

Cultivate Reflection Guide

When in Rome: What Does God Want from Me?

March 20/21, 2021

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

Following God in a culture that doesn't is easier said than done. The book of Romans is full of foundational gospel truth that will teach us how our faith can influence the world around us, instead of letting others tell us what to believe – in the places where Christianity and culture collide.

Use our Weekly Reflection Guide, in community or through personal study, to live out what we're learning on the weekends. It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you. Choose the questions that are meaningful to you, then be REAL with self, God or others as you reflect, respond and pray.

1. REAL questions: It's often in the face of trial, frustration or confusion that we have our most authentic moments with God crying out with something that sounds like, "what do You want from me?"

- When have you cried out with a "why, how, what if or what next" question to God?
- What did you learn about yourself? About God?

2. REAL faith: Faith is believing that God is real and trusting Him above what we see, feel, think or want. Yet so often, we get in our own way when it comes to REAL faith.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that He exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek Him." Hebrews 11:6 NIV

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1 NIV

- What within you [e.g., doubt, desire, pride, ideas/opinions, politics, etc.] is an obstacle to having faith?
- REAL faith in God takes trust, loyalty and belief – in which of these areas do you most need to grow?

Dig Deeper: Read Mark 9:14-29. Be REAL with God about any area where you need Him to help your unbelief – even if that means having the faith to trust His plans when they look different from yours.

3. REAL tests: God not only wants us to believe that He is REAL, but He wants us to know that our faith is REAL. God causes or allows tests to examine [inspect, appraise, prove] our faith.

"Friends, when life gets really difficult, don't jump to the conclusion that God isn't on the job. Instead, be glad that you are in the very thick of what Christ experienced. This is a spiritual refining process, with glory just around the corner." 1 Peter 4:12-13 MSG

- How does this verse challenge, encourage or instruct your perspective on the testing of your faith?

4. REAL effort: We can't earn our way to being saved, but once we are, what we do with our life should reflect what God has done and is doing within us. Effort is a good thing.

"²⁰Are you so slow? Do you need to be shown that faith without actions has no value at all? ²¹What about Abraham, our father?... ²²See, his faith was at work along with his actions. In fact, his faith was made complete by his faithful actions." James 2:20-22 CEB

- How is God working through you – spiritually, emotionally or relationally.
- In what area could you make more effort to grow?

Take a moment to praise God for how He is working in your life. Invite Him to continue that work and to give you the courage and strength to be obedient to what He wants to do through you.

Cultivate Community: The devil wants nothing more than to convince you that God isn't working through you. It's not prideful to delight in the gifts/talents you have and the effort you make to use them to God's glory. If you're not sure what God is doing, ask a friend how they see Him at work in your life.