

A black and white photograph of a crowd of people, likely at a church service, with their hands raised in the air. The image is slightly blurred, creating a sense of movement and energy. The hands are silhouetted against a bright, hazy background.

**foundations[®]
for Middle School**

**20 Day Devotional for Middle School
Worship**



**SOUTHLAND
CHURCH**

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Versions of scripture quotations are noted.

Welcome to...

foundations[®] for Middle School

Dear Student,

This eBook is a tool that we hope will help you to get into the habit of doing regular devotions with Jesus. Now what are devotions? Devotions are simply a time you set aside to spend time with Jesus one-on-one! When you do devotions you pray, read your Bible and listen to God's voice for encouragement and direction in your life. You may already do this, or maybe you don't know where to start. This eBook is a GREAT place to start! Each time you do devotions you will want your Bible, a journal (like a notebook) and a pen!

If you have any questions about this eBook or how to do devotions please ask Pastor Amy or Kyle – of course you can email me directly as well! I trust you will grow closer and closer to Jesus this year!

In Him,



Thom Dick
Pastor of Resource Development
Southland Church

We welcome any ideas you have to make *Foundations for Middle School* better. If you want to offer some feedback or have questions about how to use *Foundations* more effectively talk to the pastor in your ministry area or email Pastor Thom at thom@mysouthland.com.

Foundations for Middle School is also available for download at www.therenewedfamily.com.

DAY 1 - Introduction

We all have our heroes – and so we should! There’s nothing wrong with looking up to a professional athlete (I would think middle schoolers ALL have to look up to most professional athletes... because they’re short! Hahaha!) Maybe you’re not even the typical middle schooler and you have a pianist or better yet a composer who is your hero. Maybe you’re an über nerd so you look up to some weirdo computer programmer who lived in his mom’s basement. Regardless, every kid needs a hero and you’re a kid so you need a hero!

Probably if someone asked you, you’d even have a hero in the Bible. “God is my hero!” Well aren’t you a good Christian kid! Of course God *is* the hero of the Bible, but what I love is that God, our Hero extraordinaire, uses *people* to accomplish His goals. James 5 tells us that Elijah was a person, just like the rest of us. Did you even read that right? ELIJAH! Call-Down-Fire-From-Heaven Elijah! Elijah the Parter-Of-Rivers on the way to his FLAMING CHARIOT OF DEATH! He was a dude with the same beating heart and breathing lungs as anyone else.

Now compared to a lot of people who are too afraid to stand up for what they believe, sure, Elijah is a hero. But he wasn’t a kid when he was taking on the prophets of Baal – and he still ran away afraid afterward. But God! He really was the Hero! After all Elijah may have *called* for the fire from heaven, but God was the one who lit the cosmic match! Elijah was only a hero because God made him one.

Has God ever helped you to be heroic? I hope He has, because it’s a pretty rad experience! How did you respond? I hope you turned around and thanked God in the loudest voice for allowing you to be part of His story! That is worship. When we are overwhelmed that our Hero used *us*, regular blood-pumping, air-breathing lumps of dust to do something amazing, well the right response is worship.

God really is the Hero of the Bible, but He chose to use regular old people to do His work and when they got it – they worshipped! These people are the ones we are going to learn from this month. It will be an exercise of worship and hopefully you’ll come to see that we don’t deserve anything from God, but that God “with undeserved kindness” (Ro 11:5) saved us and uses us for His purposes!

Who is your favourite regular person in the Bible that God turned into a hero? How did they respond when God used them? Spend some time thanking God for using ordinary people for extraordinary things!

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 2 - Moses

Read Exodus 15:1-18

The Israelites have just witnessed some of the most powerful miracles ever seen on earth. The 10 plagues were absolutely mind-blowing, but God outdid Himself by causing a wind to blow so powerfully that the Red Sea actually separated allowing Moses to lead the Israelites through on dry ground. (And then the water rushed back and drowned Pharaoh and his army... that's just sick!)

So what can Moses do? He sings! Now notice the words, he sings. First he sings and reminds himself and everyone else what God has just done. Then he starts talking about the power of the Lord. Worship is about both remembering and honouring. We remember what God has done and honour Him for His strength and character.

