



Sermon Series Devotional

September 3 - September 23

Hinckley First United Methodist Church

Introduction

The Bible contains a lot of small stories. Books that take up just pages of a thousand page book. Stories of individuals whose lives may have been insignificant in every way, except for one. They allowed God to do incredible things and write amazing stories with their lives. Join us as we study these Small But Mighty books that teach us lessons for life with God, and offer an outline for how God can transform our lives in powerful ways.

Why a Devotional?

A vibrant and authentic faith is not grown merely in one hour on Sunday morning. This devotional will give you the opportunity to engage with God's word on a regular basis as you seek to become more like Christ each day. There is a daily Bible reading plan, as well as reflection questions that are linked with each week of the sermon series. You can use this devotional individually or in a formal or informal small group.

Daily Bible Reading Plan

September 3- Worship

September 4- Habakkuk 1:1-4

September 5- Hab. 1:5-11

September 6- Hab. 1:12-2:1

September 7- Hab. 2:2-20

September 8- Hab. 3:1-15

September 9- Hab. 3:16-19

September 10- Worship

September 11- Jonah 1:1-3

September 12- Jonah 1:4-16

September 13- Jonah 2:1-10

September 14- Jonah 3:1-5

September 15- Jonah 3:6-10

September 16- Jonah 4:1-11

September 17- Worship

September 18- Micah 1:1-2:13

September 19- Micah 3:1-12

September 20- Micah 4:1-13

September 21- Micah 5:1-15

September 22- Micah 6:1-16

September 23- Micah 7:1-20

- Begin your time with prayer. Ask God to speak to you, for Jesus to be revealed to you, and for the Holy Spirit to fill you as you read these words of Scripture.

- Slowly, thoughtfully, read God's Word. Pay particular attention to words or phrases that stand out to you. Write them down or take time to memorize them.

- Consider how this Scripture connects with your life today. What may God be inviting you to do, challenging you to learn, or calling you to change?

Week 1

Habakkuk

"Habakkuk's name means both to wrestle and to embrace. You can wrestle with God about all that you don't like, yet simultaneously embrace him because he is good and trustworthy."

- Craig Groeschel, *Hope in the Dark*

- Habakkuk wrestled with God over injustices he saw that seemingly went unresolved. What are some injustices you see around you today (in your personal life, in your community, nationally, and globally)? How do these injustices impact your faith in God?

- Are you now or have you ever wrestled with God over something in your personal life? What is/was God doing in you through the struggle? What did you learn?

- In the midst of his wrestling, Habakkuk was also able to embrace God. Think about a time when you were disappointed in your circumstances, but you had complete faith and trust in God's goodness.

- As you reflect back on your life, how can you now see that God was faithfully working for your good during a season of hardship or struggle?

Week 2

Jonah

"On it's surface, Jonah is the story of a reluctant prophet and a cautionary tale about what happens when we don't follow God's call in our lives. But when we look a little deeper, we find a story about a prophet who believes that he understands God's will and is incredulous when God corrects his understanding of divine justice."

- Bruce Epperly, *Immersion Bible Studies: Jonah*

- Why did Jonah run away from God's call to go to Nineveh? Read Jonah 4:2-3.

- Ultimately, Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he believed they were unworthy of mercy and grace. Is there anyone who you (or others) believe are beyond redeeming or not worth saving? Be honest. Who are your Ninevites?

- Think about a time when you were quick to write someone off. When have you been content to hold a grudge or perpetuate a prejudice, when you know you should forgive or love?

- How does the story of Jonah expand your vision of God's grace and mercy? How might this story be calling you to extend grace to people or groups in your life?

Week 3

Micah

"How can I stand up before God and show proper respect to the high God? Should I bring an armload of offerings... Would God be impressed with thousands of rams... Would he be moved if I sacrificed my firstborn child...? But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don't take yourself too seriously - take God seriously."

- Micah 6:6-8, *The Message*

- "What do you want from me?!" Have you ever shouted that phrase at someone, or had someone ask it of you? What feelings are behind that question?

- Have you ever felt like God asks too much of you? Or that the church or religion asks too much of you? Serving God shouldn't feel like a burden. If you have felt (or do feel) like it is, what does this passage from Micah speak to your heart?

- What does it mean to "do justice"? What is one thing you could do this week in order to do justice?

- What does it mean to "love kindness"? Who is one person you can show kindness to this week?

- What does it mean to "walk humbly with God"? How can you do that this week?