

MONDAY: "Our" is possessive, and is the beginning of The Lord's Prayer. At the very basic level, prayer isn't focused on me but on 'us', community. Read 1 Corinthians 12 as a reminder of our God-given/God planned/God-ordained connectedness. When you pray, do you have a 1 Corinthians 12 perspective? What might happen if we lost that connectedness? How would our prayer focus change? Who could you re-connect to in some small way today?

TUESDAY: Scripture often refers to God as Father, yet the scriptural agenda isn't focused on our claiming a masculine image of our God. There isn't any scripture that addresses the gender of God. There are some texts that use a 'Mothering' image that are worth exploring. Read Genesis 1 and be aware of the plural in verse 27: we have both male and female. The word in your bible translated 'man' is the Hebrew word for humans (Pronounced ah-dam that leads us to Adam). Read Psalm 131. Do you think of God as a man? What faithful/spiritual possibilities might spring forth if we didn't limit God with gender?

WEDNESDAY: Heaven seems to be the place of residence for God. I have always thought of heaven as 'up', and there are scriptures that reinforce that idea. But Psalm 139 offers us another thought of 'where God resides'. Read Psalm 139. If God is 'omnipresent' (in all places at the same time) how might that adjust our prayer life? What about all of our life? If God is everywhere all the time would we ever say 'don't say that in church'? Do you say things like that, things that focus God in a particular place and not in others?

THURSDAY: Not taking God's name in vain is our third commandment. Exodus 20:7. It means much more than not speaking certain words. It means to hallow God's name with our lives. Read Amos 2:1-8 and see how the lifestyle of those who claim to be lovers of God bring dishonor through their behavior. What in your life brings the most sadness to God? Is it possible to keep all the commandments and laws and still not hallow God's name? Where is God working on you with this issue?

FRIDAY: Read Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer in Luke 11:1-4, followed by Matthew's version in Matthew 6:5-15. How are they different? How does Luke set the scene versus Matthew? Matthew ends with some rather uncomfortable words about forgiveness that Luke doesn't include. Can we just skip that uncomfortable part in Matthew? What do you do when you come upon 'uncomfortable' scripture?