

**GROW. PRAY. STUDY.**  
**First United Methodist Church- Weekly Study Guide**  
*“equipping people in becoming deeply committed Christians ”*  
**Privilege with Responsibility (February 8-13)**

Yesterday Dr. Pat Whittemore preached in worship. You may remember he spoke to us about the many privileges we enjoy as children of God. He reminded us of the comfort, strength, hope and peace that comes from being the children of a gracious and loving God. He reminded us that our faith offers us something more in life. But Dr. Whittemore also offered a convicting contrast to these privileges....the idea that with them comes a great responsibility. As children of God, filled with hope and sustained by God's love we are called to do more than just receive God's blessings.....we are called to share these blessings with the world. Did you know that with the privilege of your faith comes an enormous responsibility. You are responsible for being a vessel of God's love and grace for the world.

This week we are going to spend our time together thinking and reading about both the privileges and responsibilities that come with faith. Are you enjoying the benefits of faith without answering the call to share your faith? Are you taking the responsibility along with the privilege?

**Monday READ Matthew 8:1-4**

Today our reading comes from Matthew and it is the story of Jesus healing a man with leprosy. In this story the man asks Jesus if he is willing to make him clean and Jesus, in this beautiful moment of grace, says, "I am willing." This leper experiences firsthand the privilege and healing power of faith. Then, just as the man stands up cleansed and ready to leave Jesus orders him to go and show himself to the priest as a "testimony." Why do you think it was important for this man to share what had happened to him rather than simply be healed, rise up and return to his normal life? Are you spending enough time telling others what Jesus has done for you?

***Pray the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer***

**Tuesday READ Mark 5:1-20**

Today we will be reading another healing story of Jesus. In this case we will read about his healing of the demon-possessed man. Listen closely as you read to what Jesus did for this man. Then focus in on verse 19. What did Jesus tell the man to do after he was healed and why? Is your life a witness to God's power and love?

***Pray the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer***

**Wednesday READ Hebrews 12:1**

Today we are going to read one of my favorite passages. Listen to what the writer says "surrounds" us. How does being surrounded by people who have been touched by God's grace and are willing to tell us about it make our life more bearable? As you run the race of life do you find comfort in those who are willing to share their story of faith with you?

***Pray the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer***

**Thursday READ Acts 3:1-10**

Today we are going to read a story in Acts about Peter healing a crippled beggar. First, listen to what Peter did for this man in the name of Christ. Then, spend some time thinking about verse 9-10. This man now healed and praising God, was telling a story of hope to all who saw him. Are you telling a story of hope with your life?

***Pray the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer***

**Friday READ 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13**

In our reading today we hear the writer of 2 Thessalonians warn against us becoming "idle." In this passage the writer reminds us of the responsibility we have as people of faith to not just receive the benefits of faith.....but also to share them with others. In other words, the writer reminds us we are to always be looking for ways to share the story. When you look at your life are you "busy" sharing the hope of faith or are you "idle?"

***Pray the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer***

**Saturday READ Luke 9:21-52**

Today you will be reading the passage we will use in worship tomorrow. Pray that God will open your heart and prepare you for a powerful worship experience as we come together tomorrow as the body of Christ.

***I invite you to pray the following prayer:***

*Dear God,*

*As I read this passage today help me do so with an open heart, sincerely listening for your voice in my life. Use this passage to prepare me for worship tomorrow. As I read it help me to set aside my own agenda and my own desires so that I may come to worship tomorrow prepared to be molded by you as I continue my journey to becoming a deeply committed disciple of yours. In Christ's name I pray, AMEN*

Here at FUMC we believe part of becoming a Deeply Committed Christians is praying daily. If you find yourself struggling with what to say, we suggest you try praying Wesley's Covenant Prayer.

***A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition***

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,

exalted for thee or brought low by thee.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,

let it be ratified in heaven. AMEN

(United Methodist Hymnal, p. 607)