



ENCOUNTER
— WITH —
GOD

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EXTRA

scriptureunion 
HELPING PEOPLE MEET GOD EVERY DAY

A GUIDE FOR MEETING GOD DAILY IN HIS WORD

Welcome to *EXTRAS*

EXTRAS has been created as an additional resource to use with Scripture Union's daily devotional *Encounter with God*. It is an excellent tool for small group Bible study and can also enhance your own individual Bible reading. These questions will encourage you to dig deeper into the meaning of the Scripture passages you have read during the week.

1 JOHN 1 - 2:14

- 1.** Read Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1,2. Why is it important to understand that Jesus was in the beginning? John writes of what he has heard, seen and touched; how have you experienced that progression in your faith in Jesus?
- 2.** The apostle testifies to manifestation of the Life. Think about testimonies in today's courts and what about them is important. How does John's testimony compare? Why does this give him reason to proclaim the eternal life? What is your reason?
- 3.** Among John's objectives in writing this letter is that we have fellowship. The word in Greek is a unique Christian word (Koinonia), meaning "a having in common". What do you have in common with your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Psalm 84; 1 John 2:15 - 5:12

1. John tells us we have an anointing from the Holy One; we have been consecrated. What does that mean for you as you seek to serve God?
2. Notice the parallel in John 3 where Jesus speaks to Nicodemus, telling him that he must be born again - he must become a child of God. God's sacrifice of his Son does not just save us from hell - it proclaims his great love for us, makes us his children and gives us his nature. Read James 1:18. What difference does this make to our faith?
3. As children of God, we are to do what is right - to love our brother with the love of God expressed at Calvary. In what ways do you find this statement overwhelming as you compare your love to God's? In what ways do you find it consoling because you can claim God's power?
4. In Hebrews 11:1 we read, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." John tells us that our faith in Christ overcomes the world. How do you see this being born out in your life as you seek to follow his commands?

1. Whether you believe the second epistle of John was written to an actual person or to the personification of the local church, it has great value in its declaration of grace, mercy and peace. How do you see grace, mercy and peace being worked out in your church today, especially considering the challenges of our world pandemic?
2. John tells us that a Christian is to walk in truth, obedience and love. What are some ways to express yourself as a Christian in a diverse community? How can you be encouraging your church to express truth, obedience and love outside of its walls?
3. Read Philippians 2:4. Like Paul, John is concerned for his brothers' physical and spiritual wellbeing in his third epistle. He also commends Gaius for his faithfulness to his brothers who visit and even to strangers. How do we show hospitality with our country's current health concerns?
4. When God sent Jonah to Nineveh, everyone in that great city, from the greatest to the least of them, repented. Will you ask God to lay at least one person on your heart with whom you can share the Good News? What are some reasons why you should be sharing your faith and what would be some ways you would be encouraged in doing so?

Psalm 86; Jonah 3 & 4; Genesis 1:1-3:1-24

1. True repentance involves more than remorse or regret. It includes seeing our sin as God sees it and committing, by God's grace, to turn away from that sin. True repentance also results in God's absolute forgiveness. Have there been times when you have been sinned against and have been asked for forgiveness but you found it hard to forgive as God does? What did you do?
2. Jonah pities a plant, angry that he has lost his source of comfort. However, there is no evidence that he shows any remorse over his lack of concern for the more than 120,000 persons who, without repentance, would have perished. In this polarized time in our nation. God calls us to relate to one another with compassion, to love with His love. Is God's love and compassion expressed as you relate to others who may not agree with you?
3. On the seventh day of creation, God had finished his work and rested from all he had done. He blessed the day and made it holy. And while he rested, he sustained all that he had created. So, what does that day of rest look like for you? From what and how do you rest? What do you sustain? What makes it a holy day for you?
4. The tree of life is referenced in both the first and the last books of Scripture. How would you compare Genesis 3:22-24 with Revelation 2:7? How would you compare Adam and Eve with the Church in Ephesus? Are there areas in your own life where you have strayed from the love you had at first? How about your church?