What has God done in your life? Is there a song we sing at church or that you know that reflects how you feel about God when you hear it? Do you have it? Why not turn it on and spend time praising God for how He has rescued *you!*

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 3 - Miriam

Read Exodus 15:20-21

After Moses sang his longer song, his sister, Miriam grabbed some girlfriends and a couple percussion instruments and started dancing! She did add on a verse to the song Moses had just written, but it is short so they might have sung it over and over again as they danced and played their instruments.

Psalm 100:1 (NLT) say, *Shout with joy to the LORD, all the earth!* But I especially like what the ESV bible says *“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!”*

I imagine that all those instruments of drums and tambourines would have made an amazingly beautiful noise! I wonder how far that noise would have reached... all the way across the Red Sea? (Probably not... it's pretty wide) but it would have carried far over the crashing waves and far over the sandy hills – who would have heard it? Do you think the Israelites would have cared?

When God does a *great* thing in our lives we need to make a joyful noise without any shame or embarrassment – we might even dance for God – because we just can't contain ourselves and the gratitude in our hearts. We can worship God with more than just words – we can sing one verse over and over again. We can play instruments for Him *without* any words. And we can dance!

Is there a time when you were so amazed at God that you took a risk and raised your hands, or knelt down, or *danced* in worship? Why did you do it? How did you feel after? Were you embarrassed or did you just not care what other people thought of you?

Ask God to help you to worship without fear of what your friends think of you!

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 4 - The golden calf

Read Exodus 32:1-14

Ok so occasionally we can learn a lesson from the foolish rookie mistakes people make in the Bible – the golden calf was one of them – and it almost cost the Israelites their lives.

What happened here? Why did they decide to disobey God so terribly, *just* after witnessing some of the greatest miracles that had ever taken place on earth?

I wonder if it isn't the reason that many of us worship the wrong things today as well. An idol is anything that you worship in the place of God. Think about it like this – let's say you have the option to play video games for a couple hours or spend time with God, what do you choose? Do you "do the right thing" and spend 15 minutes with God rushing through devotions so that you can get to your video games? (Meanwhile your devotions sucked because you were already thinking about how you would beat the next level.) What about the power of friends in your life? Given the choice between going to cell or going out with friends from school – what would you choose?

God wants to be first in our lives – but sometimes it can seem like He is far away and we get impatient waiting for Him so we fill up His time with other stuff and activities. That's not the right response! If God feels far away, you go right on worshipping Him because it's likely a test to see if you are going to stick with it!

Have you ever stopped doing the right thing because God feels far away or not real? Have you confessed those times? Are there idols in your life that are more important than God? Confess it!

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 5 - Jericho

Read Joshua 6:1-17

Jericho was the first city that the Israelites conquered on their way into the Promised Land that God had promised to Abraham hundreds of years earlier. They are coming out of the desert where their parents and grandparents died along the way out of Egypt. It's now time for a whole new generation of Israelites to experience the miracles of God!

So who are these heroes who took Jericho? Actually there is only one hero – God. Think about it – how many cities have been conquered by walking around its walls? Not too many. Actually only one. So once again God used ordinary people to take down an enemy – once again God turned ordinary people into heroes!

But why were they successful? In **Joshua 1:8 (NLT)** God tells Joshua and the people of Israel to *Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.* So why were the Israelites successful? Because they paid attention to God's word! Meditating on God's word means that you spend time with it. You read it carefully. You study it to find out what it really means. And when you do that you are actually worshipping God! This time worshipping came *first* and then God was able to make the Israelites successful!

Worship isn't only a response – it prepares you for action! Why not spend some time now looking back at that Bible passage and ask God for one big truth or idea that you can worship Him for. He might just use it to prepare you for something big. (But don't start marching around your school or anything... that won't work and you'll look weird.)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 6 - Deborah

Read Judges 4

Oh this is one of those *great* stories in the Bible – it even has TWO heroes in it – Deborah and Jael. Two wicked awesome women warriors! Think of their bravery! Deborah leading the army into battle and Jael finishing off Israel’s enemy. No doubt about it, this is a great story. But where’s the worship... Ah that’s in Judges 5 which is actually an entire chapter of worship! In it Deborah recounts many of the details of why she led the army into battle and how Sisera died at the hands of Jael. But before she launches into her epic retelling of the week’s events she says this **Judges 5:3 (NLT)** *“Listen, you kings! Pay attention, you mighty rulers! For I will sing to the LORD. I will make music to the LORD, the God of Israel.*

Why is Deborah writing a song? She is writing it so that people remember what *God* did and she is singing back the story to God.

