

• PRAYER •
**BIBLICAL
COMMUNITY**
• GUIDE •

Introduction

Prayer is a gift from the Lord and an invitation to properly orient our hearts to the Lord as our loving heavenly Father. As we walk through life, aligning our minds with the truth of God's Word (biblical literacy), prayer moves our hearts into alignment with him. Our alignment with him based on God's word creates the foundation for our biblical community (to follow Jesus with others who truly know and love us). Our personal prayers can spring into community prayers as we share what God is doing in our lives with those around us. Our hope is that our biblical community would be deepened through prayer.

Whether our prayers are confession of our brokenness or praise for God's provision, God meets us in our prayers with all his love, compassion, and grace through our faith in Jesus Christ. As you open this prayer guide each day, I hope you will find help to confidently cry out to the Lord because of the perfect work and unquenchable love of Jesus Christ. I also pray that you will be reminded of your deep need for Jesus Christ that has been fully met in his grace and kindness toward you.

Please do not miss the "Family Devotion Guide" in the back of the prayer guide. The "Family Devotion Guide" provides a wonderful way for parents and kids to interact around the key biblical principles related to biblical community. The guides are easy to follow, full of great ideas, and a perfect way to engage your family for the sake of biblical community in your own home.

Every day this month, open the gift of prayer and respond to the invitation to know and follow Jesus Christ.



Kevin Ueckert
Lead Pastor

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August 29

Week One

Hide No More

by Mitzi Mayfield

SCRIPTURE

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loin cloths for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. So the Lord God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard You in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

Genesis 3:7-10

DEVOTIONAL

I grew up going to church and, over the years, have experienced various highs and lows in my walk with the Lord. I can recall seasons where I was growing and maturing as a Christian, seasons where I felt stagnant and seasons where I was completely rebellious. I thought, "If God gave grades, I'd probably be 'average.'"

However, I've always known I was "above average" in recognizing the sin in other people's lives. That sinful habit, along with my spiritual gift of encouragement, has landed me in Bible studies, small groups and ministries where I genuinely encouraged others to admit their sin, confess and repent, while I was either in denial or actively hiding my own sin.

But I have a new life in Christ! Just like God called out to Adam "Where are you?" he has called out to me, and I've finally listened. I have made the choice to hide no more. I am experiencing the joy and freedom that is possible by admitting my sin and my absolute dependence on him.

PRAYER FOCUS

Ask God to give you the desire to honestly look at the sin in your life.

PERSONAL PRAYER

God, thank you for loving me even in my sin. Thank you for calling out to me and pursuing me. Give me the humility I need to admit my sin and the confidence in you to hide no more.



Mitzi and her husband, Chuck have been members of FBG for six years. They have two married children and one grandson.

NOTES

Admit Sin and its Damages

by Ron Clark

SCRIPTURE

When I kept silent, my bones became brittle from my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy on me; my strength was drained as in the summer's heat. Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You took away the guilt of my sin.

Psalm 32:3–5

DEVOTIONAL

Admit my sin. Those words can stir fear as we are prone to hide our sin. But, as the verse says, our very vitality is weakened by our lack of admission of our sin to God. When we make the admission of our sin, we experience relief from carrying our guilt and our lies to God and those around us.

When I admitted my addiction to alcohol for the first time, I experienced a beautiful freedom in my admission that I could not manage or control my drinking. That admission was the first of many admissions, but it was the touchstone to building an honest and open relationship with God and others. My admission was no more than agreeing with God about the truth of my actions. As unconfessed sin grew, the consequences grew as well. My admission did not negate there being consequences, but it did place those consequences in the biblical perspective of being trained and not punished.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the FBG family to be open to hearing and confessing sin in Christ's love and grace.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, I pray that your church will act and experience the grace and freedom of admission of sin. I pray that all who read this will look at our own hearts and ask if and where we have unconfessed sin and urgently confess that sin to you.

Ron and his wife Valerie have been married for 28 years and have three grown children. They have been at FBG since 2017.

NOTES

Admit Powerlessness

by Valerie Clark

SCRIPTURE

For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is no ability to do it.

Romans 7:18

DEVOTIONAL

I first heard of admitting powerlessness in a traditional 12-step program. There they suggested that I make such an admission over my habitual sin. This did not seem so difficult since I **felt** helpless and devastated over the results of my actions. The feeling of despair assisted greatly in my initial admission. Yet, after some time had passed, I did not **feel** so powerless. My life was easier and happier, and my understanding of powerlessness needed to change. I prayed the Lord would teach me and give me understanding.

In time the Lord revealed to me in the Bible the origin of my sin nature, as well as knowing that after salvation I still have a sin nature called “the flesh.” This nature is hostile toward God. It is at war with the Creator of the universe. It seeks a glory that is not its own. It craves and is never satisfied. I was born this way. This sin nature is at the very heart of me. I have a problem much bigger than I can solve. I need a heart change, and I of myself am powerless to do that. Behavior modification is not going to work here!

In light of God’s truth, my admission of powerlessness was a joy. I was agreeing with the God I loved about my heart’s condition, the sin nature I had inherited through Adam’s fall. I then knew that I sinned because I was a sinner, and I was going to go on offending a holy God in the flesh unless help intervened.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the FBG family to have eyes to see and ears to hear the truth about our hearts' need and condition before a holy God and to admit that we alone cannot change what is broken in us.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, thank you that you reveal yourself and your ways in the Bible. I confess that I am powerless over my sin nature and that apart from your divine intervention, I am unable to stand before you blameless. Thank you that you have made a way to bring us back to yourself and you intend to clean us up fully for our good and your glory.



Valerie and her husband Ron have lived in Georgetown for several years. They are originally from Austin. They have been attending FBG since 2017 and became members in 2021. They have been married for 28 years and have three grown children.

NOTES

Admit Your Need for Others

By Cody Schwertner

SCRIPTURE

One who isolates himself pursues selfish desires; he rebels against all sound judgment.

Proverbs 18:1

DEVOTIONAL

In all my years of growing up in the church and into adulthood, the dangers we are warned about in Proverbs 18:1 about isolation were never a focus nor a concern of mine. My walk with Christ was my own and involving others in it beyond the surface was not something I wanted or saw a need for. It wasn't until my struggle with alcoholism as a young adult that I became willing to step out of my comfort zone and get help.

Early in my recovery, I was only able to stay sober with the help of others who had walked the road ahead of me. God placed these individuals in my life through Christian discipleship ministries like Re:generation. I learned how to be accountable to others and lean on others when I struggled. I learned how to serve others and not be consumed with myself and my needs. Learning to live sober and how to be a husband early in my marriage was difficult. I could not have made it through on my own. Isolation kept me trapped in my addiction for too long.

Today my walk with the Lord and the health of my recovery depends on staying connected to others.

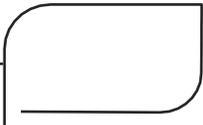
Today I have relationships built with other Christian men that hold me accountable, encourage me and give me the opportunity to do the same for them. We meet regularly, and I can call upon any of them at any hour. I share openly about my struggles and it's not so scary anymore. I know today that I need others for my own recovery and for my walk with the Lord to grow. God uses others in my life in ways I could have never foreseen years ago when I was isolated and stuck in my sin.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you in connecting with others at FBG through a small group or the Re:generation discipleship ministry. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guard you against isolation.

PERSONAL PRAYER

God, give me the courage and lead me to connect with others at FBG to protect myself from my sinful desires. Use these connections to grow my walk with you and my fight against my sin. Guard me against my tendency to hide from others when I need help the most. I pray our FBG family develops these connections so you can do your mighty work to bless our church, community, and beyond.



Cody and his wife Leslie, along with their four children, have been at FBG for five years. Cody and family live in Liberty Hill, and he works as an operations manager for an electric utility in Austin.

NOTES

Believe God and Be Restored

by Amy Norton

SCRIPTURE

My soul, praise the Lord, and do not forget all His benefits. He forgives all your sin; He heals all your diseases. He redeems your life from the Pit; He crowns you with faithful love and compassion. He satisfies you with goodness; your youth is renewed like the eagle.

Psalm 103:2–5

DEVOTIONAL

Believe. Trust. Restore. It is only through believing and trusting the Lord that we are restored. It can be hard to believe and trust when we have been so broken, tired, and hurt that we just feel like we are in that pit. However, sometimes that is what it takes to remind us of how amazing God's love is and how we can be restored.

I was 21 years old and a bit wild when I gave my life to Christ. I went to an Easter service and heard how Jesus makes all things NEW. I grew up knowing who Jesus was, though I was not aware of that Jesus wanted a relationship with me. I wanted to have a new life in Christ. So, I chose to accept Christ as my Savior and follow him.

Even though I made that choice 25 years ago, there are still many times I feel like I am running on empty. It is simply because I am not taking the time to give it all to God — the good, the bad and the ugly. Jeremiah 29:13 (NASB 95) says, “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.” When I do seek God with my whole heart and believe he will guide me and not falter, he restores me. I have peace.

Though I am recovering from anxiety, I recently sought God with my whole heart, trusting and believing that he would take care of the details of a job change. I was in awe of how perfectly he orchestrated it all. I was overjoyed! I felt restored and ready to take on the world!

PRAYER FOCUS

Believe that God wants to restore you. Believe that he wants all that troubles you and will help you get to the other side of recovery.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me see that I can put all my stuff at your feet. Help me believe and trust you more each day; knowing that all you want to do is restore me. Thank you, Father, for loving me no matter what. Amen.

