

First Sunday Faith5 – February 2, 2020

On Sunday, February 2, gather with your family for intentional time with God and with each other, using the Faith5.

Step One: Share your highs and lows.

Step Two: Read a Bible verse or story.

Matthew 5:1-12, The Message

5 ¹⁻² When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

3 “You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

4 “You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

5 “You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

6 “You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

7 “You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

8 “You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

9 “You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

10 “You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

11-12 “Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even!—for though they don’t like it, *I* do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.

Step Three: Talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows.

- We often think of blessings as gifts we are given to make our lives easier, but it seems here like Jesus issues a challenge with each blessing mentioned. Which blessings can you relate to? Which ones are hardest for you to relate to?
- The blessings Jesus mentions here also show us a little more about what the Kingdom of God will be like. How did your high today help you feel more connected to God’s Kingdom? (Or, why do you think it didn’t help you feel more connected?)

- How did your low today help you feel more connected to God's Kingdom? (Or, why do you think it didn't help you feel more connected?)

Step Four: Pray for one another's highs and lows.

Instructions: Write down your highs and lows on separate pieces of paper, and then swap with one another so that no one is holding their own high and low. Then, take turns praying for each other's highs and lows. If you would like, you can use the prayer below to help you!

Holy God, I pray for (name). I thank you for (insert high) in their day. They are struggling with (insert low). We place our gratitude and our struggle before you, because we know you are with us in our best times and our hardest times. Help us to also be with each other. In your name we pray, amen.

Step Five: Bless one another.

With blessings like we read in the Beatitudes, we know that offering a blessing over one another is no small thing. It is a way of asking God to help one another see things more through God's eyes than our own – and while that means joy that can flood our souls, it also can mean challenges and hard things!

When you are ready, offer a blessing to one another by making the sign of cross on each other's forehead or hand. Say, "(Name), you are blessed to be a blessing."