What did God do for you *today*? Can you spend time singing your day back to Him? Can you write Him a poem about your day and praise Him for it? Can you draw Him a picture from your day and then praise Him for it?

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 7 - The women of the town

Ruth 4:14-15 (NLT) *Then the women of the town said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!"*

There are many tragic stories in the Bible and the story of Naomi and Ruth is one of them. In very short form, Naomi leaves Judah with her husband and two sons because of a drought. In the country of Moab her sons find wives, one of whom is Ruth, and they both marry. Sadly Naomi's husband and both sons die and all three women are left as widows. After heart wrenching prayer, Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem her town and Ruth insists on coming along.

In those days women had no rights and without husbands they were left to fend for themselves. But God had other plans and a relative (called a kinsman redeemer) named Boaz noticed Ruth and although they have to work out some politics first they eventually marry and have a baby whom they name Obed. Obed grows up and has a son named Jesse and Jesse eventually has a son name David. Yes, the David and Goliath, David.

But look at how the women in the town respond when they see how God takes care of Ruth and Naomi – *they worship!* Amazing how even the miracles in other people's lives cause our hearts to worship.

Ask God to remind you of some amazing miracles that you have heard about in someone else's life. What does that tell you about what God is actually like? Spend time worshipping Him for that quality!

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Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 8 - Hannah

Read 1 Samuel 1

Have you noticed how many of the stories in the Bible include women who can't have children? You're a kid so you won't understand this until you are married one day and want to have your own children, but when someone wants to have children and can't it is very *very* painful. God made women's bodies in such an amazing way that they can actually grow little people right inside of them!

But being a mother has more than just having a body that can grow a person, God also made women with the right emotions to *want* to have a baby. So when it isn't possible, it can be emotionally painful. That is why Hannah was so incredibly sad and that is why she made the unbelievable promise that if God would give her a baby, she would give that baby back to Him.

Worship sometimes means giving back something God has given to you! It is an act of worship to put money into the offering at church. Whose money is that anyways? Is it yours or is it God's? But this is the thing, does God really need you to give him a loonie from your allowance? No of course not – He's God – if He needed money He could probably make some! But *people* need to give their money to God to remind them that it is all His anyways.

Worship is giving something back to God after He has given it to you! (And by the way, Hannah wrote a worship song after as well! 1 Samuel 2)

What can you give to God as an act of worship? You might not actually give it to the church, perhaps you could give something to someone in need of clothes. Maybe you could give your lunch money to a kid who always gets vegetables for lunch. Maybe you could give your *time* to someone or to the church – that would be an act of worship as well because time is a gift from God!

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 9 - Saul

Read 1 Samuel 13:1-15

Have you ever noticed that after you worship that you feel different? You might feel lighter, or just happy, or maybe you feel a little bit convicted about something God pointed out. But what about brave? Have you ever felt like you had more courage after you spent time worshipping?

This isn't uncommon. Many people find strength when they spend time in worship. In fact often before Israel went into battle against an enemy they would first stop to worship God, usually by offering a sacrifice. This offering would give courage to the troops and would honour God who would in return give victory.

But worship has to be done right. And it was against the rules for King Saul to offer sacrifices – that was the job of a prophet. The reason this was so important is that King's tend to get a bit arrogant so when God required a prophet to do certain jobs it humbled the King. Unfortunately, King Saul had pride growing silently in his heart and he became impatient waiting for Samuel to offer the sacrifice before they went to war with Philistines and did it himself.

Look, this will never work. You can't force God to do something! Let's say you didn't study for a test and now you're panicking, so what do you do? You spend 10 more minutes doing your morning devotions than usual. Do you think 10 more minutes reading your Bible or praying is going to *force* God to help you with your test? Come on now, that isn't how it works!