Amy and Erik have been married for 23 years, and FBG members for 13 years. They have two children: Kire is in 11th grade and Mya is in 8th grade. Amy serves as “Sprinkles” in storytelling in Kid’s Ministry and has started serving in Student Ministry.

NOTES

Trust Christ and Receive New Life

by Mike Bezner

SCRIPTURE

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us, made us alive with the Messiah even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!

Ephesians 2:4–5

DEVOTIONAL

I have been in church all my life. I started in a liturgical church, and it was all I knew. As a teenager, I started to question some of the church teachings. I eventually married and started attending a Baptist church with my wife. I heard the pastor preach a Christmas message about Mary and how she did what she did for God, to obey and honor him. I decided I needed to do what I needed to do for God and my family. So, I trusted Christ as my Lord and Savior, was baptized, and began a new life in him.

I have had some life-changing trials during my life that tested my faith. In June of 1989, I received an electrical shock of over 14,000 volts. The current entered my hands and exited out my feet. The doctors didn't know how I survived. Three months and nine surgeries later, I went home temporarily confined to a wheelchair. I confided in a nurse that I didn't know why I didn't die. Her reply was "God has other plans for you."

Fast forward to 2017. At that time, I had been at FBG for about 25 years. I had always thought of myself as a pretty good Christian. However, I didn't realize how much better I could be as a Christian until Pastor Kevin came here. I was struggling with my anger, and I needed to learn what triggers my anger and learn to manage it. I came to realize my anger comes from years of being yelled at and told I wasn't good enough.

God has shown me a path he wants me to follow through Kevin's teachings, reading the Bible, and being obedient to God. This path led me to the FBG Re:generation discipleship ministry where God began showing me how to confess my sins, trust others, love God, love people and help others do the same. I can't wait to see what else God wants me to learn and where he will take my life.

PRAYER FOCUS

If you haven't already trusted Christ, open your heart to him and receive new life. If you have received new life in Christ, ask him to teach you, grow you and show you His plans.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for offering me new life in your Son, Jesus Christ. Lead me in the path of life you have for me.



Mike is married to Jan, and they are active in Sunday morning Adult Classes at FBG. Mike serves as a Deacon and on the prayer team.

NOTES

Daily Depend on Christ

by Jeff Webb

SCRIPTURE

I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without Me.

John 15:5

DEVOTIONAL

I entered God's door of recovery when I fully placed my trust in his Son, Jesus Christ. He has redeemed me by his blood and made all things possible if I trust in him alone. Before truly trusting Christ, I was burdened with issues of anger, resentment and codependency that controlled my life and caused me to think or act irrationally. Since trusting Christ completely, I have been able to love more unconditionally, accept the actions of others, and forgive.

The Holy Spirit dwells within me and gives me the strength and the ability to overcome life's daily challenges. I desire to bear the fruit of the Spirit and live the life that God desires for me. This happens each day when I focus on him.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that each of us will be challenged and not be afraid to admit our faults.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, help me each day to seek your direction in my life. Help me be connected to you like the branches on a strong vine, so that I may bear the fruit of the Spirit including love, kindness, and self-control.

Jeff is a native Texan and has been a FBG member for over 35 years. Jeff and Kathy have been married for 42 years, have three children and four grandsons.

NOTES

Ask God's Spirit to Change You

by Melissa Gould

SCRIPTURE

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22–23

DEVOTIONAL

Carrie Underwood's 2005 song, "Jesus, Take the Wheel," resonated with my brokenness in 2009. The car's out-of-control spinning on ice mirrored my life as I needed a supernatural force to save me from myself before I crashed and burned! I cried out like the song, "Jesus, take the wheel. Take it from my hands 'cause I can't do this on my own. I'm letting go ... And save me from this road I'm on." Just like the song, I was spared and thankfully hopped in the backseat!

Even though I accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord when I was 7 years old, he hadn't been Lord of my life since I went through an unwanted and painful divorce when I was 28 years old. I didn't want to be disappointed again, so I thought I knew better than God what was in my best interest. I still believed in God, active in whatever church I attended and served, but I stopped trusting him.

Through a financial targeting experience in 2009, I quickly learned how much I needed divine help and oversight! Through a deceitful person's actions, I finally let go of the grip I had on the steering wheel of my life. I surrendered my will to God as I needed his peace in my life. I began a new life in Christ with that decision to make Jesus Lord of my life again.

I knew the Holy Spirit immediately indwells in all believers who accept Christ as Savior, but I needed to submit to the Spirit and allow him to change me from the inside-out through my thoughts which led to

changed outward behaviors. With this daily decision, the fruit of the Spirit began to take root in my life. I continue to see new areas to allow him to reign as he refines me.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for complete surrender to the Holy Spirit who resides within you.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Father, thank you for my new life in Christ. I am your child, created in your image, who needs and wants you to be the daily driver of my life. I surrender my control today and desire your Spirit to direct my every step.



Melissa is a retired USAF social worker/ therapist in private practice. She serves as a table facilitator for the core classes, Bible Study teacher for Women on Mission, Mission Kids teacher on Wednesday nights, and serves on the state board of WMU. She has been a FBG member for six years.

NOTES

Take an Honest Look at Your Heart

by Michele Sparkman

SCRIPTURE

The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it?

Jeremiah 17:9

DEVOTIONAL

Sometimes our sin is evidenced by external actions. We lose our temper with our kids. Our gaze focuses on images to satisfy our flesh. We exercise relentlessly to achieve an ideal physique. We gossip with friends. We overeat to numb an ache inside. Other times, however, our struggle is deep within our heart, hidden from external view and often from our own understanding. We struggle with comparison, measuring our life to those around us. We elevate family as the highest good. We measure our worth by successes and failures. We value the opinion of others more than we ought. Regardless of whether our sin is evidenced by external actions or is hidden from outward view, sin originates within our hearts. Scripture tells us our hearts are deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9) and in denying our sin, we deceive ourselves (1 John 1:8). These truths should spur us to honestly evaluate our hearts and ask God to reveal deep-rooted sin (Psalm 51:6).

Over the years, I have seen how the Lord frequently uses changes in my circumstances to illuminate my heart and draw out sin. Five years ago, I experienced a season of change in my professional life when I stepped away from a job I loved into an uncertain future. In God's great sovereignty, my changed circumstances coincided with the start of the Re:generation discipleship ministry at FBG. Before I began Re:generation, I believed I trusted God and was walking in freedom. But through the long, arduous process of taking an honest look at my heart, the Lord patiently revealed I am prone to self-reliance which is antithetical to depending on God. When confronted with my sin, it was easy to justify, particularly because it seemed as though my self-reliance had enabled me to achieve various goals throughout life. In reality, my self-reliance was rooted in pride and unbelief

of God's goodness. I trusted my abilities and plan for my life more than I trusted God.

Taking an honest look at our hearts is not easy but doing so reveals our natural bent toward sin and what we believe about God. My self-reliance, pride and unbelief are idolatry. And the reality is that an idol is an idol no matter what temporary good it may seem to yield. As we see our sin for what it is, we can walk in confession, repentance and ultimately the freedom for which Christ set us free.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for courage to honestly evaluate your heart.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, reveal sin in my life and lead me to confession and repentance.

Michele is married to Curt, and they have four lively kids.

NOTES

September 6

Take an Honest Look at Your Worship

by Curt Sparkman

SCRIPTURE

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

Matthew 22:37

DEVOTIONAL

This is a verse I have known since I was a little boy. I learned it doing hand motions, pointing at my chest when we said “heart,” crossing my arms on my chest when we said “soul,” and pointing to my head when we said “mind.” Those motions were to remind me that all of me is to be devoted to the Lord. The command is clear and simple, but in no way has it proven to be easy. In fact, the most important commandment has proven impossible.

Because of my sin, my heart is rebellious and wants to chase feelings whether they align with truth or not, my soul pursues my gain so as to make much of me, and my mind justifies itself in order for my logic to win the day. It is only by the transforming work of God through Jesus that I can love God with my heart, soul, and mind at all.

Knowing my brokenness, I have wondered how can I tell if I am really loving God? I came across this quote that has given me a good indicator of where my heart is: “Worship is a response to what has captured your heart.”

Worship is defined as “adoring reverence.” Simply put, it is where I put my value, effort, passion, and time. One place I have at times put my worship is into seeking approval. I have wanted the applause of people for my efforts. At other times, the object of my worship has been my comfort, success or even my family. In the end, none of these are worthy of worship. Our worship is to be a daily indicator of how we are loving God.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the Lord to reveal the areas of false worship in your life and lead you to true worship in loving him more with your heart, soul, and mind.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, grant me the clarity to see what I am truly worshiping with my life. I am sorry I chase things that are of lesser value than you. Make the desires of the world less appealing and the desire for you irresistible. Lead FBG to be a church that worships you out of genuine love from our hearts, a depth of conviction in our souls and a pursuit of truth with our minds.



Curt serves as the Formations Pastor at FBG where he and his wife, Michele, have been for nine years with their four kids. You will most likely find Curt adventuring with his family on the trails.

NOTES

Take an Honest Look at Your Sin Patterns

by Susan Swanson Bartek

SCRIPTURE

You took off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires; you are being renewed in the spirit of your minds; you put on the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

Ephesians 4:22-24

DEVOTIONAL

Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to someplace better! Why did I chase money, beauty, intelligence, possessions, fun, and popularity? Why was I so enamored with these? Somewhere along the line I came to believe that these were where greener pastures lie. However, these things did not sustain me.

