

Growing Deeper
Great Summer Adventure

Week One: Deeper Conversations
Psalm 1

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Think about your conversations over the past week. What do they focus on: the here and now, your projects and accomplishments, the must-dos for the day, the news cycle? Ask God to settle your spirit to have a conversation with him as you continue on with your FIFTEEN.
2. Read Psalm 1. It compares the wise man to the wicked man. What choices does a wise man make?
3. What do you think of when you hear the Law of the Lord? What feelings does it evoke?
4. Reread Psalm 1:2. Often, thinking about the Law of the Lord does not bring delight but brings to mind a list of what we should or shouldn't do. The Bible teaches us that God's Law is used in three ways: a curb, a mirror, and a guide. As a curb, the Law clearly shows us right and wrong. As a mirror, it shows us our sin against God and our sin against others. As a guide, it shows us how to love God and other people. Because we have God's Law, we can also see and understand God's love more clearly. When we know right and wrong, we know that we fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); we can see how much God the Father loves us in sending God the Son to die for our sins and raising him from the dead to show us eternal life (John 3:16). We can see that God the Holy Spirit is protecting us by giving us commands to live by. How does knowing this impact the way you think about God's Law?
5. Skim Exodus 20. Can you see how God uses his Law as a curb, a mirror, and a guide?
6. Read Psalm 19:7-11. How does the psalmist David see God's Law? Which of these verses speaks to you? Why?
7. End your FIFTEEN by having a deeper conversation with God. Praise God for his Law as you close in prayer. Thank him for how he has used it to protect you and to guide you. Thank him for how he has provided a Savior for you in Jesus.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. In order to have deeper conversations with people, we must have deeper conversations with God. Proverbs 2:6, "For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." As you open your FIFTEEN in prayer, ask God to open your ears to his voice as you study today.
9. Read Psalm 1:4 and Jeremiah 17:7-8. Describe the tree that is in these verses.
10. What is God's role in the growth of the tree?

11. Read Galatians 5:16-25. Paul writes to the Galatians about the war between our sinful nature and our spiritual nature. God's Law tells us what is right and wrong; it also frees us to live by his Spirit. What fruit do you see God producing in your life? What fruit would you like to see more of?

12. Conclude in prayer; confess where you fall short and where you are trying to grow your own fruit. Ask God to grow the fruit of the Spirit in you and to tune your ears to his voice so you can grow deeper with him.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

13. What kind of a conversationalist are you? Are you the chatty Cathy? Do you dread small talk? Do you have a story for every occasion? Are you the friend who listens patiently?

14. Having deeper conversations means sharing more of who you are and what you believe. Read Matthew 12:34. How is what we believe about ourselves and our God revealed in how we speak?

15. Read Luke 18:18-30. What do we learn about the ruler from the questions he asks Jesus? What does he think about Jesus?

16. Consider a conversation you had recently. What does it reveal about you? What does it reveal about how you think about God?

17. Mark 10:21 includes a detail not found in Matthew's story of the rich, young ruler. Jesus looked at the man and loved him. Even when our conversations don't reflect the best in us or reveal a misconception about God, how does Jesus feel about us?

18. End your FIFTEEN by thanking God for his deep, enduring love for us. Ask God to show you his love today. Think about how you speak about yourself (and God) and ask God to help reframe your thoughts about yourself. *

*See Pastor Dion's message about God's Acceptance and Your Own from the previous series for more insights.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQxS7WoV3k0>

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

19. Brené Brown loosely describes vulnerability as the willingness to be seen with no guarantees of the outcome of being seen.* This vulnerability is the courage to tell who we are with our whole heart while treating ourselves with compassion, and this leads to connection. How can connections with others lead to opportunities for deeper conversations?

20. Read Matthew 15:21-28. Jesus is approached by a woman from a different culture. What did she ask for?

21. How did the Canaanite woman display vulnerability in her conversation with Jesus?
22. Her vulnerability lead Jesus to praise her great faith and ultimately to heal her daughter. Are you vulnerable when you approach God? Why or why not?
23. How do you choose to be vulnerable with your friends and family?
24. The beautiful thing about our faith is that whether we feel vulnerable or not when we approach God, God loves us. It is a fact. He loves and delights in his children – no matter how they feel. How does that impact your willingness to be vulnerable?
25. End your FIFTEEN by praising God for his infinite love for you and that your faith is based on facts about God and not how you feel. Ask God to give you opportunities to practice vulnerability in your conversations.

*Learn more from Brené Brown's talk on vulnerability (20min).

https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability/transcript?language=en

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

26. Look again at Psalm 1. It talks about a wise man loving and meditating on God's law, shunning the company of the wicked and being watched over by the Lord. What else strikes you as you reread this Psalm?
27. Read Matthew 22:37-40. How did Jesus sum up the Greatest Commandment? Write it in your own words.
28. Skim Exodus 20 again. Can you sort the commands into categories: love God and love others?
29. How can we love others through deeper conversations?
30. Many times we may feel insecure, unequipped, or afraid of opposing views that may be expressed during deeper conversations. Read Proverbs 16:1. Who is in charge of responses?
31. Read Romans 8:15. Abba is an Aramaic word for "father." But a closer translation may be "daddy." What has God, our Daddy, given us that can banish our fear?
32. What does a deeper conversation sound like to you? Does it focus on sharing God's Word? Does it allow for others to share their thoughts and opinions without judgment? Does it mean you listen more and talk less? Does it mean that

you share more of who you really are as a way to allow others to do the same? Ask God for opportunities to practice moving conversations deeper. End your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask him to remove your fears and to strengthen your trust in his ability to guide your responses. Praise him for his gift of sonship (daughtership) in his family and all that being a child of God gives you.