometimes we aren’t healed from physical ailments. Our grief never seems to end. The bad things keep happening. Relationships stay broken. How do we find hope in the glory of God and hope in our sufferings? Do you know someone who has been joyful in the midst of difficulty? How do they do that? Can you still feel God’s love and grace when life is a struggle? Read Romans 5:9-11. How does reconciliation to God through Christ give you hope in the most difficult times?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Wednesday January 18, 2017 – 2 Corinthians 1:3-7**

What is all this about the role of comfort? Are we comforted for our own sake? Perhaps in part, but give some thought to the idea of being comforted for the sake of others. Have you ever experienced pain, and then been able to reach out to encourage someone else who finds themselves in a similar situation? What does this passage suggest about the role of community when we find ourselves struggling? If our comfort abounds through Jesus Christ (v.5), does our comfort also abound through the body of Christ, the church?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Friday January 20, 2017 – Matthew 5:1-12**

These are called the Beatitudes. These are tough words of Jesus and might be strange to us. How can we be blessed when we are poor in spirit, when we mourn, when we are persecuted? Where is the good news in this passage? Does this change your perspective about pain and suffering? Where is hope in this passage? Now go back and reflect on the different themes and readings from this week. What connections do you see? How are these passages related? What do you understand differently about yourself, God, and our world?

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