

# Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

*A Discipleship Journey*



## **Discipleship Habit #4: Seek Reconciliation Often**

Week 20

Lord, Give Me This Living Water

This month we will explore Discipleship Habit #4: Seek Reconciliation Often. While focused on Reconciliation, we will maintain a common Opening Prayer with a reflection tailored to the Reconciliation area of focus for the week. Each week our focus is a different aspect of God's mercy with the goal of inviting you into a better understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation to inspire a greater love for this sacrament.

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This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Study Discipleship Habit #4: Seek Reconciliation Often.
- ❖ Reflect on Scripture (*John 4:5 – 19, 25b – 26, 28 – 30, 39 - 42*).
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed, as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

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### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise You, for You are merciful. You died on the cross for our sins and rose to restore us to fullness of life in You. Forgive us for the times we've turned away from You and others and did not earnestly seek You. In Your Scripture You tell us, "the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14b) Thank You for giving us Your mercy and healing in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Help us to know that You long to shower us with Your mercy. Give us the courage to face that which alienates us from You and allow You to tear down the walls that separate us from You. Help us to seek You often in Your Sacrament of Mercy. Jesus, we trust in You. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Reflection:

Mercy is one of those things that you don't know until you've really needed and The fourth habit of discipleship that we want to explore is the call to "*Seek Reconciliation Often*", the habit that finds the disciple regularly encountering the mercy of Christ. "Confession is the sacrament of the examined Christian life. It is the sacrament of recognized enlightenment. The life we embraced and committed to ourselves to live at Baptism was the life of disciples – students and imitators of the life of Jesus Christ." (Fr. David Knight)

By God's design, we are made for relationship. We are made for deep friendship with God in Christ now and for all eternity. We are made to practice sacrificial love toward our neighbors, whether they are family, friends, acquaintances, enemies, or unknown people across the globe. And we are made to love ourselves in ways reflecting the Divine Image in which we were created.

Unfortunately, due to our human weakness, we fall short of God's design for us. Often, because of the careless things we do or don't do, we cause the wounding or progressive hardening of these relationships. And sometimes, because of gravely selfish choices, we cause deep fissures or total fractures in our relationships with God and others.

We know our sin is real and, like a pebble thrown into the pond, causes ripples of harm to the community of people and the Church around us. But there is great news! Repairing our relationships is exactly why Jesus came! By dying on the cross for our sins, He built a bridge of forgiveness back to restored relationships with God, others, and ourselves.

Through His once and for all sacrifice on the cross, Jesus has placed His mercy and forgiveness at the doorstep of our hearts. All we need to do is open that door and walk in repentance to encounter Him in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. He is waiting for us there in love and mercy.

Reflect on a time when you may have harmed someone knowingly, how did that impact the way that you looked upon yourself following that experience?

Reflect on Scripture: *John 4:5 – 19, 25b – 26, 28 – 30, 39 – 42*

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son, Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from His journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to Him, "How can You, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and Who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

[The woman] said to Him, "Sir, You do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can You get this living water? Are You greater than our father, Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back."

The woman answered and said to Him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I can see You are a prophet...I know that the Messiah is coming, the One called the Anointed; when He comes, He will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am He, the One who is speaking with you."

...The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could He possibly be the Messiah?" They went out of the town and came to Him...Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done." When the Samaritans came to Him, they invited Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

(Reflect on the questions on the following page.)

Reflection Questions

As you read these passages from Scripture, what strikes you?

Put yourself in the place of the woman. How would you react if someone you just met told you everything you've done wrong or been ashamed about? Did the woman react like you would?

What does Jesus seem to want the woman to understand? What do you think He wants you to understand?

What is Jesus' attitude toward the woman? What does that tell us about Jesus' attitude toward us: our weaknesses, our sins, our failings?

What does this Scripture tell us about forgiveness and healing?

What is difficult or challenging about confessing our sins?

Closing Prayer

Have mercy on me, God, in accord with Your merciful love;  
in Your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.

Thoroughly wash away my guilt;  
and from my sin cleanse me.

For I know my transgressions;  
my sin is always before me.

Against You, You alone, have I sinned;  
I have done what is evil in Your eyes

So that You are just in Your word,  
and without reproach in Your judgment.

A clean heart create for me, God;  
renew within me a steadfast spirit.

Do not drive me from before Your face,  
nor take from me Your Holy Spirit.

Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation;  
uphold me with a willing spirit.

Lord, You will open lips;  
and my mouth will proclaim Your praise.

*Psalm 51:3 – 6, 11 – 14, 17*