

Week Eight: *The Path of Loyalty*

John 16:32-33

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. To begin your first FIFTEEN of the week, read John 16:32-33. How do you think Jesus' words in verse 32 made his disciples feel?
2. Jesus' disciples likely considered themselves very loyal to him. But after his words in verse 32, they may have felt challenged, hurt and even angry. How do you feel when someone questions your loyalty or even challenges it?
3. What qualities come to mind when you think of loyalty?
4. Those who are most loyal are often extremely committed, almost to a fault. But it's because they are motivated by fear and the need for security. Does that describe you? Why or why not?
5. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, spend some time contemplating who and what you are most loyal to. Are you proud of those loyalties? Then, pray that God would help you most value and be most loyal to who and what he wants for your life.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

6. Do you typically think of loyalty as a good quality to have? Why or why not?
7. When does loyalty often cross the line and become unhealthy or dangerous?
8. Read John 16:32-33 again. Does anything new catch your attention this time?
9. When you have trouble at work, home, or somewhere else, how does it affect your attitude? Do you embrace the difficulty, or do you become negative?
10. One Christian author paraphrases verses 32 and 33 of John 16 like this: "Within an hour you will be running like a bunch of frightened sheep. You say you know who I am. You say you understand that I came from God and that I know all things. But do you know that within an hour's time you will be so confused and so uncertain of what is happening that you will run away and leave Me alone? And yet I'll not be alone. My security won't be threatened in that hour, for the Father is with Me. I say this to you in order that you might know the kind of peace I have. It is not based on what happens, or even on my understanding of what happens, but upon a trust in the One who controls what happens. I say this to you, that in Me you may have peace." Does that paraphrase help you better understand those verses? How does it make you feel?

11. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, ask God to give you the strength and ability to better embrace the difficulty when trouble comes your way. Ask him to remind you of all the ways he has blessed you when you face adversity.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

12. To begin your FIFTEEN for today, read John 16:32-33 again. Then back up a couple of chapters and read John 14:27-29. What questions arise in you as a result of these readings?

13. What do these two passages have to say about peace? What or who is the source of the peace described?

14. In both passages, Jesus says he is the only source of peace that lasts. Why is real peace a result of trust in who Jesus is?

15. What happens if your peace is reliant on your own circumstances and abilities? What happens when things don't go as planned or even fall apart?

16. As you finish your FIFTEEN for today, be honest with yourself about what or who you rely on for peace. Pray that God would help you to continue to trust in his perfect peace. And if you're currently struggling to rely on his peace, ask him to help bring you to a place where you both can and will rely on the peace that only he provides.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

17. To begin your FIFTEEN for today, read John 14:27-29 again. Does anything new catch your attention this time?

18. Think of a time when something or someone you had trusted for peace and comfort failed you. Can you recall the emotions you felt?

19. How did you respond? How did you find peace again?

20. In the moment, when you were suffering and left without peace, did the thought of God being your best and only source of peace enter your mind?

21. It's often our devotion to our tribe (our church, our denomination, our group) that is our guarantee of security. But that doesn't leave much of a role for God in your life. What or who have you been loyal to that has gotten in the way of your loyalty to God?

22. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, spend some time asking God to show you how you can better put your loyalty and trust in him as your ultimate source of peace and joy. Thank him that he is always there for you, reliable, constant and

faithful.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

23. To begin your final FIFTEEN of the week, consider what your life would look like if your true loyalty was to God. How would your life look different?

24. Think again about your own life. When does *your* loyalty often cross the line and become unhealthy or dangerous? Is it happening currently?

25. Do you think God wants you to keep living that way? Or does he have so much better in mind for you?

26. Read Colossians 3:15. What does it have to say about how God wants us to live?

27. If you can trust in the support and protection of God and know that Jesus has already overcome the world's threats, how does that affect your courage to face down any fear?

28. As you finish your FIFTEEN for today, ask God to always remind you of just how good life can be when your true loyalty is to him. Ask him to remind you of the true joy and peace that comes with that. Then, thank him again that he is always there for you and that he never fails you.