# W/A/S DEVOTIONAL

## What are the Ways?

From reflecting on Scripture and on lives lived with God, FPCM's Staff and Session have distilled 25 Ways that God calls us to live our our faith in community and in devotion to Him.

These Ways are meant to help us create an "atmosphere thick with love," and a culture where God's character is evident in all we do. In short, they show who we aim to be.

# How do I Devote?

#### 1. Pick your Best Time and Space

Give God your best time, not your leftovers. Look for a time in your day when you are alert and uninterrupted. It can be helpful to find a location which feels prayerful to you.

#### 2. Be Attentive to Yourself

Before you Devote, be attentive to your own heart and mind. Are you feeling preoccupied... disappointed... resentful? Your personal state will impact your prayer life. Make it known to God.

#### 3. Be Attentive to God

This is your time with God. It is personal and relational. Jesus is listening and the Spirit is present with you. Be with God in this time. Even in silence you can know and enjoy His presence.

#### 4. Read. Think. Pray.

Devoting yourself to God is simple. **Read** scripture, **Think** about what it means and means to you, and **Pray** about it. This can be a time to engage your heart and mind toward God's calling. Don't rush it.

Savor your time in the word and in prayer with God.

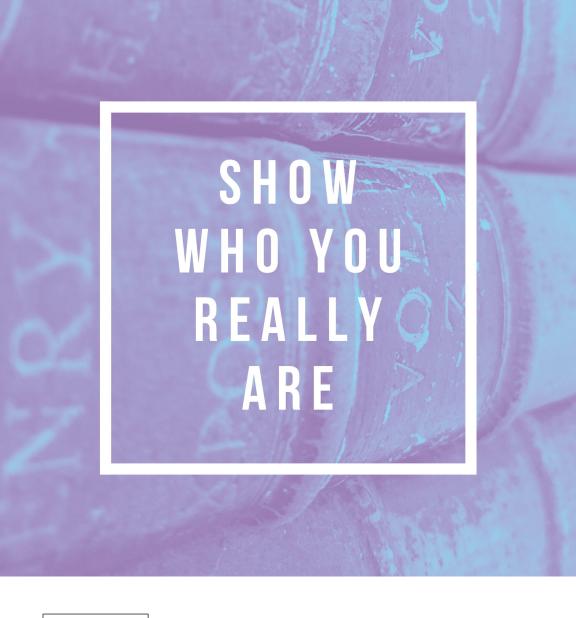
#### 5. Live it Out

Now do something about it.

# **Rest and Reflect**

Each Sunday is an opportunity to Rest with God and Reflect on His presence and power in the previous week and how you will respond in the next.

Sabbath can be a powerful force in your life. Take a break and recline into God's grace. Let work take a back seat to joy and peace. Remember all that God has done for you this week. *God* is in control.



Sunday

Our church is for "real" people. Bring your true self, including your joys, your sorrows, your fears, your strengths and your weaknesses. God loves you as you are. Don't hide your struggles, failures or problems.

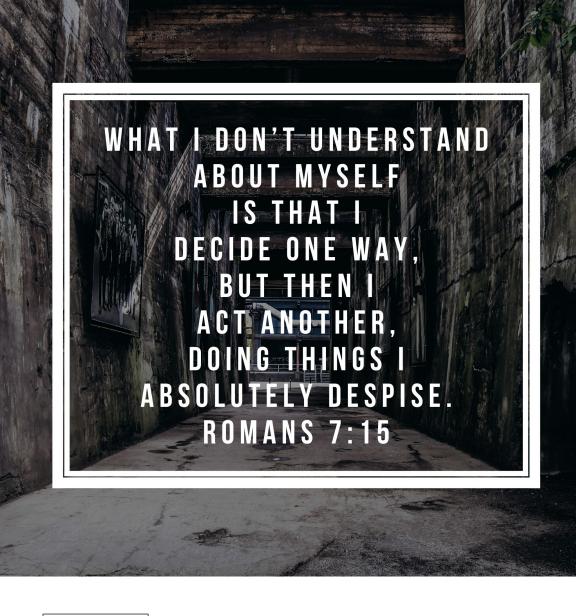


Monday

**READ**: Romans 5:1-11

**THINK**: Christianity is not moralistic teaching to train yourself into who you should be. It is a place where a mighty God breaks into your life when you were utterly helpless to set things right. Your goodness, transformation, and growth all originate in God's work. So Show Who You Really Are: someone who has been rescued by the power and might of God.

**PRAY**: that God would show you how you are relying on your own strength, not His.

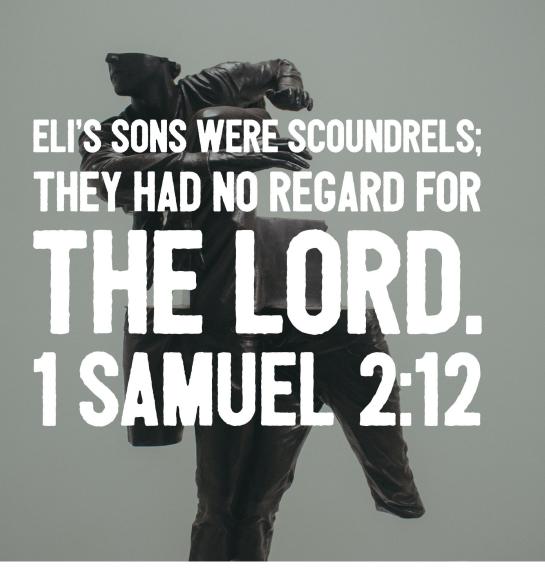


Tuesday

**READ**: Romans 7:7-25

**THINK**: Sometimes this feels like the quintessential statement of the Christian journey: "I decide one way, but then I act another." Sin breaks us so deeply that even when we plan to do the right thing, we don't always manage it. When you Show Who You Really Are, you remind yourself and others that faith is a journey. No one becomes righteous overnight, but we try to move in the right direction.