Ephesians 4:22-24 tells me I can let my old life go. I can change. These verses remind me that God is good and holy and that I am created in his image. I literally can have a new life in Christ. The choice is mine.

After looking within and doing a fearless inventory of my life, I discovered that my lack of fulfilment was the result of not making God first in my life. I needed to make him sovereign. I needed a change of attitude. Eventually, I faced my brokenness and totally surrendered to God's will for my life.

I know now that nothing else is more important than maintaining my relationship with God. I begin each day in prayer, Bible reading, and meditation. I thank him for the things that are happening in my life. I ask God to fill me up with love and renew my faith in him so that others can see the treasure I have found. I ask him to guide me through the day and then I meditate on scripture and what I want my day to look like. Finally, I'm silent and listen for God's guidance.

Now, because I know that God has a plan for my life, that he is good and that he is righteous, I cannot imagine turning to anything else. And I realize that my faith will grow as I trust God in more situations. When I pray and God reveals his will, I must reorient my life. Instead of blaming others or running from difficulties, I trust his plan. I hope others can see the treasure I have found.

PRAYER FOCUS

Express your gratitude to God for his love for you and his offer of a new life with him.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, free my heart from the things I've put before you. Transform me and renew my mind so that I am captured by your love, not my idols. Thank you for the Holy Spirit who has set me free from my broken, old life and my patterns of sin and their power over my life.



Susan and her husband, Fred, have been members of FBG for four years. Susan serves as Women's Coach in the Re:generation discipleship ministry. She has four children and five grandchildren.

NOTES

Be Honest With Yourself

by Fred Bartek

SCRIPTURE

If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

DEVOTIONAL

From the time I was a teenager my relationship with my father was so strained that it effectively removed him completely from my life. I remember feeling truly alone in the world, and I carried a deep sense of shame that I was somehow undeserving or flawed.

To seek the approval, recognition, and acceptance that I craved, I aggressively pursued personal achievements according to the world’s standards. Although quite successful, I deceived myself with the idol of pride in my performance instead of seeing its sin nature. Additionally, I had other sinful idols to help me deal with the pressures and fears of failure along the way, namely isolation, justification, control, and over 50 years with alcohol misuse.

Regrettably, my spiritual life prior to joining FBG was extremely lacking.

Thankfully, that all began to change when my wife and I moved to Texas and joined FBG. In a Sunday morning Adult Class, I began to learn about God’s great love, grace, and mercy as well as his gift of salvation to those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. I had deceived myself in thinking that “I” could earn my salvation through my achievements. This revelation was profound.

I entered the FBG Re:generation discipleship ministry, and, for the first time in my life I undertook a rigorous and thorough moral inventory of my life. As a result, I uncovered and confessed my sinful nature, much of which I had suppressed or flatly denied for far too long.

The peace and freedom that I experienced through trusting Christ as my Lord and Savior convinced me to become baptized at FBG, which I did in July 1999.

I also developed an intimate relationship with the Lord by engaging with the Bible in my daily devotions as well as in a weekly Bible Study.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for God's continuing guidance as we seek his truth in our lives. Pray for him to show us our sin and give us a willingness to honestly confess to him and to others we trust who know and love us.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I thank you and praise you for the changes that you have brought about in my life. I thank you for your patience and your abundance of love. Thank you for the realization of your promise that you will never abandon me. By your Spirit continue to show me the truth about myself, help me keep confessing my sin and leaving it behind, and change my heart to give me a new life in Christ. Help me, Lord, to continue to grow in faith rather than fear.

Fred serves as a Re:generation ministry leader. He is also active in a Sunday morning Adult Class and Men's 4x4. He and his wife, Susan, have been at FBG for a bit over four years.

NOTES

September 9

Confess Your Sin and Brokenness to God

by David Printz

SCRIPTURE

But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light ... the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:7,9

DEVOTIONAL

In 2017 I realized something was desperately wrong in my life. I felt like I was drowning in a stagnant pool. I realized that I needed help and sought pastoral counseling. As a result I began attending the Re:generation discipleship ministry at FBG.

In Re:generation, God began to teach me about confession through 1 John 1:7-9. He allowed me to look into the darkest part of my heart and showed me that my real problem was my sin, brokenness and the rebellion of my heart. My pride had tried to justify and control my sin. My pride had been unwilling to accept God's holy and perfect standard. Even worse yet, God showed me that I had turned my pride into an idol. In my sin, pride, brokenness, and isolation, I had separated myself from God.

It became evident to me that I had rarely made confession a part of my prayer life. However, since I have confessed my sin and brokenness to God, a great and heavy burden has been lifted. I now subscribe to the acronym ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication. I incorporate it into my daily prayer life.

One of the great tenets of confession is to not only confess to God, but to confess in authentic community. When I confess in community to my mentor and my brothers in Christ, I bring my sin fully into the light. Once my sin has been exposed, it no longer holds power over me to isolate, and I become fully known.

Most important I must always remember the ultimate price paid by Jesus Christ upon the cross. Jesus Christ suffered the full wrath of God to pay the ransom for my sin, brokenness, and the rebellion of my heart. Christ's sacrifice was perfect. Christ has justified me, and I am at peace with God. I have been redeemed!

The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. God, you will not despise a broken and humbled heart.

Psalm 51:17

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for strength and courage to confess your sin to God.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord God, the Almighty, change my heart and grant me the strength and courage to confess my sin to you, the sovereign, holy and righteous God. Let my confession to you draw me toward your throne of grace through the blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus my Lord and Savior.

David and his wife Rebecca have been members of FBG since 2017. David has served as a FBG Re:generation leader since since 2018.

NOTES

Confess Your Sin and Brokenness to Others

by David Griffin

SCRIPTURE

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The urgent request of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.

James 5:16

DEVOTIONAL

I have been in church since infancy, read the Bible throughout my life, and regularly heard Bible teaching by pastors and seminary professors. However, most of my life I was blind to the truth of James 5:16. The biblical concept of confessing my sin and brokenness to God was a “no-brainer” for me, but I had no idea that confession of my sins to other believers was essential for my healing and new life in Christ.

My first response was, “No way! Anyone who knows the truth about me will reject me, and I cannot survive rejection.” However, my desperation for healing became greater than my fear of rejection. So, after far too many years, I confessed for the first time my hidden brokenness and secret sins to another human being. An FBG brother heard my confession, and, rather than turning away in disgust as I had feared, gave me a bear hug, prayed for me, and said: “I love you, accept you and support you.”

I couldn't believe it! I confessed the truth about myself, and I did not die! Instead, I began to experience new life in Christ as never before. I became fully known and fully accepted by fellow church members. I began the journey of learning to regularly confess my sins to FBG brothers. My brokenness is being healed. I am overcoming secret sin. By the grace of Jesus Christ, I am walking in the light instead of isolation.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for courage to confess the truth about yourself to a member of the FBG family you know and trust.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, give me the willingness, the courage, the desperation, to confess my sin and brokenness to someone in my grace-filled FBG family. Also, use me to hear confession, extend grace and avoid gossip. Empower me to share my story of brokenness and healing so others can know Christ and find new life in him. Make FBG safe for confession of sin and brokenness.



David serves as Care Pastor (semi-retired) at FBG where he and his wife, Ellen, have been members for 37 years. They have two married sons and six grandchildren.

NOTES

Turn to the Path of Life

by Susan Brundidge

SCRIPTURE

For the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord gives grace and glory; He does not withhold the good from those who live with integrity.

Psalm 84:11

Turn my eyes from looking at what is worthless; give me life in Your ways.

Psalm 119:37

Flee from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22

DEVOTIONAL

As a teenager, I confessed and repented of my sins to God and asked Jesus Christ to be my personal Savior and Lord, thinking I was surely on the narrow pathway to eternal heaven. Indeed, I was. However, I was totally unaware that God's path of life had bumps, curves, and blind spots, usually of my own making. Having been raised in a dysfunctional family, I like control.

As an adult Christian, I finally realized that I could not be on God's path of life by my own efforts. Not being wild and crazy in my lifestyle choices, outwardly I seemed to be successfully in control. Yet I didn't have the true joy and peace in my life that I had been so desiring, for it was not the promised Holy Spirit, but me, guiding much of my life.

Yes, studying God's Word, teaching Bible studies, joining the church, participating in small groups, praying, etc., had all taken me along this path of life. Yet seeking more of God's light, I learned about the Re:generation discipleship ministry at FBG. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard Christians confessing weaknesses out loud to others right here at FBG. Finally, I had found a safe and trusted place to openly admit my fears

and weaknesses before God and to others who would accept and not reject me. The narrow road now is more hope-filled for I am on God's path of life with others at FBG who are eagerly calling on the Lord and trusting in his way to bring rest to the soul.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for obedience to follow God's leading, relying only on God's power to turn to the path of life and encouraging others in the FBG family to do likewise.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Holy God, thank you for providing all that I need to turn to and stay on the path of life. Knowing that I can only enter this path through the narrow gate, my earnest desire is to be obedient to your will for my life and to make you and your Son well known. May my faith and trust in you be an example of your mercy and goodness to others in the FBG family.

Susan attends the Precept Bible study at FBG taught by Denice Brown and has served in Re:generation leadership. She and her husband have three married children and eight grandchildren.

