**Notes on Lectionary Readings - 3 to 9 May, 2021.**

**To the Ends of the Earth**

[Extract from Disciplines 2021: Upper Room]

SCRIPTURE OVERVIEW: The Acts passage continues to tell the story of the advance of the gospel. The Psalm is a simple declaration of praise. The two passages from John are linked by their emphasis on the relationship between love and obedience.

**Read Acts 10:44-48.**
**Situation** - The Holy Spirit falls on a group of Gentiles. They believe and are baptized, thus showing God's inclusion of all peoples in the plan of salvation.
**Questions** - When has the Spirit of God brought you to a new understanding?
**Prayer** - All-inclusive God thank you for Your grace demonstrated in Jesus Christ. Thank you for welcoming each of us into Your family. Amen.

**Read Psalm 98.**
**Theme** - All creation will sing to and rejoice in the Lord.
**Questions** - Where have you encountered "a joyful noise" in creation? How do you make a joyful noise in praise of God?
**Prayer** - Creator God and Redeemer, may I never cease to worship you. You are worthy of all my praise. Amen.

**Read 1 John 5:1-6.**
**Situation** - We do not follow God's commandments in order to make God love us. On the contrary, because God has first loved us and we love God in return, we follow God's teachings
**Questions** - When have you considered God's commands as burdensome? When have you found them freeing?
**Prayer** – O God thank you for giving us rules to let us live by and forgiving us when we fail. May we learn to truly delight in Your law. In Jesus name. Amen.

**Read John 15:9-17.**
**Situation** - Jesus provides the model for us, being obedient to his Father out of love.
**Questions** - Are you accustomed to thinking of your relationship with Jesus as a mutual friendship? If so, what does it mean to you to be Jesus' friend?
**Prayer** - Dear Jesus, thank you for being my friend even though I've done nothing to deserve it. I praise you for Your kindness to me. Amen.

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