



Our faith is not just something we check in with on Sundays, our faith is how we live lives of meaning and purpose everyday, if we will learn to notice and respond to how God is moving. But this awareness, like anything worthwhile, takes practice. Which is why a weekly discipleship practice of Reading, Reflecting, and Responding to scripture in the context of community is so important. The following devotions have been written with this practice in mind. Use them with friends or family to help you deepen your experience of faith.

Week: Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Adult and Littles

Read - John 2:1-11

Reflect - Have you ever been to a wedding? Dressed in special clothes, the couple promises to love each other before God and their families. One day, there was a wedding in a city called Cana. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to come. As the people celebrated, the wine ran out. Jesus' mother came to him and told him what had happened. Jesus responded to his mother in a way that sounded a little funny. But, she told the servants to do whatever Jesus said to do. There were six large jars made out of stone. Jesus told the servants to go and fill them with water. The servants filled them to the very top. Jesus told them to take some out and give it to the person in charge of the wedding. The water had become wine and everyone was surprised because it tasted better than the wine that had been served at the beginning of the wedding! This was the very first of Jesus' miracles, and the disciples believed. Did you notice who encouraged Jesus to perform his first miracle? That's right! His mother.

Respond – What good things has a loving adult such as a parent or teacher encouraged you to do? Gather your family or friends together and have a party and serve your favorite juice and give thanks for the encouragement of elders.

- Quantrilla Ard

Adult and Middles (Elementary)

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

Reflect: Do you have a special talent? Something that you are really good at? Now, can you name a special talent of your brother or sister? Your parents or teachers? It's probably safe to say that you don't have all of the talents – gifts – that you mentioned. You might be really good at art or baseball or singing or math. You might be a very kind friend or have a special way with animals. None of us have the same talents and gifts (and thank goodness! It would be boring if we were all rock stars or amazing runners!)

In this letter to the people who live in a city called Corinth, Paul is reminding them that we all have different gifts and talents. It's easy to think that some gifts are more important than others, or that some people are more valued than others because of their jobs or money or titles. But Paul tells us that is not true. God has given each of us special gifts and talents, and when we use them together, we can learn from one another and we become stronger followers of Jesus.

Respond: Make a talent tree. Using a poster board or large sheet of paper, draw a tree. Then cut out leaves or circles to paste on the tree. Have children and adults write their own talents and the talents of others on individual cut-outs. (My gift is xxxx. Joe's gift is xxxx. Beth's gift is xxxxx). After you have "flowered" the tree with your collective gifts, hang it in a place where you will see it frequently. Let it remind you of the beautiful – and varied – gifts in your family.

- Richelle Thompson

Adult and Bigs (Youth)

Read - John 2:1-11

Reflect - Let's be Jesus for a few minutes. You're at a wedding with your mom. You're hanging around, minding your own business, not ready to start your super-serious ministry of redeeming the sins of a whole lot of people. Suddenly your mom tells you there's no wine. If I had answered my mom the way Jesus answered his mom, I would have been in trouble! Mary answered exactly the way my mom would have: she ignored Jesus, and she pressed him into service. Jesus had no choice as a respectful son than to do what she said. The idea of Jesus being a respectful son in order to perform this miracle brings me lots and lots of joy. Every time you follow your parents' directions or wishes, or those of any adult, you are being like Jesus. Who knows what miracles you'll perform in the process?

Respond - Follow directions when they're given to you or anticipate the needs of your family or loved elders. Notice what happens when you do this even when – actually, especially when – you don't want to. What can you learn after a week? Talk about it with your family.

-Miriam McKenney

Adult and Adult

Read: 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11

Reflect: Paul revealed to the people of Corinth that they each held spiritual gifts that were given by the Spirit. He wanted them to know that although each of them held a different spiritual gift, each of those gifts came from the same source. These gifts were given to each of the people of Corinth and also to us so that we could wield them for good and help each other. Some people know their gifts straight away. Some people take many years to finally realize a gift. Regardless of the time it takes to own a gift, we each have them and we can each use our gifts to offer a revolutionary hope to the world.

While one person has immense faith another is great at articulating prayers. While one person can travel to advocate on behalf of families separated at the border, another person can work to organize clothes and necessities for the community. Imago Dei is alive in each of us because God is the great gift giver. We are well past Christmas when some of us receive gifts, but now is the time to share our inner gifts. Now is the time to share radical hope and immense grace. Are you ready to give?

Respond: This week go through your closets or pantry. What do you no longer need? Consider sharing these with families in need that have been driven to your local bus stations or homeless shelters. Does your church have a yard sale coming up where you can donate your gently used items? If you have a family, make it a family project. Retain the faith of a giving heart.

- Carolina Hinojosa-Cisneros

Faith-at-Home is a Forma sponsored resource and is managed by Jerusalem Greer. For more information on our authors and this resource visit Forma.church