

FOURTH SUNDAY after the EPIPHANY

Directions: Read the scripture selected from the Revised Common Lectionary, perhaps before bed, in the morning, or during a family meal. Move through the discussion questions in one sitting or answer one a day to help reflect on the scripture throughout the week. End your time in prayer. This could be a simple ritual to incorporate into the week.

MARK 1:21-22

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think of a time you learned something new. What was that like?
2. What makes a good teacher?
3. When did you feel astounded by a new perspective?
4. What do you think it means to have authority?
5. How do you decide on whose authority to trust in your life?

LISTENING FOR PERSPECTIVE

Every time we read scripture, we learn something new from it. Even short verses and passages hold meaning and insight waiting to be found. Here's an activity to help you explore our text this week:

1. Read the scripture out loud. Notice any words or phrases that stick out to you. Feel free to write them down if it helps you remember them.
2. Think about those words and phrases. Feel free to say them out loud or in your head. You can even use them as a prayer.
3. Read the scripture out loud again. This time, think about what it says about Jesus (his actions, relationships, personality, etc.). Feel free to write down your thoughts if it helps you remember them.
4. Think about what you've just learned about Jesus. Consider how people in your life are similar to Jesus. Take a moment to lift them up in prayer.
5. Read the scripture out loud one last time. This time, notice if any new words or ideas stick out. Have you noticed anything different in the text after hearing it so much? Feel free to write down your thoughts if it helps you remember them.
6. Take a moment to just sit with your thoughts. Make up your own prayer based on what you've learned or use the prayer below.

PRAYER

God of new things, you surprise and astound us throughout our lives. We learn so much through you and your Son, Jesus. Help us learn and be open to new ways of seeing your great world.

Amen.

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