

# WAYS 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 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.



# FIND STRENGTH IN BELONGING

Sunday

At FPCM, you're loved and valued. Claim us as your family. Rather than withdrawing, allow struggles and disappointments to deepen your sense of belonging. Pray for chances to bring healing to relationships. Please be patient! God isn't yet finished with us or with you.

Remember to Rest and Reflect on God's goodness and how you can *Find Strength in Belonging* this week.



**BUT WHEN PETER CAME TO ANTIOCH,  
I HAD TO OPPOSE HIM TO HIS FACE,  
FOR WHAT HE DID WAS VERY WRONG.  
GALATIANS 2:11**

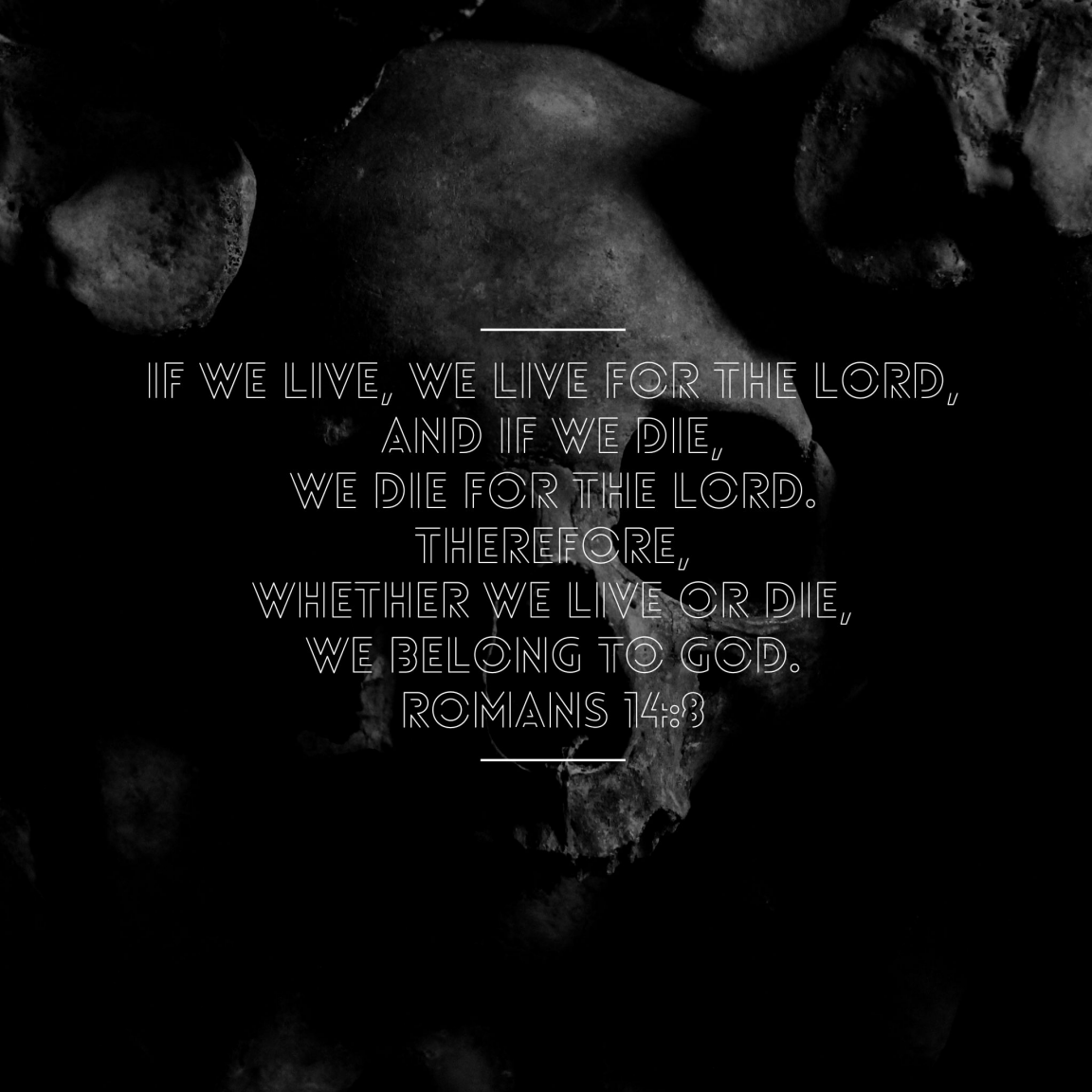
Monday

**READ:** Galatians 2:11-21

**THINK:** Even in the very early church there were arguments. Notice, though, that Paul doesn't leave the established church over it, nor slander Peter. Instead, he confronts Peter and corrects him to his face. The church is a bunch of sinful people trying to follow God well. That is a recipe for failure, but when we *Find Strength in Belonging* we find space for disagreements to be overcome by grace and truth.

**PRAY:** that grace and truth would overcome disagreements here.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.



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IF WE LIVE, WE LIVE FOR THE LORD,  
AND IF WE DIE,  
WE DIE FOR THE LORD.  
THEREFORE,  
WHETHER WE LIVE OR DIE,  
WE BELONG TO GOD.  
ROMANS 14:8

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Tuesday

**READ:** Romans 14:5-9

**THINK:** We belong first to Jesus. In His death and resurrection, He makes a claim on your life and calls you friend, child, and heir. Though we were in rebellion, He adopted us into His family; and we belong with Him. *Find Strength in Belonging* to a God who created you, knows you, rescued you, loves you, empowers you, and looks forward to spending time with you.

**PRAY:** God would show you what He thinks of you.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.



THE LORD IS  
COMPASSIONATE  
AND GRACIOUS,  
SLOW TO ANGER,  
ABOUNDING  
IN LOVE.  
PSALM 103:8

Wednesday

**READ:** Psalm 103

**THINK:** This is what the God that you belong to is like: slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. Too often the reason people choose not to belong to a local church is because we have not mirrored this God in our interactions. The number one adjective non-Christians apply to the church is judgemental. That is not who we are and not who our God is. *Find Strength in Belonging* here just as you are.

**PRAY:** that we would be a church slow to anger and filled with unfailing love.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.