If you are going to worship, then *worship!* But don't do it because you actually just want to get something from God. We worship God because of who *He is* not for what He can do for us.

Have you been guilty of worshipping God for the wrong reasons? Ask the Lord to show you your heart and confess anything He shows you.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalms 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 10 - David

Read 2 Samuel 6:22

It's no secret that David was a crazy, heart-full-of-love, energetic worshipper! I mean, King David was so head-over-heels in love with God that when they brought a very important holy piece of furniture back to the Tabernacle in Jerusalem he literally danced his clothes off.

That's awesome (not recommended in church... but still awesome!)

Can you imagine being so completely in love with Jesus that you wouldn't care what other people think about you? That's the goal, did you know that? To be *that* crazy in love with Jesus!

Do you worry what other people think about you when you worship? Some of that is natural, and some of it is even good, because we don't need to be *weird*. BUT... if that *keeps* you from worshipping the way your heart wants to, then it isn't good. Jesus needs to be number one. Ask Him what keeps you from completely being yourself in worship. Ask Him what He thinks about you and ask Him to give you a picture of how much He loves you.

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 11 - David again

Read Psalm 51

The Psalms are the worship songs of the Bible. David wrote a whole bunch of them himself and while they are all amazing this one is pretty amazing. Do you have any idea why David wrote this song for God? Because he was caught in a *major* sin. He wasn't caught in a little white lie, or stealing a bit of money, he slept with a woman who wasn't his wife, she became pregnant and then to cover up the whole thing had her husband killed. This is a nasty, messy ordeal from start to finish.

How could it be that after such an awful sinful act, Luke would write about David in **Acts 13:22 (NLT)** that *...God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'*

How is it possible that a man after God's own heart would do something like this? How could God possibly say that about David? Well it's because God doesn't measure us by our sinful actions, He measures us according to our heart towards Him. No one is good enough to go to Heaven, we are *all* horribly sinful. But God has mercy on us. He looks at the desires of our hearts and can tell if we mean it when we say sorry or not.

David meant it. In fact he wrote Psalm 51 to prove to God that he meant his sorry.

Have you ever been forgiven for something big? Doesn't that make you want to praise God? Think back on something God has forgiven you for, something big. Now write out a letter or a poem of thanks to God. Turn what was a nasty situation into a song of worship.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 12 - Asaph

Read Psalm 76

David wasn't the only song-writer in the Bible. We have already seen songs by Miriam, Deborah and Moses, but there were many others as well. One of those writers was a man named Asaph.

Asaph was a priest in the temple from the tribe of Levi. He was one of the singers in the temple! And writing worship music and singing ran in his family because after Asaph disappears from the stories in the Bible we start to read about "the sons of Asaph" who were also singers and musicians!

For some of us the thought of writing music for the church isn't even remotely interesting, but for others there is nothing you would love more than hearing a song you wrote for God sung in a church service! Asaph wrote about all sorts of topics, like judgment, confusion, faith, history and God's power; all things that Israel needed to remember.

What would you write about if you wrote a worship song for church? What would be important to remind people about? Why would you choose that topic? Ask God what He thinks about it.

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 13 - Micah

Read Micah 6:1-8

Micah was a prophet who lived during the reigns of King Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. There were other prophets at this time as well including Hosea and Isaiah. Micah had a strong sense of right and wrong, and treating people fairly and properly. He didn't like the idea that people in power would abuse their neighbours. But he especially despised when worship turned into religion.

Does that sound strange to you? I mean isn't Christianity a religion? Well technically it is but a religion is basically seen as a set of rules, dos and don'ts and that isn't what Christianity is! Christianity is better described as a *relationship* than as a religion. We are supposed to worship God because we love Him and we know how much He loves us, but isn't it easy to come to church and sing the songs and say the prayers just because it's "what we do?" When we start doing things "just because" instead of out of love for God, then there is a danger that Christianity is becoming "just" a religion for us!

That is what was happening when Micah wrote his prophesies! People were doing all the "right" things, offering sacrifices and going to the temple, but that isn't what God wanted! He wanted far more! He wanted their hearts!

