

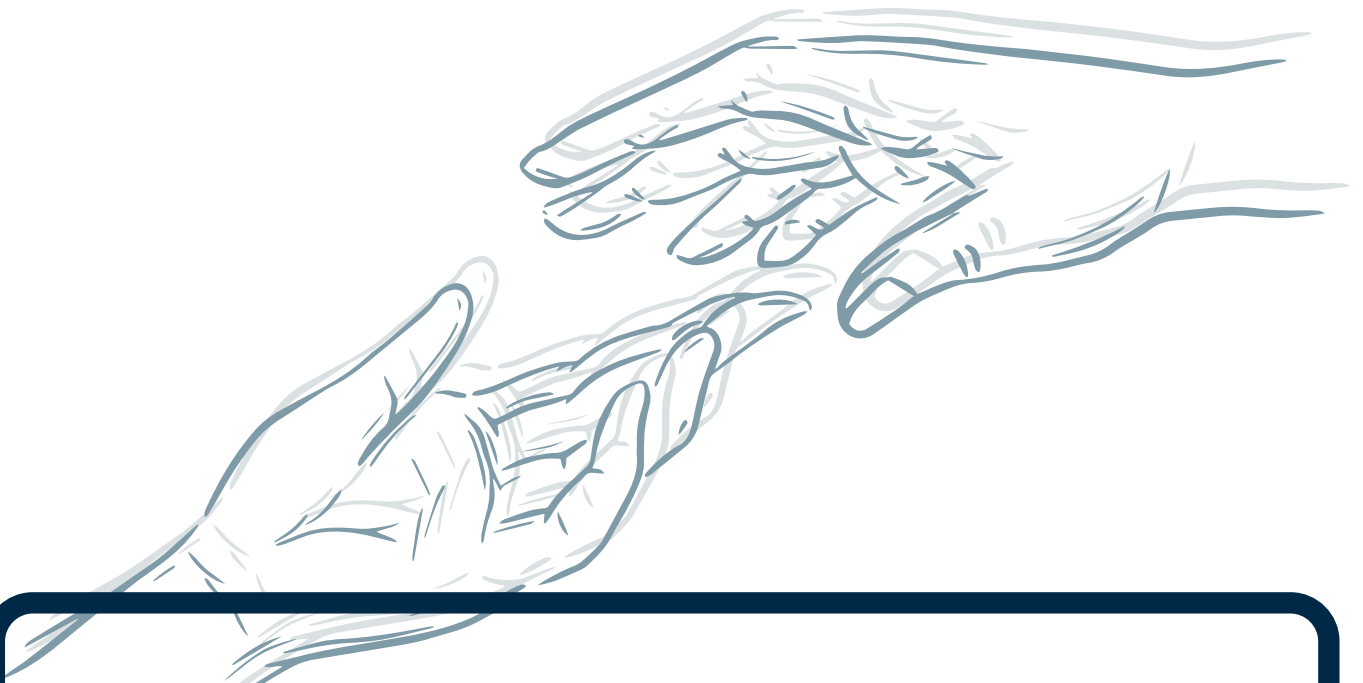
CREATED

to

Connect

1 Corinthians 12:27





Now you are the
body of Christ,
and each one of
you is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12:27

Welcome!

We are thrilled to embark on this journey of preparation for your mission trip at Impact! Thank you so much for your willingness to respond to God's call and your willingness to serve with us.

We hope that resources such as this devotion guide will be helpful to you as you prepare for your experience. Our goal is that your time at Impact will be more than a short-term experience – that it will be a new chapter in a life of mission. We have developed the devotions around our theme – Created to Connect. The challenges of the last few years have left us hungry for relationship, which is exactly how God has created us. We will explore how God invites us into relationships and works through them to enrich our lives and those of the people around us.

Before - We will reflect on how relationship is how God is revealed to us and how God created us to carry out God's Mission.

During - We will reflect on how what we are doing during our mission experience helps us understand how God is calling us to connect to those God brings into our lives.

After - We will consider how we need to see the world and our place in it to continue to serve God through relationships.

Each devotion includes a passage to read, devotional thoughts, a reflection question, and a prayer prompt. You will also find a space for writing your thoughts at the end of each section (before, during, after).

We pray God's peace to you as you prepare to take on a new challenge as part of God's worldwide mission.