NOTES

Count the Cost

by Ron McGaugh

SCRIPTURE

Then He said to them all, “If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Luke 9:23

DEVOTIONAL

How would you react if I told you that I have the holiest heart that I know? “Wait, what did he say?” Now I don’t mean “holy” as in 1 Peter 1:16 (CSB) “for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy.” I mean “holey” as in 20-year-old-socks-hole. That was my heart for about 40 years. For that many years I put many things (idols) into my heart to try to fill it. I used alcohol, drugs, sex, money, church (yes, even church), and recovery, (yes, even recovery).

For many years, I described myself as addicted to anything that changes the way I feel. Sometimes that included all the above, and a few more things. The sad thing is that the more things I tried, the emptier my heart got. The emptier my heart got, the more I knew I needed something that would fill it for good. You see, I tried all the above things, and they filled it for an hour or for a week, or even for a season, but nothing filled it perfectly. Everything left me empty. I even tried church for many years, but I was doing church for me, not for the Lord, so I had church in my heart, not God.

When I started in recovery, I was in a secular program and was in it all the way. I soaked it up. The problem was, even though I had stopped drinking and using, I still had that hole in my heart. When I found Christian recovery, I knew I was onto something. For the first time, through prayer and Christ-centered steps, I was filling my heart with Christ, and soon, there was no room for all the other things. For the first time, I was really clean. For the first time, I had real peace. I had seen the cost of filling my heart with idols from the world, and I did not want to go back.

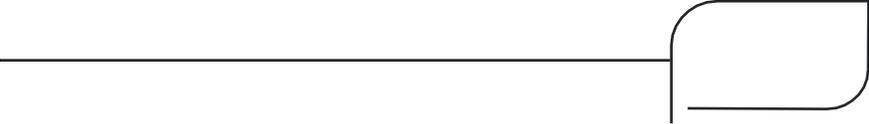
We all have a God-sized hole in our hearts, and the only thing that will fill it, and fill it perfectly, is his Son, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the courage to empty your heart of the worldly idols and fill it with Christ.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Father, you are the only thing that will fill my heart. Please help me to empty my heart to the idols of the world daily and invite you to fill it with your grace and mercy.



Ron has been a member of FBG for 12 years. He is a choir member and Re:generation leader. He and his wife, Cindy, live in Georgetown with their three dogs and two cats. They have three grown daughters, all living in Texas.

NOTES

Forgive as Christ Forgave You

by Mary Beth Oliver

SCRIPTURE

And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children.

Ephesians 4:32–5:1

DEVOTIONAL

I am a justice-seeker. In truth, forgiveness does not come naturally to me. My natural bent is to feel as if a person who has wronged me should seek to make it up to me, to earn my forgiveness. I realized this is how I approach God, as well. “Lord, if I do ‘x,’ will I have fully earned your forgiveness for this thing?” I struggle to allow Jesus’ work on the cross to be enough payment for my sin, or anyone else’s.

I love the verses for today’s focus: “forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children.” When I was praying over these verses, I was reminded of how, when my girls were little, they would put on my husband’s shoes and walk around in them. Having put them on, they would stumble around in too-big shoes, thinking big thoughts about who they might be one day — their full potential as grown-ups. This is who I am with forgiveness. Knowing I am completely and absolutely forgiven in Christ — he has done all of it. There is no more I can give to the situation. I want to imitate him in this. If all he has done for me is enough for me, it is enough for those who wrong me.

Just as my babies stumbled around in their daddy’s shoes, I, too, stumble through forgiveness. But, with each opportunity to imitate Christ in this, he grows me in my likeness of him.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for grace to forgive as you have been forgiven.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, please continue shaping me into your image. Help me to walk so closely with you that your kindness, compassion, and forgiveness to others is lived out through me. I love you.



Mary Beth's family relocated to Georgetown in July 2009, from Okinawa, Japan, when her husband retired from the Marine Corps. They have been members at FBG since 2010. She served on the FBG staff for seven-and-a-half years. She is currently Chief of Data Integrity at Mike Rainey and Associates. Her proudest achievement is being Nana to two-year-old Henry.

NOTES

Accept Christ's Payment for Sins Against You

by L.J. McCulloch

SCRIPTURE

He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world.

1 John 2:2

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:29

DEVOTIONAL

The sins of my parents introduced destructive lifestyles to me and my siblings at an early age. I remember seeing the glow of red and blue lights in my window when my dad was arrested for selling drugs when I was 3 years old. On several occasions, members of my family stole from me to have money to purchase drugs. Worse, my siblings fell into the same lifestyle. My oldest sister passed away due to complications after consuming an illegal substance in 2010.

The consequences of my parents' choices deeply grieve me. For years, they chose drug use over their family. I became bitter and wanted nothing to do with them. I thought that I could pay them back by shutting them out completely. However, I found myself trapped and unable to move forward in life due to the angst I felt toward them. God began to work on my heart and eventually gave me freedom from my sinful attitude toward my parents. If God has forgiven me for all the wrong I have done against him, should I not forgive my parents? Payback was no longer an option. I knew that I had to trust God to take care of the sins of my parents.

When I think about those who have wronged me, I find myself saying, "They do not deserve forgiveness!" This is certainly true. However, I owed an impossible debt to God, but Jesus took on my sin and offered

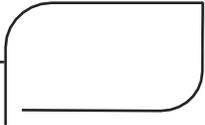
me forgiveness — I did not deserve it. No sin against me compares to sin against a holy God. If I am to accept Christ's work to absolve my sin, I must be willing to forgive those who hurt me. I must trust God's justification in those who wrong me.

PRAYER FOCUS

Thank God that He has taken away your sin in Christ. Pray that he will help you trust him when you are wronged and not seek justice on your own.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, help me remember your work on the cross and forgive others who have sinned against me. Grant me freedom from seeking justice on my own and help me take my hurt to the cross.



L.J. serves as Kids Pastor at FBG. His family joined in January 2017. He and his wife, Bethany, have two sons (Levi and Marcus) and two daughters (Aliyah and Natalie).

NOTES

Trust God for Justice

by Ron Moore

SCRIPTURE

Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for His wrath. For it is written: Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay, says the Lord.

Romans 12:19

DEVOTIONAL

I believe it is sometimes easier to ask someone to forgive me than it is to accept forgiveness from someone else or to wait for someone to ask me to forgive them. A fellow Christian offended me, and I thought their sin against me was so severe I could not get past the sin to forgive them. This person did not ask for forgiveness from me, show any signs of remorse, grief, suffering, sorrow, or repentance. They acted like nothing had happened. I felt like they thought that God had already forgiven them. However, I could not forgive them. I felt like they had no integrity and needed to feel the significance of their sin. I felt like they needed to suffer like I had to suffer. I tried on many occasions to turn this over to God, only to take it back later. I felt like they needed punishment now for their sin, and I wanted to give them their punishment.

Then I decided to take someone's advice and got involved in the Re:generation discipleship ministry here at FBG. In Re:generation, Romans 7:18-20 (NLT) changed my perspective: "And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it." The truth of these verses enabled to look past the sin of the other person to see my own sin. I was wrong in wanting them to suffer and be punished.

Romans 8:1 (NLT) also changed my perspective: "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." How could I want the other person to suffer and be punished when Christ had forgiven them and no longer condemned them?

I came to see that I was living in pain and the other person was not. I was only hurting myself. So, I turned justice over to God, and, when I did, I felt such relief and joy from my pain. A burden was lifted. A heavy load was taken off. I felt the healing hand of God from emotional pain.

I pray you will discover the power of forgiveness

PRAYER FOCUS

Ask your Father in heaven to give you His grace and wisdom to forgive those who have sinned against you and turn justice over to him.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Thank you, God, for leading me to this place at this time. May your grace, wisdom, and word always be in me and with me.

Ron was baptized by immersion and joined FBG in 2015. He serves as a volunteer greeter and parking lot leader, Stephen Minister, Re:generation mentor, and Bone Builders class leader. He was raised in Ludtke Memorial Methodist Church in Houston, a church named after his great-grandparents, and he accepted Jesus during his conformation.

NOTES

Forgiveness Isn't Optional

By Andy Phillips

SCRIPTURE

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how many times could my brother sin against me and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" "I tell you, not as many as seven," Jesus said to him, "but 70 times seven.

Matthew 18:21–22

DEVOTIONAL

Being raised as a regular church attendee, I was well aware of God's forgiveness of people as reconciliation through Jesus' payment of our sin debt. I practiced forgiveness of others as the "right thing to do." However, in 2015 an experience led me to believe my forgiveness lacked authenticity.

That year I became aware I had grown up in a household of emotional abuse where it was implied that I was not able to do anything right and I could not be forgiven for it. Even if courtesies of "I'm sorry, but..." were exchanged, it was just a method to downplay the current situation and didn't resolve the separation in relationships. This toxic environment led me to experience a lifelong existence of anxiety from fear based on shame.

With the help of counseling and the FBG Re:generation discipleship ministry, I became aware of some key aspects of my forgiveness experiences. My forgiveness of others was on a superficial level and meant very little. My "people-pleasing-conditioned-self" reacted in quick forgiveness of others, mainly because I believed they were better than me and "deserved" to be treated well and respected. Accepting forgiveness for myself, however, was a different story. I knew too many details about the real me, not the guy I let the world see. I felt I didn't deserve forgiveness because of my low self-worth based on my perception of other people's opinion of me. Finally, to forgive the person who caused my original emotional distress seemed totally unreasonable.