Micah told the people of Israel and Judah that God doesn't really care about all their sacrifices, what He wants is that they *"do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."*

Do you worship God because that's what you're supposed to do or because you are so in love with Him? Do you love to do what is right because of that love? Do you show that you are humble by asking God what He would like you to do?

Spend some time thinking and asking God these questions. Write down what He shows you and confess any sins that pop up.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalms 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 14 – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

Read Daniel 3

In Daniel 3 we have a story about the *cost* of worshipping God. Remember what you read about yesterday? Whether you were worshipping God because you were supposed to or because you loved Him? Well, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego *proved* they loved God by worshipping only Him *even if it meant their death!*

Now we don't really face this kind of craziness where we live, but that doesn't mean that Christians elsewhere in the world don't. For many, many Christians, daring to worship God is puts their freedom and life at risk. Can you imagine? Would that change your attitude towards worship? Do you hold God in such high regard that you would be so daring?

Ask God to make you *this brave*. That no matter who or what comes in the future, you will *never* stop worshipping God!

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalms 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 15 - Angels

Read Luke 2:1-20

Ok, pause for a minute. Can you imagine being a shepherd on the night that Jesus was born? Out in the dark, still night where the only sounds were the deep breathing of your fellow shepherds and the occasionally baaing of a sheep.

Can you imagine doing what you had literally done every other night for your life when the sky erupts from east to west of angels! Out of the night sky the sounds of the most tremendous music you have ever heard and then you realize what they are saying, they are *worshipping* God!

Think about why an angel would worship God. Why do you worship God? I worship Him because He died on the cross for my sins and helped me out of a life far away from Him. But if an angel sins they don't get a second chance, so they don't praise God for saving them from their sins! Also they live with God so they don't need to do anything to feel close to God – they are always *with God!*

But they still worship Him! Why? Because God deserves worship and they know it! God doesn't deserve worship only because of what He has done for us (although we should worship Him for that too) but rather, God deserves worship because He is *God*. God is good! God is holy! God is awesome! The angels get it and when Jesus was born they went so out of their mind with joyful worship that the sky was lit up! Awesome!

Write down some characteristics of God. How would you describe God to someone? Then spend some time thanking Him for being those things.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 16 - The Wise Men

Read Matthew 2:1-12

Strange as it may sound there were a group of magicians (actually) from a country far away from Israel who had been told that when a certain star appeared in the sky that a king would be born in a country west of theirs. I wonder who told them! I wonder how long they watched the heavens for the promised sign of the king!

Whatever the answer to those questions, *they were watching!* They knew a king was coming and they didn't want to miss out! Not only did they want to make sure they saw the sign, when they did see it, they were ready to go on a LONG journey to visit this amazing child, and they brought *expensive* gifts as well.

When you come to church, are you prepared? Are you waiting for the chance to come and meet with your King? Do you bring any gifts along to show how much He means to you? We can learn a lot from the Wise Men, the Magi, who weren't even Jews! They were foreigners who were watching for a Jewish Messiah. Amazing.

Ask God how He would like you to prepare your heart to meet with Him this week.

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 17 - The Ten Lepers

Read Luke 17:15

Leprosy. Yikes. Do you know what this disease did to people? It wasn't nice believe me. But probably the worst part of being a leper, wasn't the fact that you would suffer and eventually die from the disease, but that you were made to live far away from people for fear of spreading the disease to others. Once you had leprosy, you not only had a death sentence but you also knew that you would spend the rest of your life begging for money and living in isolation. It was a very, very lonely life.

But Jesus knew the cure! And one day while travelling through the countryside ten lepers called out to Jesus from a distance knowing that He was able to heal them. Jesus didn't actually heal them this time, but gave them instructions to present themselves to the priest and when they did, they were healed! Wow! What a difference this was going to make in their lives. But look what happened next... ten lepers were healed and only one praised God and rushed back to Jesus to thank Him. Not only that, but this leper was a "foreigner" he was doing more than was even expected of him.

What a tragedy! I think I sometimes feel bad for Jesus. You know kind of like when I see a person kindly holding the door for someone in the mall who has a ton of bags in their hands, but they don't even thank the one holding the door. That isn't right!

