

**Daily Reflection on Scripture**  
**Week of December 15**  
**Jesus – The Face of God**



**Sunday December 15**

*Scripture: Romans 2:11 For God shows no partiality.*

**Morning Prayer:** God, what more needs to be said than, You show no partiality. In Jesus, I can see Your face shining on all of us alike. You don't see me as any better or any worse than anyone else. That's incredible to know and yet we live in a world where partiality seems to be the norm. I have my own partialities to confess. Without conscious awareness, I can all too easily give preferential treatment to some more than others. So my prayer today is that You help me to remember four words, God shows no partiality. May I do the same.

**Morning Focus:** Today, when you are with those you are different from you in any way, remember the words: God shows no partiality. Personally be thankful for that. And then practice it throughout the day.

**Noon Text:** Take a moment to be free of judgment and prejudice. Take in a deep breath and say, "God shows no partiality" Breathe out saying, "May I do the same."

**Evening Text:** God, I release any grudges or prejudice that I may have so that I can be free of such burdens and rest in the assurance of Your impartial love for all people.

**Monday December 16**

*Scripture: Romans 15:7 Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you.*

**Morning Prayer:** God, I find that even at this season of peace and joy, when our hearts should be overflowing with love and welcome, that it is difficult for people to extend the unlimited welcome of Jesus. Personal interests, ego, and even feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem cause strife and a desire to include some and exclude others. God of unlimited welcome, forgive me when I behave this way and fail to open my arms and heart to all who would come. I pray that I can all be filled with the spirit of Christ this Christmas season and see all others through Your eyes as precious and beloved. There is room for everyone. Everyone's gifts are important and must be welcomed. I am stronger when I am connected with others. I pray this truth will be rooted in my heart and lived out today and throughout this season and in the new year. Let it begin at this moment. May it be so!

**Morning Focus:** "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me today."

**Noon Text:** Have you encountered a situation today that challenges your desire to welcome all people into our community? Reflect on your feelings. Christ welcomes all.

**Evening Text:** During this busy season it is especially important to rest and restore. Disconnect and rest now. Breathe in, "May we love...," Breathe out, "As God loves us."

## **Tuesday December 17**

*Scripture: Luke 6:37 Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven.*

**Morning Prayer:** God, I confess that all too often I am quick to judge. It is often a knee-jerk reaction that I immediately regret but still I judge. I judge without knowing another's circumstances, not even taking time to know what is going on in someone else's life before I make a judgement about how they are living that life. And at the same time I become resentful when others judge me. Help me to overcome those reactions that lead me to judging others; help me to meet everyone in the same non-judgmental way that You love and welcome me. Help me to have a forgiving heart, to forgive as I long to be forgiven. May it be so.

**Morning Focus:** Today resolve to be less judgmental of those you encounter. Just like you, they are a beloved child of God. When you look at them, see the face of God.

**Noon Text:** Pause and reflect on your morning. Do you need to do an attitude adjustment to become less judgmental and more forgiving? Like Jesus, you are the face of God.

**Evening Text:** God, I am grateful for this day, as I was able to set aside an attitude of judgment and become more like Jesus, accepting, forgiving and loving.

## **Wednesday December 18**

*Scripture: I Corinthians 1:27a Isn't it obvious that God deliberately chose men and women that the culture overlooks and exploits and abuses, chose these "nobodies" to expose the hollow pretensions of the "somebodies"?*

**Morning Prayer:** God, thank you for the unexpected moments and unlikely people You use to bring me back down to earth. Today, when I am on my high horse or when I am throwing myself a pity party, I pray You will put another story on my heart that reminds me of the truth. The truth that You are good and loving and Your wisdom far exceeds my own. All I can do is look to Your example as I bring all that I am to love and serve others and myself. May it be so.

**Morning Focus:** Lean into the guidance and direction of God throughout this day, trusting in God's incredible wisdom and relentless love.

**Noon Text:** Take a deep breath full of gratitude. As you slowly inhale, pray "thank you God..." As you slowly exhale, pray "for Your wisdom and love." Lean into this pause.

**Evening Text:** God, I am grateful for Your wisdom. For the times You reveal it carefully with love. For the times You hold the unclear future, and encourage me to trust You.

## **Thursday December 19**

*Scripture: I Corinthians 1:27b God chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful*

**Morning Prayer:** God, I pray that I do not need to be shamed into knowing that we are all equal and of value in this world. Help me to always see that the least of us can hold the key to the very thing that vexes the most powerful of us. I find that the example of the love and fellowship with those we deem less fortunate to be one of the best illustrations. When we are in a state of openness and trust we can finally see clearly that Your love is abundant and accessible by all. I pray that you will give me the opportunity to show my appreciation and love of those less powerful today. That I can understand that in helping I am helped. May it be so.

**Morning Focus:** I will go forward today knowing that the powerless are in need of affirmation and appreciation. I will be sure to look them in the eye and help where and when I can. Showing the powerless that their name and presence is appreciated and acknowledged.

**Noon Text:** Have I sought out those who have felt downtrodden or ignored and offered them comfort or counsel? Am I willing to do this as I go forward in my day?

**Evening Text:** I rest this evening knowing that I did my best to be an example of grace and humility to those less powerful. God thank you for the lessons of this day.

### **Friday December 20**

*Scripture: Romans 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.*

**Morning Prayer:** God, how many times has someone come alongside me when I was at my weakest, supporting me in whatever trial I was facing at the time. Often it is a longtime friend, or a member of my faith community, but more than once it has been a stranger. It can be hard to accept help from others and I look back on those times, realizing that it was those moments when I saw You in the face of the friend or the stranger. Help me to be that person to others, help me to model the actions of Jesus, reaching out to those on the margins with love and grace, to offer loving support and acceptance to help them through challenging times. May it be so.

**Morning Focus:** Today there may be times when you feel vulnerable and humbly accept the help of others. Or you may be able to reach out to someone facing challenges. In either case do so with humility, receiving or offering unconditional love and support.

**Noon Text:** Is there someone who needs to lean on you for support today? Be the hands, feet and face of God in your words and actions to offer loving support.

**Evening Text:** God, in so many ways and so many faces I have encountered You this week. I hold those encounters close to my heart with gratitude as I rest tonight.

### **Saturday December 21**

*Scripture: Luke 6:42 How can you say to your brother or sister, "Let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye?*

**Morning Prayer:** Generally speaking, God, when I find something annoying or disturbing about someone else's behavior, I can usually find some element of that same behavior in myself that I am in denial about or struggling to resolve. And honestly? Sometimes I would rather point out a dozen sins in the life of someone else rather than take an honest look at the sin in my own life. It's hard to look inward. My struggle is two-fold: a misunderstood definition of sin and being my own harshest critic. I used to think "sin" as breaking your rules, whatever I thought those were. I've come to learn, God, that sin is simply anything that separates me from You. Help me, God, to remember that no matter what, You love me. And if You love me in all my imperfection, who am I not to extend myself that same grace? Help me to remember that the goal is progress, not perfection. The amazing thing is when I am able to offer myself grace, I expand my capacity to extend grace, compassion and empathy towards others. May it always be so.

**Morning Focus:** As you go about your day, shift your focus inward so that you're better able to see others as you see yourself, a beautiful soul worthy of the same grace.

**Noon Text:** Pause from the stress of the days whether situational or people driven. Remember, we're all carrying something. Deep breath in, release. Extend grace.

**Evening Text:** Rest well in God's loving embrace assured that no matter how the day unfolded, God loves you.