My spiritual journey in the Re:generation process revealed to me that my own sin in the form of ego (pride, self-centeredness, and control) was

what prevented me from authentic forgiveness. I wasn't ready to truly forgive because "they" did something to me resulting in emotional pain and haven't made up for it yet.

The Holy Spirit lovingly made me aware that when I don't forgive, I'm placing myself in the role of God. Surrendering to God's sovereignty changed my perspective to see myself forgiven only through his grace and mercy. In the same way, forgiving others, including my most "unforgivable offender," and receiving forgiveness for myself must be in the same state of grace and mercy based solely on who God is and what he has done.

Jesus tells us to forgive, he forgave others while being crucified and he paid for our forgiveness. Who am I not to do the same? Forgiveness is not an option.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal anything preventing you from authentic forgiveness.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, help me meditate on the depth of your forgiveness of me. In the same way, let me forgive others to help them see who you are and how much you love them. Fill our hearts as a church congregation to identify those in need of forgiveness and act according to your example.

Andy has been a member of FBG for three years serving in various support ministries.

NOTES

From Bitterness to Forgiveness

by Jenna Shotwell

SCRIPTURE

All bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.

Ephesians 4:31-32

DEVOTIONAL

Sometimes in the Christian walk, we tend to oversimplify some of life's most complex concepts. Forgiveness falls into this category for me. Forgive and forget. Turn the other cheek. On paper, we make it so simple, but I've found it can be quite messy.

At some point in our lives, we've all been hurt by someone else. When I went through the FBG Re:generation discipleship process, I was at a point in my life where I had been deeply hurt and betrayed repeatedly by someone who was supposed to be a source of safety and stability in life. The lack of trust in our relationship and the disappointment in not getting to experience what "should have been" left me feeling trapped in a never-ending cycle of bitterness, anger, and the desire for the offender to "pay me back" for the mistakes made.

Forgive and forget? Just like that? What if they do this again? What if they don't think they are wrong? What if they aren't even sorry? Do I still wake up tomorrow, put a smile on my face and pretend like none of this ever happened? To be honest, the thought was laughable at the time. I wanted to forgive. I longed to break through the bitterness. I desired to have a relationship that honored God. But the other part of me craved vengeance. To even the score. To get what I "deserved" out of the situation. To make sure the other party never forgot the wrongs committed.

I found that forgiveness began with a decision to leave my cage of bitterness and do my best to not return. I wish I could tell you that I shut the door on my bitterness and never looked back, but forgiveness is a messy thing that is never quite as black and white as we make it out to be. Trigger behaviors or

words quickly found me back in my cage, but my walk with Christ and my journey towards forgiveness has made it easier for me to find the exit whenever I've found myself drifting towards old habits.

I also discovered through Re:generation that forgiveness wasn't denying the pain I have experienced. To deny or minimize my hurt was to hurry through the process of forgiveness and would not have produced a lasting change. I had to mourn the loss of the parts of my relationship I was never going to have, the lost time, and the shattered expectations, and then, turn to the Lord to find comfort in him during my time of mourning.

Finally, I had to cancel my debts "owed" to me. Not forget, but to release the person and the hurts into God's hands. Let go of the score if you will. There is beauty in looking at another person and saying, "I know what you did to me, I can't forget it, it's forever a part of our story, but I love and forgive you anyway."

The freedom found in letting go of major hurts is messy and complicated and probably never quite finished or perfected, but I can tell you from personal experience, it is much better on this side of the cage.

PRAYER FOCUS

Thank God for his forgiveness and petition him to help you more deeply grasp and appreciate the forgiveness you've received. Ask God to reveal to you any sins in others that you have not forgiven and to help you release any bitterness towards others as you move toward forgiveness.

PERSONAL PRAYER

God thank you for your unending mercy and forgiveness. Please help me to better understand the magnitude of your forgiveness and grace and to apply it to others in my life. Please reveal to me any unforgiven sins in others in my life and help me work to forgive those who have hurt me.

Jenna Shotwell and husband, Jared, have four children. She is a 23-year member of FBG, an occupational therapist, and owner of a local therapy clinic. Jenna enjoys photography, spending time with family and friends and cheering for her children at all their activities.

Forgive From Your Heart

by Cindy Keefe

SCRIPTURE

This is My command: Love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:12

This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Romans 5:5

DEVOTIONAL

I can love others from the heart. That part of my Christian walk has been easy. I thought I had loving others covered in my life until I began to focus on forgiving others from the heart. It was when I read John 15:12 that I discovered that God loves me, and in return I need to love others. I started to have questions: "But what about those that have hurt me?" "How can I turn bitterness and hurt toward others into love?"

I found out that "I" can't. I can't do it in my own power. I can do nothing, but Christ can. Christ's love is known as agape love, and it is selfless, unconditional, and sacrificial love. That type of love does not come naturally for me (nor for any of us). I found that God's love can help me to forgive others. Romans 5:5 speaks to how the Holy Spirit brings agape love into our hearts. God's love for me, even when I sin, is the same love that can help me forgive others.

It was when this happened that I understood that God uses pain and hurt to show his love to a lost world. God's Son was nailed to the cross for all our sins. Christ suffered for my sins and the sins of those who hurt me. I desire to love and forgive others in the same way God loves me. I can do this only through God's Holy Spirit.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for God to show you who you need to forgive. Allow God's Holy Spirit to pour God's love into your heart so you can forgive.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, open my heart to see my sins and let the Holy Spirit pour your love into my heart. Let me forgive others from the heart and give glory to you, showing others that you love them.

Cindy has been a FBG member since 2001 and been on staff since 2006. She's been married to Rod for 41 years, and they have three grown sons, two daughter-in-loves, and three grandchildren.

NOTES

Daily Deepen Intimacy with God

by Kathy Webb

SCRIPTURE

This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and the One You have sent — Jesus Christ.

John 17:3

DEVOTIONAL

For much of my adult life I have attended church, participated in Bible studies, and served enthusiastically when asked. But during those years I often loved people more than I loved *God himself*. Relationships were my idols! I'm very grateful that I discovered the truth of John 17:3 ten years ago after finding myself feeling hopeless in a 33-year marriage. After seeking help from several women I trusted in my FBG family, I soon realized that the time and energy I was spending trying to change my unhealthy marriage would be much better spent with an all-knowing, all-powerful God who could heal me from my broken life.

By entering into an intimate, personal, love relationship with Christ each day, I began to recognize and acknowledge my sin, *and* experience the healing only God could provide. I realized “my truth” was not “God’s truth,” as I focused on Bible passages about setting healthy boundaries in relationships, allowing God to be in control *instead of me*, and *responding* instead of *reacting*. I have experienced the full blessings of God’s goodness: a healed marriage, healthier relationships, and four wonderful grandsons!!! I am so grateful for my new life in Christ and “eternal life today” by connecting with God daily, following his will and trusting him for freedom, hope and peace.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray you will be compelled to meet with God daily and deepen your relationship with Christ.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Father God, remind me each day to meet with you first through prayer and Bible reading. Provide opportunities for me to share my new life in Christ and encourage other broken people to seek healing. Make our church a safe place to acknowledge our brokenness and find freedom, healing, hope and peace.

Kathy has been a member of FBG for over 35 years. Kathy and Jeff have been married for 42 years and have three children and four grandchildren.

NOTES

Continue to Cultivate Heart Health

by Todd Overgoner

SCRIPTURE

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139:23–24

DEVOTIONAL

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world and brought the curse of death. I too have a sick and sinful heart. I am tempted by the things of this world, and Satan often tries to deceive me and draw me away from God and his perfect will for my life. I sometimes find that when things are going well in my day to day, my focus is pulled away from Christ, and that is when sin creeps in. I have found that it is important to intentionally stop and examine my heart with the help of the Holy Spirit. I know I need to consider where my heart has been self-centered, dishonest, inconsiderate, or even frightened. I ask God to search me, show me my part, and identify the condition of my heart.

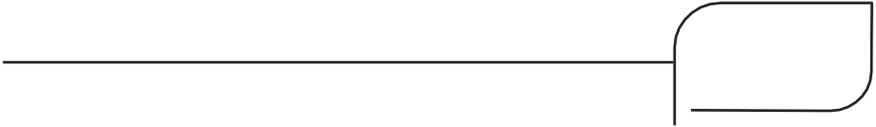
By walking through this step with the Lord, he rightly assesses my heart, grants me the gift of repentance, and leads me to the way of everlasting life. When we confess and pray, God will heal and shine his light in our darkness. He is the one who helps us keep a healthy heart. We can't possibly do it with our own strength. Confession is necessary for our fellowship with God. It is the simple act of admitting the wrongdoing, humbling ourselves, and walking in obedience. My heart is naturally sick beyond measure. My hang-ups were anger, pride, lust and the approval of man. After carefully examining my heart with the Lord's guidance and praying with my brothers in Christ, I found freedom, joy, and unspeakable peace.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that our FBG family will keep our hearts with all vigilance, and, under the covering of God's grace, come out of hiding and walk in the light.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, I pray that you help me step away from my old self-protective ways where I lived in darkness hiding from you. Heal my heart and help me turn to you so that your love and light shine through me and you are glorified.



Todd has been happily married for 20 years and has three children. They live in Liberty Hill after moving from the Austin area five years ago. He has been a member of the FBG for four years.

NOTES

Take the Initiative

by Joe Yurkovich

SCRIPTURE

Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness — without it no one will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14

DEVOTIONAL

I found my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, at 65 years old. All it took then was taking that first step to ask God for help. It still is.

