

FAITH 5

DEEPENING YOUR FAITH AND STRENGTHENING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH SHARING, BIBLE STUDY, PRAYER, AND BLESSING

The term “disciple” means student. We use that term to describe followers of Christ because it recognizes that the Christian faith is a life-long process of learning and growing in understanding, and in faithfulness to Jesus Christ our Lord. One cannot passively receive faith, or have a close relationship with God without nurturing these things.

This year, Prince of Peace will be equipping members and friends to deepen their discipleship by adopting a daily practice in your home with your children, spouse, parents, or friends, called “*Faith 5*.” The more you make the *Faith 5* a regular practice in your life, the more you will deepen your understanding of the Bible, strengthen the faith lives of your loved ones, and get more out of Sunday worship. You will become a more mature disciple.

The steps are designed to be done with others. If you live alone, however, you can do this on the phone with a friend, or by yourself. You are encouraged to write down notes on the weekly handout or in a journal. **If you are doing the exercises with very young children, try picking out one or two verses, providing the answers to the questions for discussion, and focusing on the sharing, praying, and blessing times.**

Remember it takes several weeks for something to become a habit. But if you make the *Faith 5* a part of your days, the discipleship ritual can become a very special part of your children’s routine, and/or a valuable way to strengthen your relationships. Although this is designed for a daily practice, any time during the week that you can give to this will be beneficial. If you are looking for a good study Bible to help you with this process, Pastor Elizabeth recommends the [Harper Collins Study Bible](#) in the New Revised Standard Version. It has useful introductions to each book explaining context and themes, as well as helpful footnotes.

The Five *Faith 5* steps are:

- 1) **Share**- Gather to share the highs and lows of your day honestly, and lovingly.
- 2) **Read**- Each week you will be given two Scripture lessons. Read both, or pick one to focus on for the week. Read the text every day. The Spirit will enable you to develop deeper understanding each day if you open yourself to her work.
- 3) **Discuss**- Each day of the week you will have suggested questions to help you contemplate the word of God to you in the text. Discuss the answers together. Practice relating your highs and lows to God’s word. What might God be saying to your situation through the text?
- 4) **Pray**- Practice simple prayers with your children or take turns praying with your spouse/parent/friend. Offer thanks for the highs and ask for the Holy Spirit’s help for your lows.
- 5) **Bless**- Mark one another with the sign of the cross and bless one another with a simple blessing, “You are beloved to God. May you feel Christ with you today and always.”

Faith 5 Worksheet

Weekly Scripture lessons:

For:

Note: The following are the questions for the Bible study portion of the Faith 5 practice. Each time you gather, be sure to follow all five steps, as described below, and in more detail on the first page. If the passage is too difficult for children to understand, try to isolate a verse or two to consider, or talk about how the Spirit leads us into greater understanding over time.

Monday: After sharing highs and lows, have someone read the Scripture lesson(s). Listen carefully as he/she reads. Do any words or phrases leap out at you? Pause for a minute, and then have someone else read the text again. Why do you think those phrases resonated with you? Discuss and follow with prayer time and blessing.

Tuesday: After sharing highs and lows, have someone read the Scripture lesson(s). Can you tell what kind of text this is (i.e. a letter, a gospel, history, a psalm, a parable etc.)? Who are the characters mentioned (if any)? In your study Bible, see if you can find out who most likely wrote the text, and who the target audience was. How does knowing this affect your understanding of the text (if at all)? Discuss and follow with prayer time and blessing.

Wednesday: After sharing highs and lows, read the text(s) again. Can you think of an example of a behavior or circumstances or belief today that is similar to the one being addressed in the text? What might the Holy Spirit have to say about that? Discuss and follow with prayer time and blessing.

Thursday: After sharing highs and lows, read the text(s) again. What is God's lesson for you this week in this text? Discuss and follow with prayer time and blessing.

Friday: After sharing highs and lows, read the text(s) again. If God is calling you to change your behavior, how might you begin to do this? If God is calling you to change how you see yourself, others, the world, or God, how can you begin to embrace this change? Discuss and follow with prayer time and blessing.

Saturday: After sharing highs and lows, read the text(s) again. Do you still hear in it what you heard the first time you read it? Share any additional comments or observations in your mind and heart from sharing and studying this text with your loved ones this week. Follow with prayer time and blessing.

Notes: