

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

MAY 23 - 27, 2022

**COMMON**  
**QUESTIONS**  
**ABOUT JESUS** APR 24 - MAY 29

# MONDAY

Read [John 15:15](#)

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**Is true friendship with God possible? Is there evidence for this possibility?**

Yes, there is evidence in the Bible. Enoch and Noah “*walked with God.*” Abraham is described as God’s friend. Moses talked with God “*face to face.*” David was described by God via Samuel as “*a man after God’s own heart.*” Many of the psalms give testimony to the realness of David’s friendship with God. And, of course, Jesus modeled this friendship with His Father.

Second, there are plenty of testimonies in the books of men and women who had a meaningful relationship with God. Three recent examples are in the writings of Philip Yancey, Craig and Medine Keener, and Rachel Held Evans. Philip Yancey’s latest book, *Where the Light Fell*, describes in some detail his lifetime relationship with God—its ups and downs. He tells of both the hard times and the good. Without such transparency and honesty, it is hard for us to relate because we have such testimonies as well.

As a young atheist, Craig Keener was accosted by some zealous apologists for the gospel. He considered their arguments to be “lame.” But later upon considering the conversation, he found himself asking

God for the “real story.” And God’s answer was to show up in a very convincing way. His life has not been the same since.

Rachel Held Evans authored six books asking hard questions of God and His Church. She credits women in the Bible and in her life with bringing God’s story to her and other women. She brings a woman’s perspective to the issue of having a meaningful relationship with God.

Third, God has placed us in a community of people with varying degrees of friendship with Him. We are learning from one another how to dive deeper into eternal friendship with God. After three years of being together, Jesus told His disciples, *“I am no longer calling you servants, but friends, because I have taught you everything you need to live this life”* (John 15:15).

## QUESTIONS

Our relationship with God is central to everything else in our lives. What evidence do you consider valid in showing the possibility of knowing God and having a relationship with Him? Have you ever experienced such evidence yourself personally?

## PRAYERS: FOR HIS CHILDREN

Pray for new partnerships to further the mission of For His Children. We pray to form new relationships with churches, organizations, and individuals to continue providing life-changing care to vulnerable children and young adults in Ecuador. We pray each one comes to know God personally and experience His great love for them.

# TUESDAY

Read 1 John 1:1-4

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## Why have a relationship with God?

Even with the evidence for the possibility of a relationship with God, it still requires faith to believe the truth of it. So why go to the trouble? Here are three reasons:

First, look at the trouble God went to have a relationship with us. Were we worth it? God thought so. According to Gregory Boyle, “Kinship is God’s only thirst.” David had a corresponding thirst for God: *“As the deer panteth for water, so my soul pants for Thee”* (Psalm 42:1). *“God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn it, but to save it”* (John 3:17). It took over thirty years for Jesus to accomplish His Father’s wishes—incarnation to resurrection—to open the way for mankind to have a relationship with God.

Second, relationship with God is what we are meant for. It’s the whole reason we were made and why we were redeemed. The angel pronounced this gospel to be for *“all people”* (Luke 2:10).

Third, a relationship with God is the central core to life. We are most whole in that relationship. We are least whole when we are not in it. Having a relationship with Jesus centers us. Jesus said, *“This is life*

*eternal, to know God and Jesus Christ, whom He sent” (John 17:3).*  
The relationship we’re talking about is referred to as *koinonia* or fellowship, friendship, abiding, conversational prayer, communion.

The Apostle John started his first general letter with these words:  
*“That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full” (1 John 1:3-4).*

## QUESTIONS

What has been your experience of being in this relationship with God?  
Is it as advertised?

## PRAYERS: QUITO

The home in Quito has room to welcome several more vulnerable children to FHC. These are children who need loving care, therapy, and education due to neglect, abuse or abandonment. Pray that vulnerable children in Ecuador in need of this personalized care would be able to join us very soon!

# WEDNESDAY

Read **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

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## How does one begin a meaningful relationship with God?

God has done everything, is doing everything, and will do everything to establish and maintain a relationship with us. In other words, God does all the “heavy lifting.” What, then, is our part, and how do we help make a genuine relationship with God happen? Here are three beginning pointers:

First, “*Without **faith** it is impossible to please God,*” and “[God] is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6, emphasis added). We do not know how the lady with the issue of blood came by the faith to touch the hem of Jesus’ garment. But somehow, she got it, was healed, and heard Jesus say, “*Your faith has healed you*” (Mark 5:34). Elsewhere, Jesus said that even faith as small as a mustard seed will move mountains (Matthew 17:20-21). When I first came to Jesus, I wasn’t sure I had but the shadow of a mustard seed’s faith, but it worked. We are told that “*faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*” (Romans 10:17).

Second, “*the **Scriptures** are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God*” (2 Timothy 3:17, emphasis added). The Scriptures state that the person who meditates on it and hides it in his or her heart will

have success in keeping to God's path. The more familiar a person is with God's Word, the more the Holy Spirit can bring to mind those words which speak to us when we need them.