Bitter childhood memories caused me to trust no one except myself. “If it is to be, it is up to me.” My life so far, however, had consisted of failed relationships, a sin-filled life and my “go to” behaviors - pride, control, and anger, when I didn’t get my way.

God brought Sandy and me together in 2013 and we married in 2015. After just 2 years, I had managed to push her to her limit with my control and anger. I couldn’t control these impulses on my own. I reached out to our pastors who recommended I try the Re:generation discipleship ministry at our church. I decided to attend to “keep the peace” at home. After all, I hadn’t done so well myself, had I?

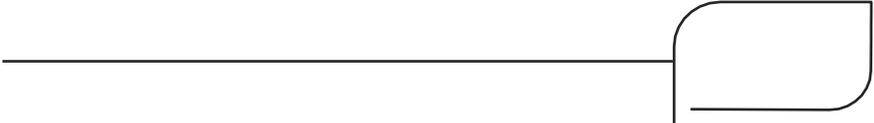
God changed my heart early in the Re:generation process. I really focused upon what I was learning and experiencing in the curriculum and small groups. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior several months later. I had taken that necessary first step! I saw that I had kept my sinful past and present secret for fear of consequences, but also that keeping those secrets clouded my judgment of God, others, and even who I had been. God wanted me to be a peacemaker; asking forgiveness from everyone I had hurt through my sins and taking the first step to make amends with them. I now knew that I must initiate this process and expect nothing in return. I have found this entire concept and practice to be the most freeing thing I’ve ever done in my life. Thanks to our Holy God for giving me the courage to take that first step, which has made all the difference in my life!

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for courage and wisdom to take that first step of faith, putting aside unfounded fears.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Father, please give me with the courage to take that first step out of trust and faith in you. Help me to be the peacemaker you have commanded me to be without fear...only faith in you.



Joe has been a leader in Re:generation since 2019. He lives in Georgetown with his wife Sandy.

NOTES

September 20

Amends: Humble Yourself

by Bryan Waggoner

SCRIPTURE

Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:3–4

DEVOTIONAL

During the summer of 1966, my Sunday School teacher, Mr. Appleget, took the rambunctious boys in our sixth-grade class to a state park for an amazing day of adventure and fun. While at the park, I borrowed some money from my teacher so I could buy some candy that I “needed” at the park store.

After returning home, I unfortunately neglected to pay off my financial commitment. It sounds like a small thing, but for years after that I thought about my obligation to repay the loan. The longer I waited, the more embarrassed I became. Finally, 30 years later, I submitted to the Lord’s steady prompting and reached out to John to pay him back. As you might guess, he did not remember his kind gesture and he was very gracious to me, fortunately not charging me interest. At once, my conscience was set free from the needless guilt I had lived with all those years. I’m so glad I did that because Mr. Appleget passed away a few months later.

Why would I neglect to pay back such a small loan? Pride, pure and simple. Today’s Bible passage instructs us to have a humble view of ourselves and a high regard for others. To neglect to pay him back was to deprive Mr. Appleget of what was rightfully his. Even though it was “just” a small amount of money, it was important because I knew I hadn’t done the right thing. Luke 16:10 (CSB) clearly states, “Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and whoever is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much.

Another scripture, quoting Jesus, highlights the importance of being timely when we commit an offense. “So, if you are offering your gift on the altar,

and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24 (CSB)

“Partial obedience and delayed obedience...is not acceptable to God. He is looking for men and women who will respond with instant, complete, wholehearted, and joyous obedience each time He speaks” — Del Fehsenfeld Jr.

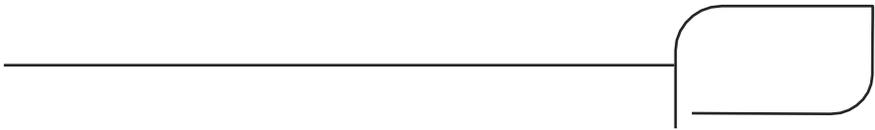
I would have been wise to demonstrate integrity by obeying the Lord immediately. In every situation, following God’s commands ASAP truly serves for our good.

PRAYER FOCUS

Ask the Lord to reveal any outstanding obligations that should be made right and commit immediately to begin the process of making amends.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Dear Lord, please help me to obey the voice of your Spirit as you speak through the Bible and your servants. Enable me to immediately correct any wrongs in a humble and timely manner



Bryan is the Generations Pastor at FBG. He has served there since 2018 when he and his wife Sheri moved to Georgetown from Indiana. The Waggoners have four adult children and seven grandchildren.

NOTES

Amends: Pursue Peace

by Kert Prater

SCRIPTURE

For the one who wants to love life and to see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit, and he must turn away from evil and do what is good. He must seek peace and pursue it, because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are open to their request. But the face of the Lord is against those who do what is evil.

1 Peter 3:10–12

The peacemakers are blessed, for they will be called sons of God.

Matthew 5:9

DEVOTIONAL

Seeking peace and making amends was not modeled well for me in my family growing up. A conflict quickly escalated, words flew from the mouth hastily, emotional reactions ensued and there we were in desperate need of making amends.

My wife, Kerry, and I knew from the moment we were engaged that the area of communication and conflict resolution would need a lot of attention and prayer in our marriage and parenting. Now, as a family of six, we regularly have challenges in implementing 1 Peter 3:10–12 as conflicts arise, and we're in need of making amends.

By God's grace, I have witnessed other families navigating conflict righteously. I've learned the blessing of seeking peace by confessing my sin to my family member, my friend or my neighbor and feeling the burden of guilt released.

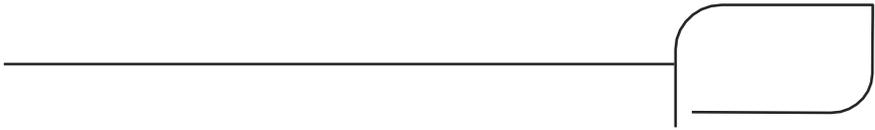
Each day is a new start to guarding my speech and earnestly seeking peace. Several Proverbs (12; 16:13; 21:28) and James 3:1–12 have served as reminders of the power of my words.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that God helps you pursue peace daily.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, please help me seek peace as I go about my day. May the words that flow from my mouth toward my family, my neighbors, my co-workers and friends be filled with life. I need your help and desire to love life and see good days!



Kert serves as Worship Pastor at FBG where he and his wife, Kerry, have been members since June 2016. They have three daughters and one son.

NOTES

Forgive, Make Amends and Seek Reconciliation

by JoAnn Goldston

SCRIPTURE

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Try to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:17–18

DEVOTIONAL

I started attending the Re:generation discipleship ministry at FBG in January 2017, faithfully doing the workbook assignments including the inventory. A part of the inventory included addressing hurts to me by another person.

My hurt: My brother suspected I was using my mother's bank account for my own personal benefit. My mother, having become blind, had asked that I handle her account. My brother asked to review mother's bank accounts and, if necessary, he would get a court order which would allow him access. Of course, I agreed to his request asking that he tell me of his findings. Time lapsed and he "had not concluded his search" after months. I shared with him how painful his suspicions were and that I was eager to get beyond this breach of trust. Oh, how my heart ached as he refused my attempts to reconcile our relationship.

This situation replayed and replayed again and again in my head. After many prayers, there was no conviction from God for my actions. To the contrary, there was assurance that I was honoring my mother.

I shared this experience along with my forgiveness of my brother with a trusted Christian lady who listened and asked many questions. This was the beginning of peace for me. But I longed for a relationship with my brother.

Through the biblical principles of Re:generation, I now realize forgiving my brother was a process. I realize that forgiveness is giving God the balance due on the hurt my brother caused. Justice is God's.

I accept that reconciliation requires both the offender and the offended to enter the process of forgiveness. Although I forgave my brother long ago, he was, and is still, unable or unwilling to accept a relationship with me. I recognize that sometimes reconciliation does not happen. Only God can change hearts that lead to restored relationships.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for God to use you to encourage others to share the message of reconciliation.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, help me to share the message of reconciliation, leaving the results to you. Use Re:generation at FBG to bring healing and restoration to all. God, give us the boldness, the confidence to ask you to examine our hearts and lead us to follow Christ.

JoAnn has been a member at FBG for 25+ years. She has three children, eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She and Vernon, both widowed, have been married 23 years.

NOTES

Participate in God's Rescue Plan

by Michael Jones

SCRIPTURE

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

DEVOTIONAL

I accepted Christ in my life when I was 7 years old. For years afterward, I struggled with that decision. Did I know what I was doing at such a young age? Was it genuine? Did I really know what it meant to be saved from my sins and choose to follow Jesus—especially when it cost me something? Where was my sign and absolute assurance? Where was the voice of God telling me that I was firmly adopted into his family? I often thought my testimony and salvation story was too vanilla. It wasn't compelling to a non-believer and thus did not have much worth.

What a mistake that philosophy was! From an outsider's perspective, I yearned for a good story—hitting rock bottom and then God cleaning my life up so that everything turned around—because I thought it would help to convince others to put their faith in Christ. How misguided! In fact, I should have been grateful that the start of my testimony was “clean and tidy.” Years later, I would add to that testimony, but in a personally painful way and one in which I would like to have avoided. But God was faithful in helping me through my addiction.

