



## Approaching God

### Begin your time with an opening prayer

Take a moment to quiet your heart and ask God to help you experience his presence today. Ask Him to free you from any distractions as you begin to read and meditate on today's passages.

## Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Slowly Read the Following Passages

**Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.**

### Acts 15:6-21

**6** The apostles and elders met to consider this question. **7** After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. **8** God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. **9** He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. **10** Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? **11** No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." **12** The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. **13** When they finished, James spoke up. "Brothers," he said, "listen to me. **14** Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. **15** The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

**16** " 'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, **17** that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things' — **18** things known from long ago.

**19** "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. **20** Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. **21** For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

## Thoughts to Ponder - Making Room for Others

Read the short essay from Raechel Myers - <https://shereadstruth.com/making-room-for-others/>

One evening last fall I was invited to a friend's house to pray. The agenda was simple enough: eat snacks and mingle, settle in to spend time alone in prayer, then encourage each other. I'm not always comfortable with group events, and nine times out of ten I'll choose a quiet evening at home over a social gathering, especially on a weeknight. But this time I went. Mostly compelled by an opportunity to catch up with some friends and the possibility of a slice of cheesecake, I reassured myself that the tender-heart time wouldn't last too long.

Several months later, I cannot recall how the food tasted, or what shoes I wore, or how awkward I felt. But I clearly remember how the Lord used that gathering to soften my heart in a very specific way. That night, in the quiet of the solo prayer time, the Holy Spirit impressed upon my heart just two words: make room. In the days that followed, I considered the different ways I could make room: in my heart, on my calendar, in my home. I thought about who I could make room for: the new women moving to our burgeoning city, the people I know who need more than they have to offer, and the guy who definitely eased his way in front of me in line at the concession stand last weekend. But even before any of that, I can make room for my Lord, who promises me His presence whether I take time to be present with Him or not ([John 14:16-17](#)).

As I penciled down a list, I realized all the ways people had already made room for me:

*Here is my time; it's yours now.*

*Here is this meal; I want you to be nourished.*

*Here is my forgiveness; I know what a gift it is to be forgiven.*

*Here is this space to sit; I'd rather you have rest than me.*

*Here I am entering into your sorrow, I was comfortable, but you need comfort more than me.*

Even more extravagant than the hospitality offered to me by others is that offered by the Father Himself:

*I was an orphan; He calls me His daughter ([John 1:12](#)).*

*I was a foreigner; He made me a citizen ([Ephesians 2:19](#)).*

*My sin made me unclean like a leper; He did not cast me out ([Ephesians 2:13](#)).*

Hospitality, I am learning, is often untidy and almost always inconvenient. But making room is not about my own comfort. It's about taking something I presume is mine and offering it to someone else. Jesus made room for everyone, for all types of people—neighbors, the poor, His betrayers, strangers, children, and so many more. It was a mark of His ministry: giving Himself and offering Himself to others and to the Father. Jesus made room because His is a gospel for all people. The apostle Paul writes, “For those of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ. There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus” ([Galatians 3:27-28](#)). In the gospel, there is no “other”—there is only “us.” By His grace, God makes us living testimonies of Christ's life by this truth: “We love because He first loved us” ([1 John 4:19](#)). In being inconvenienced and uncomfortable and messy, we find a nearness with God, because Jesus was these things and more on our behalf. We are learning to make room for others, because while we were still sinners, room was made for us. Thanks be to God.

## Daily Reflection Questions

1. What does today's Scripture say about making room for others?
2. How can we make room for people who are different from us?

## Close in Prayer:

Think about some ways that God and others have made room for you. Use those an opportunity for thanksgiving. Ask God to reveal one or two ways you can make room for someone different than you.