**PRAY**: the Spirit would draw you away from ingrained sins.

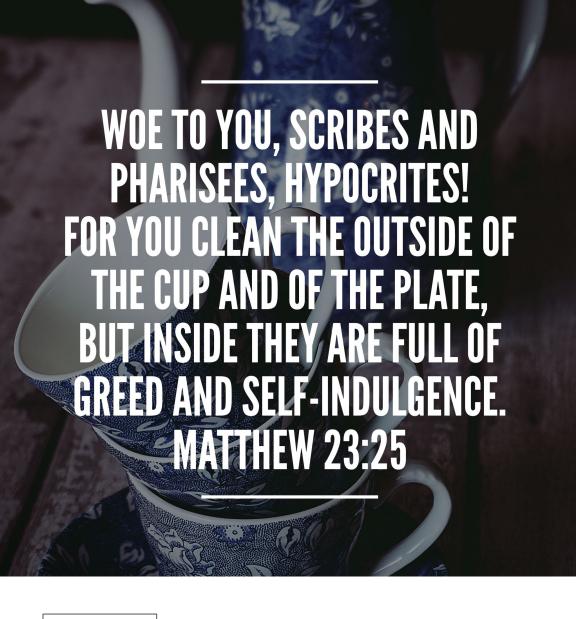


Wednesday

**READ**: 1 Samuel 2:12-26

**THINK**: Nothing breaks your expectations of control and perfection like kids. Eli, the chief priest of Israel, didn't have perfect children. In fact, they were wicked. Yet well short of wickedness, we often become embarrassed of our family's messiness as if messiness makes us bad Christians. Don't "bring your Sunday best," instead Show Who You Really Are; mess and all.

**PRAY**: that God would help us move towards righteousness in authenticity.

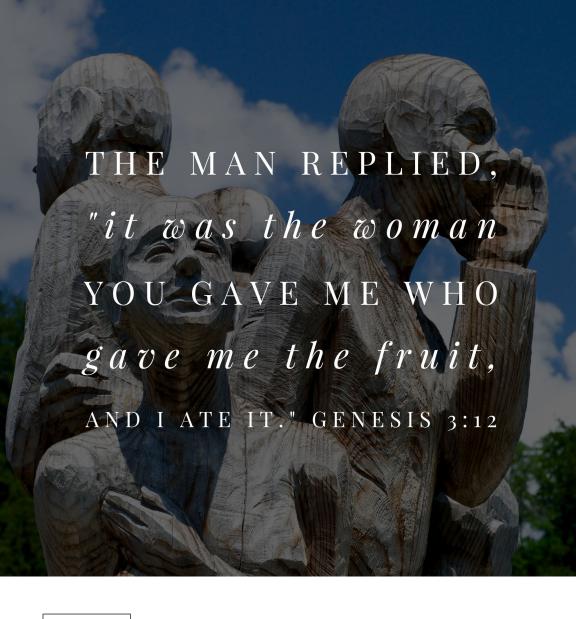


Thursday

**READ**: Matthew 23:13-39

**THINK**: Jesus loved everyone, but sometimes in His interactions with the Pharisees, it's hard to see it. In aiming to look good, they neglect actually trying to be good. Why go through the hard heart-work of rooting out wickedness when you can just hide it away? When you Show Who You Really Are you might look worse, but you will be in the process of becoming better.

**PRAY**: the Spirit would give us the grace to be a broken community together.

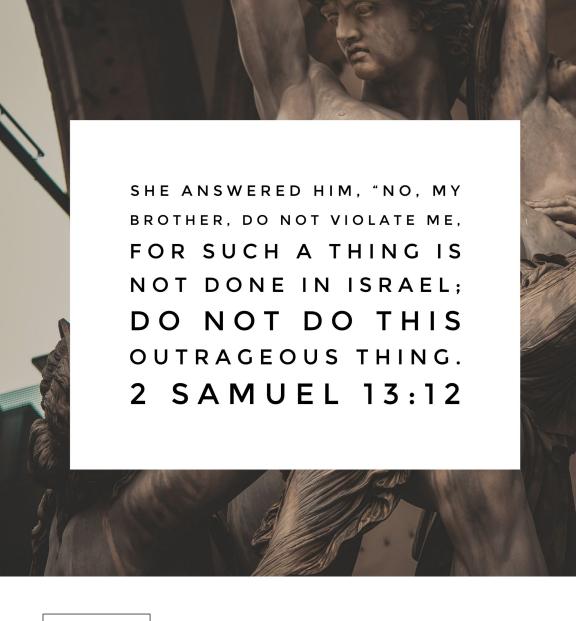


Friday

**READ**: Genesis 3:1-13

**THINK**: This is advanced blame shifting. To Adam, his sin is both God's and Eve's fault. When the ultimate goal is *looking* blameless, we work to shift blame to someone else. When the goal is *becoming* blameless, we accept our failures and seek forgiveness. How blessed we are that the prerequisite for faith isn't blamelessness, but repentance. Show Who You Really Are by owning your mistakes and finding rest in God's grace.

**PRAY**: in repentance for the blame you would rather shift.



### Saturday

**READ**: 2 Samuel 13:1-22

THINK: Does that hurt to read? Tamar cries, "No, my brother, do not violate me," and he takes her anyway. Those words or words like them have been yelled by members of our church at friends, family, or strangers. If our relationships aren't safe enough for Tamar to to share the weight of being raped, then they aren't safe enough. When we Show Who We Really Are we look to create a community safe enough for any hurt.

**PRAY**: that God would lead us to be a safe space for survivors of abuse.