

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Faith and Reason

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: How many ways can you answer the question, “Why are the worksheets burning?”

Reading: Romans 1:16-25

Outline:

- I. Suppression of the Truth (v. 18-19)
 - a. We suppress the truth of who God is by our unrighteousness and our tendency to define “God” in our own image or as we see fit.
 - b. “God has given me my body and soul, ... my reason, and all my senses” (Luther), yet we view faith as standing in the way of reason and progress.
 - c. **Q: How has God revealed Himself to us, and how do we suppress that truth?**
- II. Reason-informed Faith (v. 20)
 - a. The more we learn about the universe, the more we admire the God who created it.
 - b. Reason is an *asset* to faith, not a detriment, and we need both.
Q: Why does Paul say that we are “without excuse” (v.20)?
- III. Faith in God’s Revelation (v. 16-17)
 - a. We have living faith and active trust in the message of Christ’s death and resurrection.
 - b. Through faith in what God has revealed about Jesus and what He has done for us, we receive righteousness and the reconciliation and restoration of our relationship with God.
Q: Why do we need God’s revelation as well as reason to have faith in God?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Do you view faith and reason as inherently at odds with one another? As complementary?
- 2) How does God draw you to Himself through both reason and revelation?
- 3) Do you ever feel ashamed of the Gospel? What causes this shame, and what renews your confidence in the Good News?
- 4) Do you ever find yourself believing lies about God instead of truth? How can you recognize suppression of the truth and let the Holy Spirit lead you into all truth?
- 5) How does an integrated view of faith and reason change your perspective? The way you live?

Suggestions for further study:

- Acts 17:1-12 **Q: Why does Paul “reason” with people in the synagogue?**
- Hebrews. 11:1-16 **Q: What does this passage teach us about faith?**
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 **Q: How does the Gospel transcend human wisdom and knowledge?**

Closing Prayer: God we thank You for being our brilliant Creator. Thank you for giving us this life and breath and everything we have. Thank you for giving us our minds to and reason to think through and understand this world. God, as we increase in knowledge, may it all point us to You, the great Creator. Lord, as we look to You, may we see that You have most fully revealed Yourself in Your Son Jesus — who came, went to the cross, and rose again for us. May we trust in His work on our behalf, and walk with You all the days of our lives. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.