Regardless of our testimony, we should be quick to tell the world about the good news of Christ. As an Enneagram 3, I thought I needed to have my life 100% in order and a perfect picture of Christianity so non-believers could see a solid, blameless walk. But all this showmanship only alienates people. For our testimony to have value, it needs to be honest and authentic. Whether that's a rock bottom story, or the relatively basic story, we should be elated

that we are children of God. Our joy and happiness should compel us to share with everyone we meet that we have a new life in Christ and an eternal promise to be with the Father forever. As 1 Peter 2:9-10 tells us, we are God's special possession and we've been called out of darkness. Our sinful nature is the darkness we've been called from. God has given us mercy and we should be proud of the new life we have in Christ. We rarely shy away from telling others about a Netflix show we binge watched. Why not share about the most exciting story of all—a journey from personal death and destruction to a new hope in eternal life with the creator of the universe!

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray and meditate on the gratitude you have to God about your new, eternal life and pray for courage to live authentically on mission so that others are compelled to hear your story of coming out of darkness.

PERSONAL PRAYER

God, thank you for loving me when I'm at my best and when I'm at my worst. I know there's nothing I can do to earn your favor and that you freely love me no matter what. Please help me to focus on living on mission so that both my life and my words proclaim the good news of your Son. Give me the courage to share regularly with others my testimony

Michael has attended FBG for over 20 years and has been actively involved in teaching teenagers. He is married to Racheal, and they have with two kids, Miles (5) and Olivia (2).

NOTES

Share Your Story of Life Change

by Brett Levy

SCRIPTURE

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3–4

DEVOTIONAL

When I was around 5 years old, my dad left. The memory of that day is etched into my mind. I'll never forget the yellow swivel chair that I was sitting in or my mom and dad kneeling to break the news to me. I remember watching my dad drink and watching him hit my mom one night hours after my parents thought I was asleep. That was just the beginning of a long journey. As an elementary and junior high student, I'd stay an occasional night with my dad, usually Saturday. My mom would have had me in bed so I could get up for church in the morning, but my dad was usually passed out from drinking well before that time.

I remember the one present he ever bought me for my birthday after the divorce. I still have it.

My story could have been a story of tragedy. Without a doubt, there were potholes in the road toward healing, but Jesus became a reality to me shortly after the divorce. Life with my dad was a training ground where Jesus did His restorative work in my life. I learned how to forgive (multiple times), I learned a little bit about grace, and I learned a lot about parenting and discipling kids (of course, I learned this from what I didn't experience). What was grounded in sin and selfishness, God used to bring about good. In almost 30 years of youth and family ministry, I can't count the number of times I've been able to share how God's story changed my story with a teenager or family who are walking a very similar journey.

Your story — all the pain and all the triumphs; all the function and the dysfunction; all the great moments and all the mess — is in Jesus' hands. As he comforts you, grows you and empowers you, he is also calling you to comfort, grow and empower others. After all, we are called to love God, love people, and **help others do the same**.

PRAYER FOCUS

Spend some time today asking God how He wants to use your past for someone else's future.

PERSONAL PRAYER

God, thank you for taking my mess and working miracles. Help me to have my eyes, ears and heart open to people around me who might find comfort from the comfort you've already given me.

Brett Levy has been the Minister of Youth and, more recently, Family Pastor at FBG for 20 years. He is married to Amanda and they have two daughters.

NOTES

Practice the Ministry of Reconciliation

by Kevin Ueckert

SCRIPTURE

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, and look, new things have come. Everything is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:17–18

DEVOTIONAL

I was 13 when my mom remarried. I couldn't believe she was getting married again. I was holding out for my parents to get back together and was nowhere close to recovering from their recent divorce. Little did I know that my pain would multiply beyond my imagination. The man my mom married deeply hurt my mom, my sister and me, time and time again, for years. The wounds were very deep.

The wounds that were too deep for me to handle were not too deep for Jesus Christ. As I trusted Him and His Word, I experienced the “old” hurts, wounds and anger passing away and the “new” growth, forgiveness, love and life coming in Christ. As the Lord worked in my life, something even more remarkable happened. I started to care about the man I had come to hate. I wanted to see him come to know Jesus as I knew Jesus. I wanted him to experience the same reconciliation that I was experiencing.

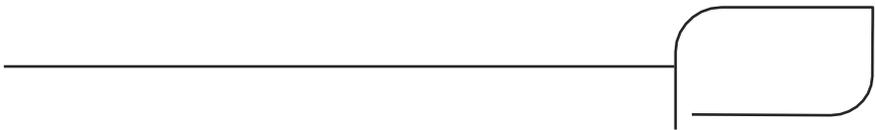
None of this happened over night. In fact, I am still growing and being changed into the new creation Christ intends me to be. As I continue to change, I find an increasing desire to engage in the ministry of reconciliation, helping others to know Jesus Christ and find new life. I am so grateful for the ministry of reconciliation that flows out of my reconciliation, my new life in Christ.

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that your reconciliation to God through faith in Jesus Christ will abound in new life, forgiveness, joy, peace and hope. Pray that your reconciliation and new life in Christ will motivate you toward the ministry of reconciliation.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, help me to live increasingly in new life. Thank you for taking the old things like the guilt of sin, the shame of failure, anger and regret, the brokenness and sinfulness of my life, and making me new in Christ. Please reveal areas of my life that still need to change. As you continue to change me, open my eyes to see those that need help in following you. I want to be faithful in the ministry of reconciliation. Because you have loved me so much, help me to look for ways to help someone see your love. Thank you, Jesus, for new life!



Kevin is the Lead Pastor of FBG. Kevin and Lynlee have been members of FBG since June 2015. Weston, their oldest child (28) is married to Haiden and they have two kids. Maelyn, their daughter (26), is married to Micah and they have a baby girl through foster care. Caden, their youngest (22), got married to Kylie in June 2022.

NOTES



• FAMILY •

**BIBLICAL
COMMUNITY**

• GUIDE •

Note to Parent: The Parent Page which follows will guide you in leading your family devotion/prayer time this week and involving your kid in using this page.

CONNECT

(Today the parent goes first.) When it is your turn, say: “**I make mistakes, too.**” Share about a time when you experienced the consequences of a mistake you made.

Something from Connect I want to remember:

READ SCRIPTURE: Read 2 Corinthians 5:17–19.

Truth

- Jesus Christ makes us new.

Untruths

- God does not care about our sin.
- God only loves people and does not discipline them.
- We do not need Jesus to be made new.

EXPLORE

Write what you want to remember about the Scriptures.

NAIL IT DOWN

Come up with three chores that are regularly completed at your home. What are the consequences of not doing each chore? Say: **“Unconfessed sin weighs us down and prevents us from honoring God. The longer we hide our own sin, the more damage it will do. If we confess our sins, God is ready to forgive and cleanse us.”**

MAKE IT STICK

A parent will lead this step.

PRAY

Have family members repeat this sentence after you. **“God, help us confess our sins to you.”** Close this time in prayer.

BLESSING

Listen as your parent blesses the family.

KID TIP

Over the next several days, ask your parents how God has given them freedom from sin that they have confessed. Remember to pray for members of your family as you seek to honor God together.

NOTES

CONNECT

(Today the parent goes first.) Say: “**Admitting our own mistakes to others can be one of the hardest things to do in life. Sometimes I am tempted to hide my mistakes.**” Share about a time when you made a mistake and tried to hide it. What were the consequences?

READ SCRIPTURE

Invite a family member to pray. Ask family members to read 2 Corinthians 5:17–19. Discuss the truth and untruths in light of this passage.

Truth

- Jesus Christ makes us new.

Untruths

- God does not care about our sin.
- God only loves people and does not discipline them.
- We do not need Jesus to be made new.

EXPLORE

Read 1 John 1:9. Say: “**We have all disobeyed God and deserve to be cast away from Him forever.**” Discuss the consequences of your children’s disobedience toward you and compare it to our disobedience toward God. Say: “**Worse, sometimes we try to hide our sin and take care of it on our own without trusting God to help us in our sin.**” Emphasize that the only way to be saved from our sin is to hand it over to Jesus and trust Him! Say: “**God loves us and sent Jesus to save us from our sin. He wants us to confess our disobedience and trust Him with all of our lives. Sin rules over our lives when we hide it. Jesus gives us freedom from our sin when we confess it and trust Him.**”

NAIL IT DOWN

A kid will lead this step.

MAKE IT STICK

Conduct a push-up contest. Set a timer for one minute and see who can do the most push-ups. Have the winner lay down for more push-ups and have one or two family members lay on the winner's back. How many can he/she do this time?

Say: **“We will live with an incredible weight of guilt and shame if we continue to hide our sin. The first step in finding freedom is to trust the Lord and confess our sin!”**

PRAY

A kid will lead this step.

BLESSING

Say: **“May God bless you as you admit and confess your sins to Him.”**

PARENT TIP

Sharing personal stories will go a long way with your children. Sharing your own shortcomings and the consequences of your own sin can have a powerful impact on your family. As you share times of failure, make sure that you give God the glory for saving you from your sin.

NOTES

Repent

Kid Page

Note to Parent: The Parent Page which follows will guide you in leading your family devotion/prayer time this week and involving your kid in using this page.

CONNECT

(Today the parent goes first.) When it is your turn, say: **“I am thankful for what Jesus did, too. If I say I that I follow Jesus but go on sinning, I would be ...”**

Something from Connect I want to remember:

READ SCRIPTURE: Read 2 Corinthians 7:9–10.

Truth

- Godly grief produces repentance that leads to salvation.

Untruths

- God wants us to have control of our lives.
- Repentance means to no longer sin.
- True repentance will eventually lead to a life of moral perfection.

