



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.

1 Samuel 2:6-8

6 “The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up. **7** The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts. **8** He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor. “For the foundations of the earth are the LORD’s; on them he has set the world.

James 2:1-13

1 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. **2** Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. **3** If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” **4** have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? **5** Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? **6** But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? **7** Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. **9** But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. **10** For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. **11** For he who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. **12** Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, **13** because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Thoughts to Ponder - Making Room for The Poor

Read the short essay from Kaitlin Wernet - <https://shereadstruth.com/making-room-for-the-poor/>

We dragged a queen-sized mattress from the guest room, which could only mean one thing: showtime. Growing up, my brother and I crafted our best gymnastics routines under the forest green glow of our bonus room. Standing in line, we'd take turns tumbling and toppling to the latest Backstreet Boys hits, the mattress catching our falls. We would practice for hours, gaining confidence with our bounding and landing. Then we'd make a phone call to the neighbor kids, inviting them to our pre-dinnertime performance. I should be the first to admit that the show was never great. These were not Olympic backflips and handsprings; we were the somersault-and-YMCA kind of kids. We'd run and flip and run and flip until the audience got bored and decided to show us they could actually do better—and they could do headstands. The thing is, I've never been able to do a headstand. My legs are too long and my patience too thin. "Just try it!" the neighborhood kids would say. "You can do it!" they insisted. When it comes to most things in life—and when we're talking about how to serve those who are poor—Jesus asks us to do the same: *"Take the world's promises and turn them upside down. That's how you'll see My promises."* In Scripture, we look upside down to see right-side up. Let's attempt a headstand together:

The LORD brings poverty and gives wealth;
he humbles and He exalts.
He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the trash heap.
He seats them with noblemen
and gives them a throne of honor"
([1 Samuel 2:7–8](#)).

Maybe it's the blood rushing to my head, but I'm seeing in a fresh light all the ways the Lord cares for the poor. He lifts them "from the dust" and gives them "a throne of honor" with noblemen. Do you see what I'm seeing? Not once do these verses mention money. True wealth has nothing to do with our bank accounts; it has to do with the riches of the kingdom that are ours in Christ. Does God use money to help the poor get on their feet or provide them with a warm meal? Yes. Should we serve the poor among us by meeting their physical needs? Absolutely! Scripture tells us this is a non-negotiable ([1 John 3:17](#)). The gospel calls for us to make room for the poor in our budgets and in our homes, and to welcome them into the family of God, just as God welcomes us. Regardless of our material wealth or lack, we are all spiritually bankrupt without the lavish love and grace of God given to us in Jesus Christ. When we think loving the poor is too complicated—if we get bogged down in the logistics, wondering who and how and what, when it comes to our time and resources—we can go to God's Word for clarity. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul gives us a reminder on how to see things gospel-side up:

*Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share,
storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the coming age,
so that they may take hold of what is truly life
([1 Timothy 6:18–19](#)).*

Generosity is more than a kind gesture; it is a lifeline that keeps us tethered to what is real, to what is eternal. When we joyfully give our resources to those in need, it reminds us that everything we have is a gift from the God who lifts us from our desperate need by His grace. May we be generous with our time, our homes, our money, as an outpouring of the room that has already been made for us in Christ. Amen.

Close in Prayer:

Did God bring anyone to mind as you read? Pray for this person, thanking God that He created every man and woman in His image, giving them worth, value, and dignity. Ask God to give you a soft heart toward this person and courage to make room for them in your life.