Third, the Bible was a dead book to me with just lifeless words until the **Holy Spirit** made them come alive. It makes sense, since the Holy Spirit is considered the Author of the Bible, inspiring those who wrote it. Zechariah reported that it is "*Not by might nor power, but by [God's] Spirit*" that things get done (4:6). We can be assured that faith, the Scriptures, and the Spirit are all gifts from God. God's grace is "*shed abroad in our hearts*" (Romans 5:5) for the express purpose of our having a relationship with Him.

## QUESTIONS

How did God use faith, the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit in your life to start your friendship with Him?

## PRAYERS: LATACUNGA

At the home in Latacunga, several young adults have passed the age when they can be adopted and FHC will be their forever family. Pray that they continue to grow and learn through the personalized care they're receiving. Also, pray for them to know they are loved by their family at FHC and more importantly by their Heavenly Father.

# THURSDAY

Read **Luke 18:1-8**

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## How to keep the communication lines open.

Maybe this is what Paul was talking about when he said, “*Pray without ceasing*” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Jesus told the parable of the widow who kept pestering the unjust judge to do the right thing by her. Finally, to get her off his back, the judge granted her request. Then Jesus asked rhetorically, “*If this poor example of a public servant could be persuaded to help this lady, how much more will our Father in Heaven do us right, when we ask Him to*” (Luke 18:7 paraphrased). Jesus told this story to inspire His disciples to “*always pray and never lose heart*” (v. 1).

First, **pray**. Jesus said during His Sermon on the Mount, “*Ask and you will receive.*” During His Passover message to His disciples, He said, “*Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full*” (John 16:24). We have questions. We have anxious moments. We have issues. Talk to Him about all of them—everything. If we confess our faults to Him, He has promised to make us clean from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Second, **write God a letter**. Sometimes it is hard to verbalize our thoughts. This is how my relationship to God got started. I rescued an old business-size envelope from the trash and wrote out how I felt. It wasn't pretty, but it was real. I told Him that I was His if He wanted



me. That's why the verse in John 6:37 became so special to me: *"The one who comes to Me, I will never drive away."* There are also times when words just won't come—only groans (Romans 8:26). God understands our groans.

By the way, **journaling** by writing a page note to God daily is a good way to keep the communication lines open and moving.

Third, learning to **hear God's voice** is an important trait of His sheep. *"My sheep listen to My voice, I know them, and they follow Me"* (John 10:27). Isaiah 30:21 says, *"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'"*

## QUESTIONS

What steps do you take to keep the lines of communication open between you and God? Is it working?

## PRAYERS: ECUADOR

Pray for the children in Ecuador who are without a loving family or are in unsafe home environments. These are vulnerable children experiencing trauma who need to be removed from their homes and offered life-changing care. Pray for these vulnerable children and young adults in Ecuador; pray that they would receive protection and love.

# FRIDAY

Read **Matthew 7:7; James 4:6; John 15:10**

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## What is at the heart of a relationship with God?

First, a **seeking heart is a finding heart** (Matthew 7:7; Jeremiah 29:13). To seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness is a heart taken care of by God (Matthew 6:33). To hunger and thirst for righteousness is a heart filling up to overflowing with righteousness (Matthew 5:16). To set one's heart to seek God (2 Chronicles 12:14) is to perform for an audience of One (John 7:18).

Second, a **humble heart is a grace-filled heart** (James 4:6). God resists the proud, but He gives grace to humble people. Here is a basic principle of God's universe—grace gravitates toward humility. Need grace? Try humility. Humility requires trust in God, that He will not hurt us in our vulnerable honesty. Then, having experienced God's grace, we are much more likely to show grace to others who need as much as we do.

Third, an **obedient heart reveals a loving heart** (John 14:21, 23; 15:10). All of this is God's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes (Mark 12:10-11; Psalm 118:23). Wednesday, August 21, 1963, Billy Graham spoke on the subject of "a new heart." Going in to the Los Angeles Coliseum, I thought, "What does heart have to do with it?" Coming out, having a heart of stone replaced by a heart of flesh (Jeremiah 32:39), I began to realize what is at the center of a relationship with God.

It's an eternal proposition. It'll take you over, and won't let up. It happens in different ways to different folks. In my case, what a difference that day made in my life!

## QUESTIONS

Have you found Jesus to be enough? More than enough? Much more than enough? HE IS.

## PRAYERS: FOREVER FAMILY FOR ALEX

Pray for Alex,\* a young man who has been with FHC since he was a toddler. He is approaching his 16th birthday in October, the age when adoption within Ecuador is no longer possible. Please pray that a family comes forward to start the adoption process in the next few months.

*\*Name has been changed to protect his privacy.*

## Sources

- Craig S. and Medine Keener, *Impossible Love: The True Story of an African Civil War, Miracles and Hope Against All Odds* (Minneapolis: Chosen, 2016).
- Gregory Boyle, *The Whole Language: The Power of Extravagant Tenderness* (New York: Avid Reader Press, 2021).
- Philip Yancy, *Where the Light Fell: A Memoir* (New York: Convergent Books, 2021).
- Rachel Held Evans, *Wholehearted Faith* (New York: HarperOne, 2021).



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