

50 Biblical Stories to Deepen Faith

Week 5

Scriptures Passages for the Week

Day	Story Name	Scripture Passage
Monday	Peter's Confession	Matthew 16: 13-20
Tuesday	The test of faith	Genesis 22: 1-14
Wednesday	Healing the Demonic boy	Matthew 17: 14-23
Thursday	Jacob's Dream	Genesis 28: 10-22
Friday	The Centurions' faith	Matt. 8: 5-13
Saturday	Coming of the Holy Spirit	Acts 2: 1-21

Process:

- A) Read the story slowly and imagine the scene in your mind's eye.
- B) After you reading, spent some time in quiet reflection, thinking about the story. What gets triggered off in your thoughts at the moment. Record these thoughts on a piece of paper or on your computer.
- C) If you have a different version or translation of the Bible, it would be interesting to read the story using that translation. What are the similarities and differences between the two translations?
- D) Take some time to look at the meta story questions. Write down your initial response to the questions even the ones you don't think apply to you.
- E) Allow the story to ruminate throughout the day. Be aware when the story comes back to your mind.
- F) In the evening re-read the story, review the responses from the morning and then add any insights come to you through the day.

Meta Story Questions

- 1) What is the overall theme of this story?
- 2) List all the characters within the story.
- 3) In what ways are like each of the characters within your own life now?
- 4) Take some time to reflect and think about what part of you is like each character within the story – remember you are the story.
- 5) What part of you desires or responds like the positive character?
- 6) What part of you is like the not so positive character?
- 7) What part of you is like the passive people in the story?
- 8) How does it feel to be the all the different parts of the story?
What does it reveal about you from a deeper perspective?
- 9) What does this story have to “say” about your life at this moment?
- 10) Take some time, in prayer, to ask God’s counsel and direction for your life?

Meta Story Example: Prodigal Son – Like 15: 11-32

An interesting observation as I read this story today is something I have never noticed before. The father has a celebration for the younger son when he returns. The older brother protests and refers to his brother as “this son of yours”. The implication is that the older brother did not want to have anything to do with his younger brother. At the very end of the passage in the 32nd verse the father speaks to the eldest son and flips the saying around. He says “this brother of yours” was dead and is now alive. By doing so, the father helps the oldest son realize he also has a responsibility to his younger brother – for in fact the younger brother is still part of the family.

The **youngest son** is really a metaphor for many of us today. We want the inheritance of eternal life and we want the assurance it

affords. Yet, we do not want the responsibility on a daily basis. There are many people, myself included want the assurance of eternal life when we die yet want to do what we want and enjoy what we want to experience what we want now. We do not want the discipline, the responsibility and the work of every day life of faith.

The **eldest son** is easy to identify with. Those of us who work in the church and try to live a faithful life and do all the work and the effort that it takes to be as Christ like as we can possibly, react when somebody gets more attention and focus than ourselves. It's almost like feel like we've been taken for granted. We have made all the effort – but the celebration is for those who are new to the faith. It is interesting to think that being part of the work of the kingdom is not reward enough. We want more than just the everyday blessings – we want the special event held typically for us. How ego driven is that when I think that way.

The father. The father figure in the story is the hardest individuals for me to identify with. How can he be so gracious, compassionate, so willing to forgive and reconcile the undeserving son back into the house. When someone has insulted/injured me I want them to experience some of consequences – some kind of negative consequence for their inappropriate action. None of that takes place's parable. The father is nothing but gracious and forgiving. The father in the stories is meant to represent God. It's comforting to know when I am like prodigal son that I will not get what I deserve when I return. An interesting part of the story is we do not know the relationship and the status of the youngest son after the party was over. Since he had squandered his portion of the estate, did he live as a guest in the house or did he have personal power? If he continues to live on the estate would he have been able to begin to earn again some of the estate back? The estate at this point was left was not the father's the eldest son. There is no answer to this question – just our imagination.

Mata story equates the whole story with ourselves. There is a part of me that is like each person in the story. The question is: How am I like the younger son, the older brother and the father now? What behaviours can I identify within my life now that is like this biblical story and how do these insights help me to grow in faith.