



## Daily Devotionals for July 21-26

### Monday, July 21 Read Psalm 16

One way to define a 'god' is to say it is something or someone with a claim to the best of your time, talents and energy. What are the "gods" in your life and where does the one God fall in that list? Look closely at vv.2 and 11. Do these truly reflect your understanding of God and how is that understanding made evident in your life?

### Tuesday July 22 Read Proverbs 28:4-9

The proverb declares that it is only with God that our lives make sense and have proper direction. Anything else is fruitless and, ultimately, insulting to God! According to this passage, what are the prerequisites for God to hear and respond to us? Why?

### Wednesday, July 23 Read Romans 8:15b-17; 26-28

How does God make himself and his love for you known? Take a moment to list some of the evidence you have experienced. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in keeping us connected to God and giving us confidence for living? What consolation does this passage give you when you feel you are not close to God?

### Thursday, July 24 Read Matthew 19:16-30

What Jesus asked of the young man in this passage was absolute and total commitment. As the disciples rightly noted, few if any of us are able to do that all the time! What comfort does Jesus offer (see v. 26) in our struggle to be faithful? What role does a life of prayer play in this?

### Friday, July 25 Read Colossians 4:2-6

Reflect on your reading from yesterday as you read Paul's guidance for the Colossians. How does "devoting" ourselves to prayer equip us for the tasks of proclaiming the gospel, being full of wisdom and gracious to all?

What would a *devotion* to prayer look like in terms of time, attitude and practical application in your own life?

### Saturday, July 26 Read Psalm 113

Read this through several times and share it with God as your own personal prayer today. Is this an accurate understanding of God's workings in your own life and experience? Why or why not? Discuss this with God today and be sure to listen for His answer!

#### Sermon Notes from 7/20/25

#### "The Casual Reply"

- ☐ 1. Prayer is about letting God shape us into the people He wants us to be

*"For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ"-Romans 8:15-17*

- ☐ 2. Prayer is how we begin to let go and let God!

*"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."- Romans 8:26-27*

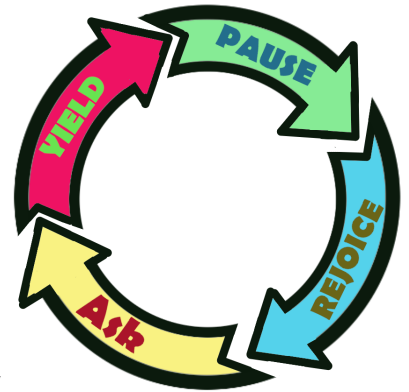


## **"The Casual Reply"** Week of July 20, 2025

### **Small Group Study & Discussion Guide**

#### **Getting Started:**

1. Have someone read Psalm 16. Note the following to the class: "One way to define a 'god' is to say it is something or someone with a claim to the best of your time, talents and energy." Discuss the following:
  - *What are the "gods" that make these demands on our lives? If we are honest (think about calendar, checkbook, etc.), where does the one God fall in that list?*
  - *Look closely at vv.2 and 11. Do these truly reflect your understanding of God and how is that understanding made evident in your life?*



2. Read Proverbs 28:4-9. Share: "The proverb declares that it is only with God that our lives make sense and have proper direction. Anything else is fruitless and, ultimately, insulting to God! Discuss the following question with your group:

- *According to this passage, what are the prerequisites for God to hear and respond to us? Why?*

#### **Going Deeper:**

1. Read Matthew 19:16-30 Consider this point with the group: What Jesus asked of the young man in this passage was absolute and total commitment. As the disciples rightly noted, few if any of us are able to do that all the time! Discuss how you might answer these questions:
  - *What comfort does Jesus offer (see v. 26) in our struggle to be faithful? What role does a life of prayer play in this?*
2. Read Romans 8:15b-17; 26-28 (if possible read it in The Message paraphrase version as well– see [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) to download the passage). Discuss the following questions:
  - *How does God make himself and his love for you known? Share with the group some of the evidence you have experienced.*
  - *What is the role of the Holy Spirit in keeping us connected to God and giving us confidence for living? What consolation does this passage give you when you feel you are not close to God?*
3. Discuss these questions from the sermon notes for last Sunday:
  - *What does it mean to say that prayer is about letting God shape us into the people He wants us to be. How would you explain this to someone who has little or no prayer life?*
  - *How does (or can) prayer help us to "let go and let God!"*

#### **Taking it With You:**

Before your group time ends, discuss ways the members of your group have improved or can improve their prayer life. How can you encourage one another to be more faithful, hopeful and bold in your prayers and are there ways you can hold one another accountable to growing a stronger prayer life?