



## 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.**

### **Romans 12:3-8**

**3** For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

### **Galatians 3:27-29**

**27** for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **28** There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

## Thoughts to Ponder - Making Room for Others

Read the short essay from J.A. Medders - <https://hereadstruth.com/making-room-for-others/>

If you've been around toddlers, you know one of the sentiments they repeat most often is, "Mine! That's mine!" Toddlers think their siblings' toys are theirs. They believe your spot on the couch is theirs. They're convinced the satellite remote is theirs. Mine, mine, mine.

For many men, one of the common barriers to biblical hospitality is this false teaching of toddlers. God calls us to be in community with our brothers and sisters in Christ, to be hospitable to one another, and to welcome the outsider. But we look at our schedules and think, "Mine!" We struggle with making room for Christian fellowship because of busyness, hobbies, kids' sports, and plain ol' selfishness. Too much "mineness." God has called us to more. God has empowered us for more.

Making room for others in our lives—mutually ministering to and benefitting from one another—is vital to our life in Christ. Paul tells us in Romans 12 how God has given spiritual gifts to other Christians for our benefit (vv.3–8). We benefit from the encouragement of a brother in Christ, and that brother benefits from our spiritual gifts. Growth is stifled when we stiff-arm people out of our lives. By making room for others, we welcome and cultivate shared and mutual growth.

Biblical hospitality is more than a dash of manners and politeness. That sort of folksy hospitality doesn't make the Satanic powers whimper. God is calling us toward heavenly hospitality, informed and fueled by the gospel of grace. God didn't keep to Himself. Jesus gave His life for ours. He came to us, inviting us into His joy. He welcomes us into His kingdom, into His space. Who could have expected this kind of hospitality from God? The gospel teaches us to make room for the unexpected. In Acts, the Jewish Christians often found it difficult to accept that God would redeem Gentiles, but God changed their hearts and minds. God welcomes and saves the unexpected.

Biblical hospitality reaches beyond people who look just like you. It crosses race, income, neighborhood, politics, and preferences—just like the gospel. Where is God changing your heart and mind to make room for others? Who needs an invitation to God's kingdom from you? We can't clutch our comfortable lives while following Jesus. He's not walking toward comfort; He's headed for the cross. Like our Shepherd, let's make room for others in our schedules, our lives, and our hearts. We can no longer say, "Mine!" for we are His.

### Daily Reflection Questions

1. Why does Scripture urge us to make room for others?
2. Did God bring anyone to mind either yesterday or today as read? Think of that person's name and write it down.

### Close in Prayer:

Pray for the person whose name you wrote down, thanking God that He created every man & woman in His image, giving them worth, value, and dignity. Ask God to give you a soft heart towards this person and courage to make room for them in your life.