DAY 1 | MISSION | GENESIS 2:18-24 (NIV)

18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

As you prepare for your week of Impact, you come to the experience with many relationships. You relate to family, friends, and countless other people you meet throughout your life. We are largely the product of our relationships. This is how God created us. The story of creation begins with God saying that it is not good for Adam to be alone. When God creates a "helper that is perfect for him," God creates that helper from Adam's side, making them equals. The kind of relationship God created for us is one of equality and mutual respect. If we are looking exclusively down on someone or solely up to them, we are not in true relationship with them. **As you prepare to serve at camp, you will meet people – some you will serve and some who will serve you.** The kind of relationship God calls you to invites you to see them as equals in God's eyes. You have a lot to offer one another. And God is inviting you to do so.

Reflect

What relationships in your life have taught you the most about faith?

Pray

God, help me to see the opportunities for relationship that you bring to me each day. Thank you for the people you have brought into my life. Prepare me to see you in the people I meet.

DAY 2 | MISSION | EXODUS 3:4-6 (NIV)

4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." 6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

In today's passage, we see Moses' first encounter with God. God's revelation to Moses begins with an introduction. "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." God is defined to Moses in terms of relationships – to Moses, **God is first and foremost a God defined by relationships**. We are largely defined by our relationships as well. Our identity as a daughter or son, as a friend, as a student, and many other relationships shapes how we see ourselves and how others see us. How we relate to others also determines how people see us. As you prepare to serve at Impact, another key relationship - your relationship to Christ – will be one that largely defines you to the community you serve. You will have the opportunity to form new relationships, and you will shape your current relationships as well. God chose to be understood first in terms of relationship. We are created for relationships, and those relationships help us to understand ourselves and God's mission for our lives.

Reflect

What have your relationships taught you about faith? What would they teach someone else about you?

Pray

God, thank you for creating me for relationship. Help me to relate to others in a way that teaches others about your love.

DAY 3 | MISSION | LUKE 10:16-23 (NIV)

16 *"Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me."*

17 *The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."*

18 *He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. 20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

21 *At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do."*

22 *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."*

23 *Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see."*

In today's passage, we see Jesus sending the seventy two out to proclaim him to towns he was going to. The way those towns responded to his followers indicated how they felt about him. When they accepted his followers, they were accepting him; and when they rejected them, they were rejecting him. **Our most important relationships reflect our relationship to God.** And when we go out into the world, our relationship to God defines our relationship to the people we meet. More than that, how we relate to people in the world shapes how they understand Christ. We introduce people to Christ and shape their understanding of who Christ is. If we offer kindness and acceptance to them, then they learn that Christ offers that to them as well. As you prepare to serve at Impact, remember that you represent Christ and how you relate to those you meet may shape how they understand who God is.

Reflect

What does it mean to you to represent Christ to the people you meet? What do you think people learn about Christ from you?

Pray

God, thank you for entrusting me with your name. Let others learn about the love you offer through how I treat them.

DAY 4 | MISSION | 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-9 (NIV)

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving

4 I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. 5 For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge— 6 God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. 7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. 8 He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sometimes we need to have hard conversations. We have to confront people about things they have done to us, or things they should be doing and aren't. **In a healthy relationship, we can confront someone with truth, in love, and the relationship is strong enough to survive and even grow from that encounter.** If our relationship is not healthy – is not built on trust and respect – then it can feel easier to avoid that conflict and just hope things get better. In today's passage, Paul is writing to confront the church in Corinth about things they need to improve. It's a hard conversation, but he knows it needs to happen. So he begins by reminding them of his love and care for them and that he is thankful for them.

Conflict is going to arise as part of any relationship. God has called us to be a light to the world even when we are in conflict. If we remember God's call to love and care for one another, then even when we disagree, we can be an example to the world.

Reflect

When is a time you have had a relationship that was strengthened by a conflict? When have you avoided conflict because you were worried about how it would affect a relationship?

Pray

God, thank you for creating us to connect to others. Help me to connect to people so that even when we disagree, we can stay in loving community.

DAY 5 | MISSION | MATTHEW 28:19-20 (NIV)

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

It's one of the first Bible verses you memorize as a kid – the Great Commission. Jesus tells his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel. You may have learned that the passage could also be understood to say, “As you go, preach the gospel.” The emphasis isn't so much on where or how you go, but how you live as you go. We aren't called to preach the gospel simply when we go (to church, on a mission trip, to any faraway place). **We are called to preach the gospel EVERYWHERE we go – through our words, our actions, and our relationships.** The Great Commission is a command to establish relationships everywhere that point people to Christ. As you go to camp, live in such a way that you point people to Christ. As you go home from camp, live in such a way that you point people to Christ. As you go, point people to Christ.

Reflect

When is a time you have had a relationship that was strengthened by a conflict? When have you avoided conflict because you were worried about how it would affect a relationship?

Pray

God, thank you for creating us to connect to others. Help me to connect to people so that even when we disagree, we can stay in loving community.



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