



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: Ordinary Time, Proper 11

Adult to Littles

Read: Psalm 100

Reflect: God is so good! God made us and loves us faithfully forever. We get to come into God's presence, to be close. When we say thank you, it makes God happy, just like a parent delights in their child's joy. The whole earth praises God!

Respond: How can we say, "thank you" to God? How can we shout for joy? Have a 5-10 minute praise party together. Put on a peppy song and dance, or make a finger painting, or just jump up and down and say, "Yay, God! Thank you for loving us!" Whatever you do, begin by praying, "God, we love you! This is how we thank you for your love today."

--Kristen Kludt

Adult to Middles (Elementary)

Read: Ephesians 2:11-22 (NIV)

Reflect: In this passage, Paul reminds us that we were once separated from God, but because of Jesus' death on the cross, we all have the opportunity to be reconciled to Christ. In Christ, there is no Jew or Gentile, (any non-Jewish person), instead we are one big family. There are people who follow Jesus in different countries that speak different languages, have a different culture, color, and background but we all united because we share a love for Jesus. Jesus is our Shalom; Shalom means peace in Hebrew. Since Jesus died for us, we do not have to earn God's love, his love is freely given to us. Paul wrote a letter to the church in Ephesus, telling them that Jews and Gentiles are no longer divided by their differences; instead, they are united in Christ.

Respond: Draw a picture of people from different backgrounds and cultures to represent the body of Christ. And write your favorite verse from today's passage at the bottom of your picture.

-Faith Brooks

Adult to Bigs (Youth)

Read: 2 Samuel 10:6-12

Reflect: Sometimes in life it feels like enemies surround us. These enemies may actually be people, but they also appear as fear, anger, and social anxiety. Joab, King David's nephew, did not cower when he saw the battle lines being drawn, but instead approached them with courage—trusting the Lord to do what was good, and depending on his friends for help. He reorganized the warriors into two squads. He led one and sent the other with his brother so they could be protected. What a joy it is to know we are not alone in facing the trials of life. God designed us to live in community, to encourage each other in our faith, and to stand together when the world feels like it is closing in. Who are the people you count on when facing challenges? What in your life is worth fighting for?

Respond: Think about your friends. Who might feel like they are losing a battle and could use some back up? Make a plan for how you will support this friend this week.

Are you feeling lonely, like you don't know whom you could help? Reach out to some friends this week and schedule some time to see each other face to face (not through screens of social media feeds). Physical presence in the lives of our friends is a beautiful offering and heals our loneliness in ways screen interactions can't.

- Chara Donahue

Adult to Adult

Read 2: Samuel 9:1-13

Reflect: The story of David and Mephibosheth teaches us a valuable lesson regarding God's desire for how we treat others. In this passage of the Hebrew Scriptures, we see that David didn't simply show kindness to Mephibosheth, (which for many of us would have been more than enough,) but David showed the kindness of God. The kind of kindness, and love, that is shown toward us in that, "...while we still were sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5:8). Thankfully (if we are honest about our condition) God's kindness isn't given only to those who deserve it. God's kindness is given to everyone, because of God's great love. Of God's great mercy. If we are to live Jesus-center lives, then don't we have a responsibility to show God's kindness to those we encounter, whether they "deserve" it or not?

Respond: In what way can you show God's kindness to someone who'd least expect it?

Sometimes, we find it difficult to show kindness. Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen you to love, bless, do good, and pray for those whom you feel are undeserving of kindness.

- Aretha Grant

***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***