



## Devotionals & Small Group Guide

"Face Time"

April 7, 2024

### Weekly Devotionals for April 8-13

#### **Monday, April 8 Read Psalm 16**

A relationship is, in a sense, a marking out of time, focus and energy especially for another. Note how vv.1-4 declare the importance of the Lord to the psalmist while vv.5-6 & 11 celebrate the boundaries God sets. What kind of loving boundaries does God set for you and how do you clear loving space for God? Reread this passage and discuss its meaning with God in prayer.

#### **Tuesday, April 9 Read Jeremiah 29:10-14**

Part of the horror of the exile in Babylon was a sense that they would be separated not just from their home but also from God. Conversely the joy at the end was of a renewing of a relationship. In what ways is your prayer life like connecting with a friend from whom you've been separated? How is it not like that? Why? Prayerfully reflect on v.13. Specifically, how do you search for God and why is that important?

#### **Wednesday, April 10 Read Luke 11:1-4**

Our experience with what we term "The Lord's Prayer" often suffers from an excess of familiarity and formality. Read this through again and think of it as a conversation with a close and loving parent. What does this prayer tell you about the God to whom you are praying? Why do you sense that? How does such a prayer help you have an encounter with God?

#### **Thursday, April 11 Read Hebrews 1:1-4**

Setting aside the poetic aspects of this passage, reflect on some of the ways God speaks to you through what you know and what you have experienced through Jesus. Why is it easier for someone with whom we have a loving relationship to tell us the truth and from whom we are willing to hear encouragement or criticism? Is your relationship with Jesus like that? Why or why not? Have you talked to Him about it?

#### **Friday, April 12 Read 2 Corinthians 3:12-18**

The veil with which Moses covered his face (Exodus 34:35) was literal but it also serves as a metaphor for our inability and unwillingness to face God. What "veils" do we put between ourselves and a real, transformative experience with God? How does a real encounter with Jesus change us and what do such real encounters look like for you?

#### **Saturday, April 13 Read Psalm 27**

In a prayerful attitude, read each verse of this psalm slowly, reflecting on its personal meaning and application for you and your life. At the end of each verse pause and listen for how God might be responding. When finished, read it all through one more time as a personal prayer. Is there a particular part of this passage that spoke to you? Why? How might this impact be a way God is encountering you personally?



## Small Group Discussion & Study Guide

### **“Face Time” Searching for an encounter with God**

#### **Part I: Do I Have the Right Number?**

- 1. Read Psalm 16** Share: “A relationship is, in a sense, a marking out of time, focus and energy especially for another. Note how vv.1-4 declare the importance of the Lord to the psalmist while vv.5-6 & 11 celebrate the boundaries God sets.” **Discuss the following:**
  - Why are boundaries important in any relationship? What kind of boundaries nurture a relationship and where might the lack of them cause conflict?
  - What kind of loving boundaries does God set for you and how do you clear loving space for God?
- 2. What are some ways you can listen for God’s responses to your prayers and in what ways does He speak to you? Look at Sermon note #1 and discuss the following:**
  - Is your prayer life more like “OK Google...” or a “personal face time.” What’s the difference and why? Read Jeremiah 29:13 out loud.
  - What of you do you bring to your prayer time with God? How do you seek the Lord?

#### **Part II. Can You Hear Me Now?**

- 1. Read Luke 11:1-9** and think of it as a conversation with a close and loving parent. Discuss the following:
  - What does this prayer tell you about the God to whom you are praying?
  - Why do you sense that? How does such a prayer help you have an encounter with God?
  - Look at Sermon note #2A and the Psalm 16 passages with it. Do you agree with the Psalmist’s last sentence? Why or why not?
  - How would you define or describe our ‘in-born desire for God?’
- 2. Read 2 Corinthians 3:12-18** Share: “The veil with which Moses covered his face (Exodus 34:35) was literal but it also serves as a metaphor for our inability and unwillingness to face God.” Discuss the following:
  - Look at sermon note #2B and the verse from the Lord’s Prayer that goes with it. How does such a prayer re-focus our priorities? Why?
  - What “veils” do we put between ourselves and a real, transformative experience with God? How does a real encounter with Jesus change us and what do such real encounters look like for you?

#### **Sermon Notes from 4/7/24**

**“Face Time”**

**Luke 11:1-9**

#### **1. Prayer is a gift designed to create a personal encounter with God.**

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you.”-Jeremiah 29:11-12*

#### **2. Regular prayer: A. Cultivates our in-born desire for God**

*“Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.” -Psalm 16:1-2*

#### **B. Refocuses us on God-priorities**

*“So he said to them, “When you pray, say: Father, may your name be revered as holy. May your kingdom come.” -Luke 11:2*

#### **C. Transforms us.**

*“And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.” -2 Corinthians 3:18*