



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 13

Adult to Littles

Read: Mark 8:1-10

Reflect: Jesus takes a small offering of bread and fish, thanks God for it, and multiplies it to feed thousands of people. Any offering we give to God—of time, money, food, or kindness—is pleasing. God multiplies our small gifts in ways we can't imagine!

Respond: What small offering do you have to give to God today? Everyone has more than enough of something. Maybe it's food for a food bank, or money for a non-profit. Maybe it's muffins for a neighbor or a smile for someone you pass in the street. Choose one small offering to give today. Pray and trust that God will multiply it!

--Kristen Kludt

Adult to Middles (Elementary)

Read: Psalms 34:1-8 (NLT)

Reflect: Psalm 34 is one of my favorite chapters in the bible. Have you ever asked for help? Do you remember how you felt when you received help? I think it's easy to miss how God helps us because we can't "see" God. Did you know that God works through people to bless you and to help you? Verse 4 is my favorite verse from this chapter, it is a reminder that God will find a way to answer us and deliver us from every fear. Now think back to the time you needed help, how did God meet your need? Who was it that God sent to help you?

Respond: This week try to find someone who needs help, and offer to meet their need. Remember that no task is insignificant. You may help others with simple things like washing dishes, or studying with a friend

-Faith Brooks

Adult to Bigs (Youth)

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

Reflect: Did you know that you make the church stronger? If you are a believer in Christ you have been empowered by the Holy Spirit and that same Spirit has gifted you to serve. Paul instructed the Corinthians to desire gifts, but he also warns them that without love the gifts are nothing (see 1 Corinthians 13:2). As parts of the body of Christ, we seek the highest good for all when we use and work with our gifts. Do you know what your gift is? You don't have to be a certain age for it to present itself, all you need is the Holy Spirit indwelling you. Scripture has lists of gifts in various places: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 4-11, and Ephesians 4:11 that can help you identify the gift in you.

Respond: Take time to look through scriptures' lists of gifts and see if any of them resonate with you. Then ask some spiritually mature adults or friends to help you assess your gifting. Think about where you feel spiritually energized, what makes you feel like you are doing what you were created to do, and where you see your help being most effective. Once you may have settled on a couple areas you might be gifted in, try to have a conversation with someone who has been using and walking with that gift for a long time. How did they know that was their gift, and how did they grow?

- Chara Donahue

Adult to Adult

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

Reflect: The Bible declares that the body of Christ is made up of many members. Each of us is a member, a part, of that body. God placed gifts and abilities in the body of Christ such as apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues, among many others. Although not everyone possesses these gifts or abilities, they edify all of us. God desires that we not only identify our gifts but to use them for the building of the church, the body of Christ. When we freely submit our wills to the Holy Spirit, God's love manifests in us through these gifts. Our gifts are not for us to hoard. No, they are supposed to be used to help others within the body of Christ. It is essential to understand that none of these gifts or abilities is more important than the others. All the gifts work in tandem, so there's no dissension within the church. Let's make sure we are using our abilities to honor God and bless the body of Christ.

Respond: Have you identified your spiritual abilities? If so, how are you using them? If you have not yet identified your abilities, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what they are and how to use them to edify the body of Christ. You may even look for a Spiritual Gifts Inventory to take online, or start a class at your church to explore these gifts.

- 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***