But you know who I feel *sorrier* for? The 9 lepers who didn't come back. They missed out on the best part! The best part is getting to know the One who healed you. Something happens in our hearts when we worship God, it's not *about* us, but it sure is *good* for us!

Are there things that God has done in your life that you haven't said thank You for? Ask God! He'll show you! Write them down and then say thank You to God for each one.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 18 - The Centurion at the cross

Read Luke 23:26-49

We don't usually pay attention to all the details going on around us. There are many details in the stories in the Bible that we miss because sometimes there are just *so many details*. But then there are details we miss because we have read the story a million times and we know it too well.

For example, you may have read a thousand times about the centurion at the cross who, at the moment Jesus died, exclaimed, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" But has it occurred to you that he was *worshipping God* right there at the foot of a nasty, gory, bloody cross.

I often worship Jesus for the price He paid when He died on the cross for my sins, but literally the moment He died someone was worshipping Him because of it. Think about that. The very first words out of someone's mouth after Jesus died were words of worship.

When Jesus was born, the angels worshipped. When Jesus died, a centurion worshipped. When Jesus healed the leper, the leper returned praising God. However, Jesus wasn't worshipped by everyone. Only those who recognized who He was.

The angels knew Him. The leper knew Him. The Centurion recognized who He was. When you realize who Jesus actually is – you will worship Him.

Ask God to show you something about Himself that you maybe haven't noticed before. Worship Him for what He shows you.

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 19 - The Corinthians (worship should be orderly)

Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40

Talking about passionate worship, the Corinthian Christians were right up there! These were some of Paul's friends and disciples from one of the churches he started on his journeys. Passion is a great thing when we are passionate about the right thing, but the thing is, passionate people can be... well... a little emotional. I don't know this for sure but when you read the stories of the Corinthians you get the impression they fit that description. In the first letter Paul wrote them he quickly mentions that he has heard there are division within the church. The people are fighting with each other and worse – they are fighting over who is their real leader – Paul or Apollos! Paul sets things straight though and tells them that he and Apollos are a team and that God used them *both* at Corinth.

Then Paul launches into a bunch of other teaching, but focusses pretty heavily on spiritual gifts and how to use them in a church service. Apparently they weren't just passionate about their leaders, they were passionate about the Holy Spirit and all the ways that He shows up during church.

Paul points out that this isn't bad! Prophecy is good! Speaking in tongues is good! BUT what isn't good is when the church service gets so crazy that it is out of hand. Paul says at the end of chapter 14 (what you just read) that worship needs to be done in a proper and orderly way.

Why do you think that is? Well can you imagine if someone who doesn't know Jesus were to walk into church for the first time and just see a bunch of people being all weird and crazy. It might scare them off! No when we worship, we can dance, sing loud, cry, kneel and raise our hands, but we need to be careful that we are always respectful and not just being crazy for the sake of being crazy.

Spend some time thanking God that He gives us order and that He isn't a God of chaos. Ask Him to help our church to be passionate about worshipping Him, but in a way that honours Him!

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

DAY 20 - The elders

Read Revelation 4

Here we are on the last day of this devotional booklet having gone pretty much through the whole Bible looking at worship. In worship, ordinary people come into the presence of an extraordinary God! It is in worship that God makes us brave!

Do you know why worship is *so powerful*? It's because it is *eterna!* There are some things that we do on earth that we will not do in Heaven and there are some things we will surely do in Heaven that we don't do on earth (I'm hoping we fly, for example!). But one thing that we do on earth that we will also do in heaven is worship!

Can you imagine what it will be like when you see God's throne room for the first time and see the smoke from the incense rising up through beams of light and hear the songs of angels and the voices of the elders bowing before God's throne saying "*You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.*"

Wow! That will be amazing! But did you know that God promises us that we can actually go there right now? **Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)** says, *So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

And just how do you get there? Through worship of course! There is something supernatural that happens when we worship that somehow, in some way, we are brought right into the throne room of God. Amazing isn't it? Doesn't it make you brave to think you can go there?

Doesn't it make you want to *worship* the God on the throne there?

Work on memory verse:

No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NLT)

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care.

Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)