

STREAMS

INTRODUCTION



THE PRESENCE-FILLED LIFE

Discovering ways to connect faith with our everyday life

REVIEW

Review your experience of the previous practice. How did it go? If you weren't able to do the practice, consider how you were able to meet with God last week?

READ

Read the passage several times through, read slowly, use your imagination to picture the scene and soak it up. As you read, look for one or two points that really impact you. We call these 'shockers' and 'blockers'. The 'Setting the Scene' information adds some further context about the passage.



Luke 13.10 - 17

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath

¹⁰ On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." ¹³ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. ¹⁴ Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath." ¹⁵ The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? ¹⁶ Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?" ¹⁷ When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

REFLECT

As a group take time to discuss what you've read. Start by sharing your 'shockers' and 'blockers.' As you share your thoughts, listen carefully to one another. Feel free to use the questions to help you reflect further and extend your conversation.

Setting the scene:

- The Sabbath ran from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. It was a weekly day of rest and worship. A group called the Pharisees created numerous laws detailing what could and couldn't be done on the Sabbath - turning it into a burden for the Jewish community, rather than the blessing God intended it to be.
- Jesus is the guest speaker in a synagogue, as he's preaching he notices a woman with a disability. He heals her, causing outrage amongst the Pharisees because he is 'working' on the Sabbath! As Jesus dissolves the division between sacred (religious) and secular (not religious), it challenges their worldview.
- The Pharisees' allowed animals to be cared for on the Sabbath. After Jesus heals the woman, he uses an illustration about their treatment of oxen and donkeys to expose their hypocrisy. How could they care for animals on the Sabbath but not people? This is the last time Jesus is recorded as having spoken or even having been in a synagogue.

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What are the 'shockers' or 'blockers' for you in this passage?

Do you think God is interested in every part of our lives or just the 'religious' parts?

How can we begin to consider all of our work (paid or unpaid) as a 'vocation' or calling from God?

RESPOND

As you have read and reflected on the passage, it's now time to consider how to respond.

Consider the following set of practices to help you respond to the theme of this session over the coming week. Choose one and feel free to adapt to make it work for you.

01 Count your blessings

This week, begin to collate a list of all the things you're grateful to God for. Add to the list every day and include all areas of your life - family, work, sport, food, sleep etc. You may like to do this as a family, adding to the list each time you eat together. Your list is a reminder that everything is spiritual.

02 That's entertainment

It can be easy to write off music as simply entertainment. Spend time this week listening attentively and looking out for deeper meanings. Many songs communicate the artist's deep longings and the search for love, life and even God - whether they're explicitly 'Christian' or not. In the car, the shops, at home - wherever, pay attention to the music that you hear. Be open to the possibility that God may want to communicate this way with you.

'We cannot retreat from the "secular" world in the hopes of finding God elsewhere. Indeed, the very presence of God is manifest in the smallest, most mundane of daily activities.'

(Richard J. Foster, Streams of Living Water)

You might also be interested in:

Article: Practical Ways to Live All of Life With God:

<https://renovare.org/articles/practicing-the-incarnational-tradition>

Book: Thank God It's Monday: Ministry in the workplace (Mark Greene)

03 Bless your home

It's a great practice to walk through your home and ask for God's blessing on each room. If applicable, you could also pray for members of your family and the room(s) they inhabit. If you prepare meals, why not make it a sacred practice and thank God for the food as you prepare it as well as saying grace before you eat it.

GOING DEEPER

A day with God

Pick a day this week where you choose to be mindful of God as often as you can. From silent time early in the morning, to your last thoughts before you sleep - invite him into every part of your day. Think about your commute to work or errands that you need to attend to and invite God's presence. In quieter moments during the day, turn your attention back to God. Secretly pray and serve people throughout the day. Consider sending encouraging messages to people or ask God for wisdom in challenging interactions or decisions. Try to do your work as though Jesus was doing it himself in your place. Try and take a break over lunch to get outside and enjoy his creation. It might be good at the end of day to stop and reflect. Make some notes about things you have learnt about spending the day with God.