

Diving Deeper into Discipleship for January 30, 2022

Pastor Pete Fowler | *All God's Creatures: Animals on the Ark*

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- What kind of "work" is God entrusting you with right now? Be faithful in that, even if it seems small to you.
- Can you remember a time when the peace of God's presence was revealed to you at just the right moment? Is there someone in your life who would benefit from hearing that story?
- Do you tend to lean too heavily on your own understanding? Is there an area of your life where you're struggling to trust the Lord with all your heart?
- Invite the Holy Spirit to give you "life to the full" so that you can flourish and be an avenue of God's desire for flourishing in our world.

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **Acts 10:1-48** | How does Peter's experience here change the definitions of clean/unclean? When Peter is faithful to God's direction regarding this change, what positive outcomes do we see?
- **Isaiah 51:12-16** | According to this passage, why would God's people seek to be sheltered under the "shadow" of God's hand? What dangers are they dealing with?
- **Psalms 1:1-6** | What does this Psalm teach us about being people who flourish?

Weekly Spiritual Practice

January Practice: Simplicity | Simplicity of Self (adapted from *Spiritual Simplicity* by Andrew Huff at friendsjournal.org)

- After one particularly challenging exercise at living simply, here's what I found: my home was physically neat and in order, but I still acted emotionally sloppy. I had consolidated my wardrobe but still held onto my grudges. I organized and curated my boxes but let my judgmental thoughts about others go unexamined. I had dutifully made more room for that of God in my life, only to realize that God isn't looking for extra shelving space in my room. God is looking for open space, yes—but primarily in my mind. Unfortunately, when I began to look at that space, I found it to be largely a messy, tangled, egotistical thought system.
- Material simplicity is the work on our homes, but the work of spiritual simplicity is on ourselves—the burdensome "selves" we carry around in our minds: the greedy self, the vengeful self, the critical self, the egotistical self. These, in a way, are psychological "possessions." And, simplicity is the process of learning to let go of these possessions so that only one remains: the loving self.
- What extra "psychological possessions" are burdening you? Choose one to focus on this week as you seek to simplify your thought life to a single, loving self.