Psalm 87; Genesis 4:1 – 9:28

- 1.** Adam and Eve were made by God to participate in his divine rule of his perfect creation. They chose their own way instead, leading to generations of sin. How are you using your walk with God as a testimony to God's grace and mercy that is influencing younger generations to trust and follow him?
- 2.** In a world filled with wickedness, God found favor with Noah, a righteous man, and set into motion a plan to save Noah and his family while destroying the earth. Righteous men and women live in our own corrupt world. Today, how do you see evidence of God redeeming it? Be sure to thank him for the grace and mercy he patiently pours out – near and far!
- 3.** When Noah and his family finally entered the ark with two of all flesh, God himself shut them in against the coming flood. Recount times in your own life when God protected you from danger, be it physical or spiritual.
- 4.** Upon leaving the ark, Noah built an altar for sacrifice and worship. How are we to show God our gratitude for his provisions and protection?

- 1.** In response to their arrogance, God dispersed the people of Babel throughout the earth and confused their language. Pray for the many missionaries God gives vision to go to the hard places of the world who must learn new languages and culture to share the Good News of Jesus.
- 2.** In Genesis 12, Abram responded to God's call, believing in the promises given him. With his family, he left Haran for a land and progeny not yet seen. Today, many of God's promises have been fulfilled; Scripture testifies to them – name some of them. Thank God for his Word that builds our faith and gives us hope for eternity.
- 3.** In the parable of the sower, Jesus teaches about seeds sown on trampled and thorny soil that wither away and bear no fruit. Pray God will show you people who need their fragile faith nurtured. Hear his voice and act.
- 4.** It is easy to become cloistered in our comfortable Christian world. When was the last time you reached outside of that world to connect in some way to someone who needs to hear about God's saving grace?

Psalm 89; Mark 4:35-6:13

- 1.** Miracles - God performed them in Scripture to show his power and build faith. Does God still perform miracles today? In what ways is your walk in Christ a miracle?
- 2.** Jesus told a 12-year-old girl to rise, and she got up from her death bed. Jesus himself rose from the dead - the ultimate victory over death. What do these miracles show us about our own final healing in Heaven where there will be no more tears, no more sickness and no more death?
- 3.** The girl got up and began to walk around. Imagine the response of witnesses at her bedside! Exuberant excitement and rejoicing with joy? Certainly not feeding her. But Jesus knows her need and tells them to give her something to eat. As you serve God's people, are you careful to notice not just spiritual needs but to be mindful of physical needs, as well?
- 4.** Jesus was rejected in his own hometown. Think of those who are rejected and even persecuted when they come to faith in the one who has saved them from their sins. Pray for their witness to their families and communities.

Psalm 90; Mark 6:14-7:30

- 1.** How much do you suffer for your faith in Christ? Have you been made fun of, have you been ostracized, have you lost a promotion at work? Think of those whom God calls to share him in the hard places of the world who risk, and sometimes, lose their very lives. How should you pray for them? Do it!
- 2.** The disciples told Jesus to send the five thousand away to buy themselves something to eat. As you pray, are you tempted to tell God what to do, and is your heart hardened when he does not follow your instructions? Read Luke 11: 1-4 and 22:42. Model your prayers after the one who taught us to pray.
- 3.** Some traditions are passed down through decades or even centuries; others begin with new generations. Whether in church or in your family, what traditions serve to express your faith or help to build it for those around you?
- 4.** Jesus told his disciples that sin came from their hearts. What things can you do to protect your own heart from evil? Are there people, things or circumstances that distract from that protection?

Psalm 91; Mark 8:1-9:29

- 1.** One might think the disciples would have learned from Jesus' feeding the five thousand not to ask later how the four thousand could be fed. Think of time when we forget lessons taught about God's faithful care in our lives and give in to worry, fear and despair? Ask the Holy Spirit to plant the truths about God's steadfast love deep into your soul.
- 2.** Read Jesus' question to his disciples in Mark 8:18 and compare with the apostle's proclamation in 1 John 1:1-3. What has made the difference? How are your hearing and eyesight when they relate to Jesus? Are you compelled to share the Gospel?
- 3.** When asked, the apostle Peter proclaimed Jesus to be the Christ – prophet, priest and king. When you are asked, who do you say Jesus is? How do you describe him?
- 4.** Jesus is called God's beloved son six times in the New Testament – four of those times declared by God himself. God sacrificed his beloved son so that you can call him father. Have you thanked him today for the gift of his son given for you?

