

Faith in action: Dwelling in the Word

Introduction

Sharing the Bible together as a group of members and friends helps us to draw closer to each other, and can help to gently discern what plans God has for us. As we take time to reflect on a passage together we ask God to draw our attention to words that he wants to highlight and use to speak to us. As we share these together we are united in listening to each other and to God.

Take a moment to thank God for his presence and to ask him to speak to the group:

Lord, speak to us as we meditate on your Word.
Challenge and inspire us.
Open our hearts and minds to hear your voice.

Amen

- One person first reads aloud the selected Bible passage, slowly, to the group.
- Then, everyone spends a few minutes individually reading through the passage and reflecting on the words.
- Next, in twos, share together words, phrases and verses that have stood out to you personally. Focus on what captured your imagination and what you might like to find out more about. Give each other your full attention so that you will be able to report back to the group what your partner has shared. Take about 10 minutes for this.
- Now come back together in a group and take it in turns to share your partner's reflections. (Respect anything shared that should remain confidential).
- Then spend some time reflecting on what you feel God may be highlighting to you as a group through his Word. How will this help you as Mothers' Union, as you reach out to your communities, and as you seek to inspire the clergy to work with us?
- Finally, draw your reflections together in prayer.
Someone may wish to encapsulate in a prayer how God has been speaking to you
- Finish by joining together in this prayer of thanks:

**Lord, thank you for your living Word which challenges and inspires us.
Thank you for speaking to us today.
Lead us forward in your will.
Amen**

Bible passage suggestions

Sending out the seventy two

Luke 10:1-12

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ² He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³ Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴ Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

⁵ "When you enter a house, first say, "Peace to this house." ⁶ If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

⁸ "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. ⁹ Heal those there who are ill and tell them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." ¹⁰ But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ "Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God has come near." ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Love one another for love comes from God

1 John 4:7-12

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Salt and light

Matthew 5:13-16

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Renewing strength and vision *Isaiah 40:28-31*

Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
²⁹ He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
³¹ but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Jesus feeds the five thousand *Mark 6: 30–44*

The apostles gathered round Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹ Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.' ³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. ³³ But many who saw them leaving recognised them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

³⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. ³⁵ By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. 'This is a remote place,' they said, 'and it's already very late. ³⁶ Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.' ³⁷ But he answered, 'You give them something to eat.' They said to him, 'That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?' ³⁸ 'How many loaves do you have?' he asked. 'Go and see.' When they found out, they said, 'Five – and two fish.'

³⁹ Then Jesus told them to make all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.