

Devotions For Students

Lesson 2: Responding To Jesus

DAY 1

"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles." - Acts 2:41-43

On September 6, 1995 Cal Ripken Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles played in his 2,131st consecutive pro baseball game, breaking the record of Hall of Famer Lou Gehrig. Many experts said Gehrig's record would never be broken. To put the record in perspective, that's playing over 13 complete major league seasons and never missing a game or being put on the disabled list. People who watched the game that night in 1995 believed they had truly been part of a once in a lifetime experience and were in awe of Ripken's accomplishment.

Read Acts 2:41-43. The story in Acts chapter 2 took place right after the Holy Spirit came to Earth and 3,000 people got saved after a message from the Apostle Peter. People were in awe of what happened and probably knew they would never experience anything quite like that again in their lifetime. This response was worship.

You may have already had an "awe" moment in your life, where God reveals Himself and incredible things happen. It's awesome to be a part of that experience. **Write down your "awe" moment with God, either in the space below, in a journal, or on your device's note taking app.** It doesn't matter how big or small the experience was because it was your moment.

Now, do you remember your response to that encounter with God? Did you realize at the time that your response was worship? Take time to thank God for those moments in life when He awes you with His power.

DAY 2

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." - Hebrews 12:28

Sometimes our encounters with God come in a moment when we become aware of something for the very first time. The writer of Hebrews gives us this fact: As Christians we are receiving a Kingdom that can never be destroyed. Have you ever thought about how amazing it is that the Gospel has not only survived but continues to impact people 2,000 years after Jesus' life, death, and resurrection? Have you ever thought about the fact that the Kingdom you're a part of will never be destroyed and will continue through eternity?

Now take what you've just learned and do what the Scripture says: worship God with holy reverence and awe. Write in the space below a prayer of worship to God for providing you the opportunity to be part of His unshakeable and eternal Kingdom.

DAY 3

"We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words." - 2 Corinthians 2:12-13

In this week's lesson on worship you learned that many times people responded to Jesus by going and telling others about Him. Does this scare you? Do you sometimes feel like Moses who told God he could not talk to the Pharaoh because he was not a good speaker?

Read 2 Corinthians 2:12-13. Paul tells us that we should not be afraid because our words don't come from our wisdom but from God through the Holy Spirit. In other words, our encounter with God compels us to tell others. He then gives us the words to use. Isn't that incredible?

Think About This . . .

1. Think about your encounters with God and what you might tell someone.
2. Let God's Spirit guide you as you formulate your thoughts and words about the amazing God you serve. Now, ask God to lead you to the people with whom you need to share your story.

DAY 4

"They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds." - Psalm 145:5-6

This week during your Bible study time you looked at how some people in the New Testament responded to encounters with Jesus. Don't forget people in the Old Testament had encounters with God as well. King David wrote many of the Psalms, including the one in today's passage. He encountered God in nature and knew of the awesome power of God. Many scholars believe the things mentioned here were more of the acts of God's judgment like the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The work of God is not always the happy and positive stuff proclaimed by many "popular speakers" today. God's might is sometimes displayed in the form of judgment and that message is not easily received, especially today.

The word "proclaim" doesn't mean just the good stuff. If your encounter with God includes some pain along the way, that is your story and God will use it to minister to others.

Think about your history with God. Worship Him today for the good He's blessed you with and the challenges He's walked through with you.

DAY 5

"But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles." At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. 'You are out of your mind, Paul!' he shouted. 'Your great learning is driving you insane.'" - Acts 26:22-24

Rejection. No one likes to be rejected.

Read Acts 26:22-24. Paul was telling his story to the Governor of Judea, a guy by the name of Festus, who was completely rejecting everything Paul had to say. This was not new to Paul. People had rejected his message of Christ many times before but he just kept on telling his story.

When you worship God by telling what He has done in your life or what you have seen Him do, there will be times people will reject what you say. Think about some scenarios where your story might be rejected and write how you think you would respond to that.

- You write a theme about what God has done in your life for a class at school and the teacher ridicules your beliefs.
- A parent you have been praying for continues to reject your invitations to church and has no interest in what God is doing in your life.
- You finally get up the courage to tell a classmate about God and he or she tells you he or she isn't interested.

You probably wrote many things but remember what Paul did in the face of rejection —HE DID NOT QUIT.

Pray that God will give you the strength to keep going on in the face of rejection.