Psalm 92; Mark 9:30-10:52

- 1.** The church has many faces, all seeking to share the Gospel. Take time to pray, not only for your own church, but for other churches in your community, regardless of their denomination or affiliation – pray the same things for them that you pray for your own church.
- 2.** How do you keep your saltiness? Have you allowed your testimony to be diluted by today's culture, other religions or ideologies? Are there life changes needed to maintain your savor?
- 3.** The rich young man's treasure was his wealth. While you may not be affluent, is there another thing – a person, a position, a possession, an activity that you value above following Jesus? Ask him to show you if there is anyone or anything that stands in the way of your relationship with him.
- 4.** Following Jesus' example, where do you see yourself as a servant in your family, your church, your community? Will you pray, asking God to show you new ways to serve others?

Psalm 93; Mark 11:1-12:17

- 1.** Do you wonder if any of the many who cheered Jesus when he entered Jerusalem on the colt were mindful of the Zechariah 9:9 prophecy? Having the gift of the New Testament to show us the fulfilment of many Old Testament prophecies, how does that shape your hope for Jesus' promised return as king? Does it cause your prayer life to be overflowing with praise?
- 2.** Is it your habit, whenever you pray, to search your heart and see if there is need anywhere for forgiveness? Do you easily extend grace to those who offend you?
- 3.** The chief priests, scribes and elders understood Jesus used their scriptures against them. God has given us his Word for our benefit. Whenever you read your Bible, do you ask the Holy Spirit to teach and encourage you through it? How has he touched your heart recently?
- 4.** Caught in their hypocrisy, the unbelieving Pharisees and Herodians marveled at Jesus. As a believer, you can find regular cause to marvel at Jesus' teaching. In addition to your Bible what resources do you use to continue building your appreciation of him?

Psalm 94; Mark 12:18-13:37

- 1.** Jesus told the Sadducees they did not know the Scriptures or the power of God - they were wrong. When you read and study your Bible, always ask God to show you his truth. Are there ways you are tempted to be swayed by culture or contemporary trends of thought? Can you identify ways today's culture can draw Christians away from God's truth?
- 2.** As you experience it today and have even experienced it over time, has your understanding God's love deepened? In what ways? How have those ways encouraged or enabled you to love yourself? To love others?
- 3.** The news is filled with reports of tribulation throughout the world. The church is persecuted, its members imprisoned, tortured and even put to death. Read Philippians 4:4-7. Pray not only for your own heart but also for those suffering throughout the world.
- 4.** We don't know when Jesus will return with great power and glory, but we do know that he is coming. Consider how you are preparing for your king.

Psalm 95; Mark 14:1-65

- 1.** The Jews celebrated the Passover to remember their miraculous deliverance from slavery in Egypt. Jesus instituted communion, instructing the disciples to remember him. When participating in communion, what do you remember? Do you remember Jesus' sacrifice to free you from sin? Do you recall his purchase of your freedom from spiritual bondage? Remembering gives great cause for rejoicing!
- 2.** In his zeal, Peter thought much too highly of himself before he denied Jesus. Praise God that, when we fail our Savior, just as he did Peter, he forgives us, restores us and uses us. Are there areas in you life where you need forgiveness, restoration and a renewed sense of his work in and through you?
- 3.** When you plead with your Heavenly Father concerning things that distress and trouble you, are you willing to follow the example of Jesus and pray, "Not what I will, but what you will"?
- 4.** When Jesus was betrayed and arrested, the disciples left him and fled. Pray for courage for those God sends to the hard places of the world to share the Gospel. Look to him to give them all that is needed to stand fast for him.

Psalm 118; Mark 14:66-Mark 15:20

- 1.** The chief priests manipulated the release of the murderer Barabbas instead of Jesus, the sinless Son of God. Selfishness and personal gain chosen instead of righteousness - and Pilate relented. Pray that God will always give you courage to stand for what is right over what is convenient or self-serving.

- 2.** Take time and imagine being mocked, beaten, spit on and stripped of all dignity. Jesus suffered those things in silence for you - and then He went to the cross and died for you. As you dwell on the enormity of His sacrifice, thank Him for His great love for you!