

## Teen Devotion

Year C – Proper 23

Lord, Increase Our Faith



**One truth shared:** God replaces my anxious thoughts with the reality that he has shown incredible generosity in my life.

*Then God said to Noah, “Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”*

*Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.*

*“As long as the earth endures,  
seedtime and harvest,  
cold and heat,  
summer and winter,  
day and night  
will never cease.”*

**Genesis 8:15-22**

### Lord, Increase Our Faith that Delights in Duty

“Over a year in that boat with those animals! That’s at least 375 days, God. My home, destroyed. My friends, gone. There is literally no one and nothing left. What am I supposed to do now?” - hypothetical Noah.

Noah had a lot of things he could have complained about or been anxious about. But instead of complaining, whining, or worrying, he worshiped God with gratitude in his heart. That is a surprising reaction. Sure, God saved Noah and his family from the flood, but did he really have to make the flood last that long? Did God really have to wipe out the whole earth? Noah was now in charge of starting the world over. Talk about pressure. Noah had a ton of reasons to complain or feel anxious, but instead, he was grateful to God.

Why?

Because Noah was very aware of reality. Noah was aware of who God is. Noah was aware of who he was. He was aware of what he deserved. He was aware of the generous grace of God that God poured out on Noah and his family.

Ask yourself, “Do I live with an awareness of God’s generosity in my life? Why do I sometimes feel so anxious and frustrated?” Why? Because we lose awareness of our reality. When we complain, we’ve lost sight of all of the blessings God has shown us. When we are anxious, we have forgotten who is walking alongside us. When we grumble, we have ignored the truth that we are sinners and that God has showered us with his love to make us his adopted children.

Be a Noah and open your eyes of faith! Be aware of this reality: You are a child of God. That means he made you sinless in his eyes and he loves you like crazy. The super powerful God, who made everything and rules over everything, made and rules everything with you in mind. The goal of your life has already been set by God, heaven. He is going to do whatever it takes to make sure you get to enjoy heaven forever. These truths help drive anxiousness from your lives and fill us with thankfulness.

So, open your eyes of faith. Be fully aware of reality. Enjoy life with gratitude in heart to God.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, open my eyes to truly see how generous you have been to me in my life. When I’m anxious or complaining, remind me again that I am safely yours, today and forever. Amen.

# Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

## Year C – Proper 22

### Lord, Increase Our Faith

**One truth shared:** God replaces my anxious thoughts with the reality that he has shown incredible generosity in my life.

### Lord, Increase Our Faith that Delights in Duty

**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

What is the worst job you've ever had or ever had to do? *(Note: Watch out for gossip. Don't talk about people. Talk about difficult tasks or expectations.)*

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

Hard or difficult jobs can easily leave us with frustrated or anxious thoughts and feelings. What is it that gives teenagers the most anxiety or frustrations today? What makes you most anxious? *(Note: Make a note of the things that cause anxiety or frustration. See if the examples can be grouped into issues like unrealistically high expectations, pressure to be in a relationship, pressure to pick the right life path, being a teen with Christian views puts you in the minority.)*

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Write down a list of things that could have left Noah feeling frustrated or anxious after the flood.
- Noah building an altar and offering sacrifices to God after he comes out of the ark tells us what about Noah's heart?
- Use the list of things that could have left Noah feeling frustrated or anxious. First look at that list explain why Noah would have had the right to feel that way. Then look at that same list through God's reality glasses/what was really going on according to God. What did Noah have to be grateful for?

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

- Gratitude versus anxiousness and frustration. They are opposite mindsets. Which one you feel comes down to awareness of reality. What are some promises from God that we need to remind ourselves of to remember what is reality?
- Why does faith play a huge role in living life with a heart full of gratitude to God?