EXPLORE

Write what you want to remember about the Scriptures.

NAIL IT DOWN

Go through each sentence below one at a time. After you read each one, have your family decide if the sentence represents godly or worldly grief and why.

“Will anyone ever know what I have done?”

“I will get better eventually.”

“How could I do that when God has been so good to me?”

“My motives need to change!”

“How could God still love me?”

“I will never commit that sin again!”

“I am so tired of feeling guilty and full of shame.”

“I need to cry out to God!”

MAKE IT STICK

A parent will lead this step.

PRAY

Say: **“Our physical posture can reflect the position of our hearts when we repent.”** Have each member bow on their knees. Close this time in prayer.

BLESSING

Listen as your parent blesses the family.

KID TIP

Sin patterns in your life may lead you to be deceived about your need for repentance. Regularly asking God to search your heart and reveal hidden sin can keep you on His path.

NOTES

CONNECT

(Today the parent goes first.) Say: “I am amazed that Jesus loves me and died on the cross to save me from my sin. If I accept His gift of salvation but go on carelessly sinning, I would be ...”

READ SCRIPTURE

Invite a family member to pray. Ask family members to read 2 Corinthians 7:9–10. Discuss the truth and untruths in light of this passage.

Truth

- Godly grief produces repentance that leads to salvation.

Untruths

- God wants us to have control of our lives.
- Repentance means to no longer sin.
- True repentance will eventually lead to a life of moral perfection.

EXPLORE

Read 2 Corinthians 7:9–10 again. Say: “**There are two types of grief that we may feel when we recognize our sin: worldly and godly. Worldly grief is the regret of the consequences of our sin. Godly grief is the regret of rebellion and offense against God.**” Spend some time discussing the difference between the two. Say: “**We can ask ourselves this question, “Are we grieving because we got caught (worldly), or are we grieving because of our decision to sin against (God)? Only godly grief leads to repentance.**” Emphasize that repentance is not just turning away from our sin and toward God; it is agreeing with God about our sin. Say: “**The goal of repentance is not moral perfection. The goal of repentance is to ensure that our hearts are aligned with God and that we remain on the path of following Him.**”

NAIL IT DOWN

A kid will lead this step. Note: the purpose of this time is to think through godly grief and repentance and what it looks like.

MAKE IT STICK

Say: **“Remember that we are aligning ourselves with what God says when we repent.”** Have your family read through Psalm 51 and point out the writer’s recognition of sin, whom he offended and his desire to be in right standing with the Lord.

PRAY

A kid will lead this step.

BLESSING

Say: **“May God bless you as you fight to keep your heart aligned with His.”**

PARENT TIP

Repentance is not a one-time thing. It’s something that we must fight for on a daily basis. We must ask God to search our hearts in repentance. “Repentance of the evil act, and not of the evil heart, is like men pumping water out of a leaky vessel, but forgetting to stop the leak.” — C.H. Spurgeon

NOTES

Note to Parent: The Parent Page which follows will guide you in leading your family devotion/prayer time this week and involving your kid in using this page.

CONNECT

(Today a kid goes first.) Ask: **If you could have an unlimited number of one thing, what would it be and why?** Let everyone answer. Now ask: **How can you use that item to help or bless someone in our family?** Let everyone answer. Now ask: **How can you use that item to help or bless others?**

Something from Connect I want to remember:

READ SCRIPTURE: Listen and follow along as your parent reads
Luke 23:33–47.

Truth

- God forgives us on the basis of Jesus' innocent blood shed for us.

Untruths

- Jesus was crucified because of His own sin.
- We do not deserve punishment because of God's love toward us.
- We are not obligated to forgive others.

EXPLORE

Read Colossians 3:12–13. Write what you want to remember about the Scriptures.

NAIL IT DOWN

Say: “**God wants us to be at peace with each other and offer forgiveness to one another. Our home is a great place to do this.**” Have your parent complete the sentence on the parents’ page. After they finish, it’s your turn: “**I know kids who are angry with their family because they ____, but if they loved the way Jesus loves, they would ____.**”

MAKE IT STICK

A parent will lead this step.

PRAY

Have your family repeat the following phrases after you: “**Lord, thank you for your love | and forgiveness. | Help us forgive others | just as you have forgiven us.**” Close this time in prayer.

BLESSING

Listen as your parent blesses the family.

KID TIP

Your parents love you — probably more than you can imagine. If you do wrong toward them, do not just say “I’m sorry.” Admit what you have done wrong and specifically ask them for their forgiveness.

NOTES

Forgive

Parent Page

CONNECT

(Example for first question: “Cookies because they’re delicious.” “Dollars because I would be rich.”)

READ SCRIPTURE

Invite a family member to pray. Read Luke 23:33–47. Discuss the truth and untruths in light of this passage.

Truth

- God forgives us on the basis of Jesus’ innocent blood shed for us.

Untruths

- Jesus was crucified because of His own sin.
- We do not deserve punishment because of God’s love toward us.
- We are not obligated to forgive others.

EXPLORE

Have one of your children read Colossians 3:12–13. Say: **“If we belong to Christ, forgiveness should become a regular practice in our lives. Let’s discuss for a moment the gospel and God’s forgiveness toward us.”** Have your family define the gospel in Luke 23. Emphasize that our sin has separated us from God, but God offers us forgiveness through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Say: **“Our debt to God is enormous. We deserve to be separated from Him forever, but He offered us forgiveness.”** Ask: **“If God has forgiven us our incredible debt to Him, how should we respond when others treat us wrongly or do things that cause us harm?”** Explain that God’s love and forgiveness commands us to love and forgive others — no matter the debt!

NAIL IT DOWN

A kid will lead this step. Complete this sentence when you are instructed: **I know there are parents who don't encourage peace at home because they _____, but if parents loved the way Jesus loves, they would _____.** Now your child will respond.

MAKE IT STICK

Say: **"I would love for forgiveness to become something that we celebrate in our home. We need to be people who ask for forgiveness when we do wrong or hurt someone and people who offer forgiveness when it is asked of us."** Give an opportunity for someone to do this now. Perhaps God is calling you or a family member to ask for forgiveness even now.

PRAY

A kid will lead this step.

BLESSING

Say: **"May God bless this family as we strive to love each other like Jesus loves us."**

PARENT TIP

Modeling forgiveness is one of the most impactful things you can do for your children. You will surely make mistakes as you raise your children. Taking the time to intentionally admit your mistake and ask for forgiveness will allow your children to see your heart. They will be more likely to do the same toward their siblings and peers.

NOTES

Trust

Kid Page

Note to Parent: The Parent Page which follows will guide you in leading your family devotion/prayer time this week and involving your kid in using this page.

CONNECT

(Today a kid goes first.) Say: **“Sometimes a team is needed to accomplish a task.”** Share about a time when you participated on a team and completed a task. Say: **“Sometimes we need other people to step into our lives and help us out.”**

Something from Connect I want to remember:

READ SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:12–15.

Truth

- God desires for the church to be a place of trust and healing.

Untruths

- Hiding sin helps attract people to the church.
- No one should confess all of their garbage to people in the church.
- Trust and healing are unnecessary to be a light for the gospel.

EXPLORE

Write what you want to remember about the Scriptures.

NAIL IT DOWN

Say: **“Let’s think of some ways that we can love our church family.”**

- How can we support our pastors?
- Can we think of someone who has an unmet need?
- Do we know of anyone in our church who is going through loss?
- Is there someone in one of our classes that we need to pray for?

MAKE IT STICK

A parent will lead this step.

PRAY

Have the family huddle-up by putting arms around each other’s shoulders. Pray for unity in our church. Close this time like you would break a huddle on a sports team. Say; **“All hands in. ‘Team name’ on three! EVERYBODY: one, two, three, ‘team name’!”**

BLESSING

Listen as your parent blesses the family.

KID TIP

God has blessed you by giving you the opportunity to be involved in a local church. Did you know that He has a place for you to serve? Talk to your parents about different ways you can serve others in the church.

NOTES

Trust

Parent Page

CONNECT

(**Today the kid goes first**): Share about a time when you needed someone to step into your life and offer some help.

READ SCRIPTURE

Invite a family member to pray. Ask family members to read Colossians 3:12–15. Discuss the truth and untruths in light of this passage.

Truth

- God desires for the church to be a place of trust and healing.

Untruths

- Hiding sin helps attract people to the church.
- No one should confess all of their garbage to people in the church.
- Trust and healing are unnecessary to be a light for the gospel.

EXPLORE

Say: **“If we belong to Christ, we should belong to His church.”** Review the characteristics of the church’s members as described in Colossians 3:12–15.

Say: **“Sometimes this is difficult in our church. The sins of others and our own sin sometimes blinds us to the need to love one another.”** Explain that bearing with others and offering forgiveness allows the church to maintain unity.

NAIL IT DOWN

A kid will lead this step.

MAKE IT STICK

Say: “Let’s think about our family as if it were a team.” Discuss some of the strengths of your family. Lead your family in coming up with a team name.

Say: “God has given each member of ‘team name’ the gift of being in this family. He has also given us a greater gift by calling us to be a part of His kingdom in our local church. We must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ so that trust and healing flourish in our church. If Christ is most important in our lives, we will have little trouble loving our church family.”

PRAY

A kid will lead this step.

BLESSING

Say: “May God bless you as you seek to be a good team member within our church.”

PARENT TIP

Do you value our church? Do you make an effort to preserve unity in our church? Help your children grow a love for the church by talking positively of your church family.

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