ANY KINGDOM DIVIDED BY  
*civil war is doomed.*

A TOWN OR FAMILY  
*splintered*

BY FEUDING WILL  
*fall apart.*

MATTHEW 12:25

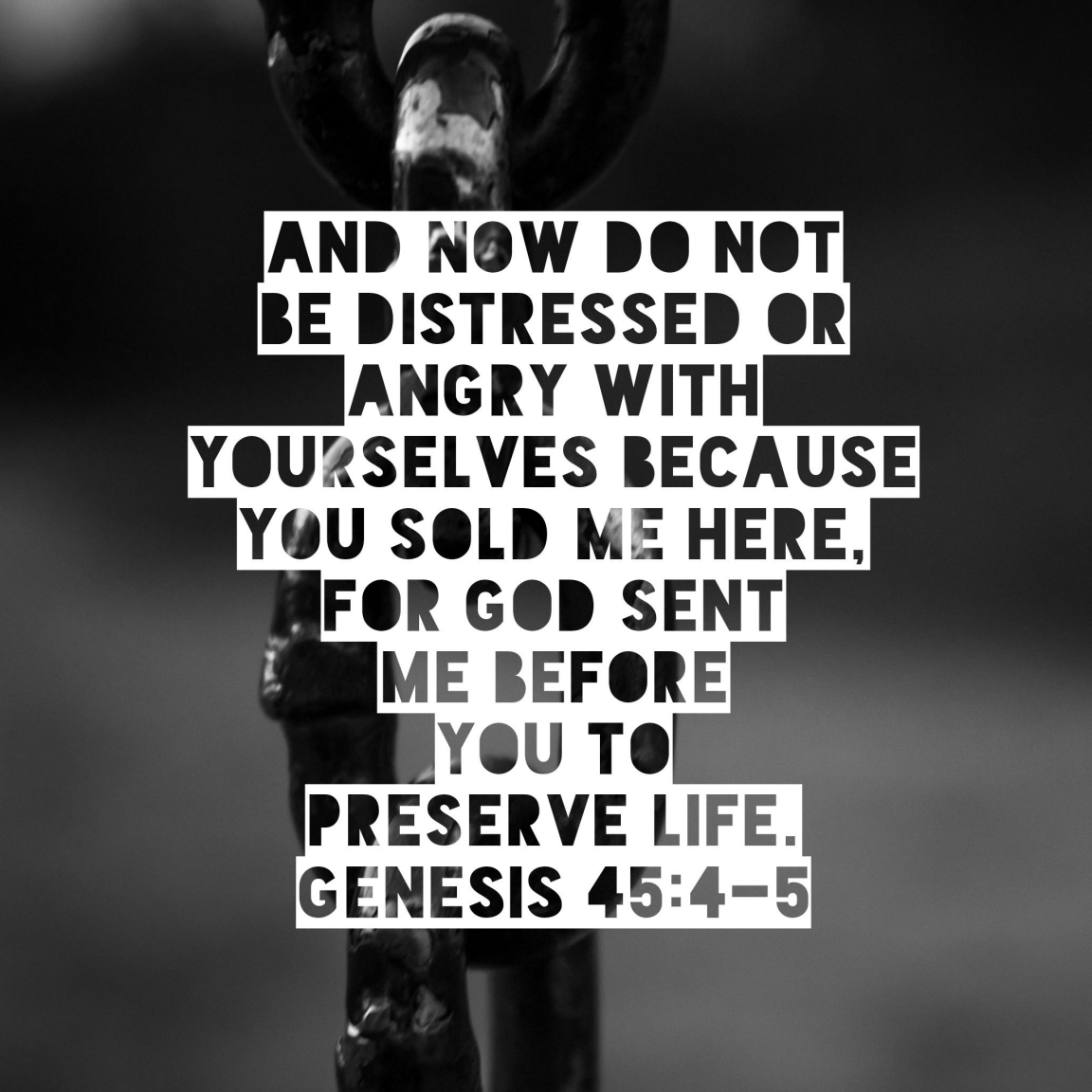
Thursday

**READ:** Matthew 12:22-28

**THINK:** Jesus insinuates the enemy would be stupid to fight itself, yet all too often churches are filled with infighting. Too often we prioritize *what* we believe instead of *who* we believe in and with *whom* we belong. Do not let disagreements, personal or doctrinal, upset the unity of the Church because part of our beauty is in our differences. *Find Strength in Belonging* by reminding yourself of who we believe in and with whom we belong.

**PRAY:** for patience with people as we struggle to work out God's plan together.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.



**AND NOW DO NOT  
BE DISTRESSED OR  
ANGRY WITH  
YOURSELVES BECAUSE  
YOU SOLD ME HERE,  
FOR GOD SENT  
ME BEFORE  
YOU TO  
PRESERVE LIFE.  
GENESIS 45:4-5**

Friday

**READ:** Genesis 45:1-15

**THINK:** Few families have been worse to one of its members than Joseph's. Sold into slavery and forgotten, Joseph has every reason to be bitter, hateful, and vengeful; but after playing a morally questionable trick on his brothers, Joseph calls for his brothers to "come close to him." We say *Find Strength in Belonging* because sometimes it takes strength to choose to belong.

**PRAY:** that the Spirit would help you forgive someone who hurt you.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.





SO IF YOU  
CONSIDER ME  
A PARTNER,  
WELCOME HIM AS  
YOU WOULD  
WELCOME ME.  
PHILEMON 17

Saturday

**READ:** Philemon

**THINK:** Onesimus, a runaway slave, is to be welcomed back by Philemon as a brother. While his slavery had more to do with poverty than race, Onesimus, like many today, would have found his voice continually silenced and discounted. He returns to belong anyway. If you feel silenced, take comfort in Paul's words that there is space for you to *Find Strength in Belonging* here. If your voice is heard, then use it like Paul to help someone who feels cast out to belong.

**PRAY:** that all voices would belong here.

*Find Strength in Belonging* today.