July 4 Psalm 150

Praise the LORD. Praise God in his holy temple. Praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his powerful acts. Praise him because he is greater than anything else. Praise him by blowing trumpets. Praise him with harps and lyres. Praise him with tambourines and dancing. Praise him with stringed instruments and flutes. Praise him with clashing cymbals. Praise him with clanging cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.

(Psalms 150:1-6)

"Thinking" space.



Living



What do these Bible verses say about how I should live for God? What will I do to live in that way?

"Just me and God" space.

Things I'm praying to God and things He's saying to me.

Loving



What do these Bible verses say about how I should love like God? What will I do to love in that way?

Serving



What do these Bible verses say about how I should serve others like God? What will I do to serve that way?

"WOW" space.

An amazing thought about God, an answer to my prayers, or a way I'm becoming more like Jesus.

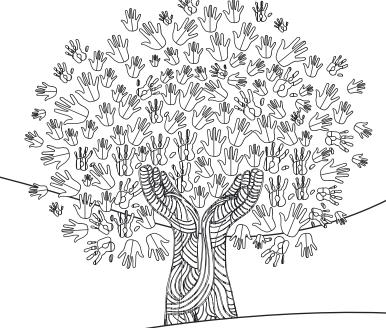
July 11 Ephesians 1:1-14

I, Paul, am writing this letter. I am an apostle of Christ Jesus just as God planned. I am sending this letter to you, God's people in Ephesus. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are faithful. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Those blessings come from the heavenly world. They belong to us because we belong to Christ. God chose us to belong to Christ before the world was created. He chose us to be holy and without blame in his eyes. He loved us. So he decided long ago to adopt us as his children. He did it because of what Jesus Christ has done. It pleased God to do it. All those things bring praise to his glorious grace. God freely gave us his grace because of the One he loves. We have been set free because of what Christ has done. Through his blood our sins have been forgiven. We have been set free because God's grace is so rich. He poured his grace on us by giving us great wisdom and understanding. He showed us the mystery of his plan. It was in keeping with what he wanted to do. It was what he had planned through Christ. It will all come about when history has been completed. God will then bring together all things in heaven and on earth under one ruler. The ruler is Christ. We were also chosen to belong to him. God decided to choose us long ago in keeping with his plan. He

works out everything to fit his plan and purpose. We were the first to put our hope in Christ. We were chosen to bring praise to his glory. You also became believers in Christ. That happened when you heard the message of truth. It was the good news about how you could be saved. When you believed, he marked you with a seal. The seal is the Holy Spirit that he promised. The Spirit marks us as God's own. We can now be sure that someday we will receive all that God has promised. That will happen after God sets all of his people completely free. All of those things will bring praise to his glory.

(Ephesians 1:1-14)

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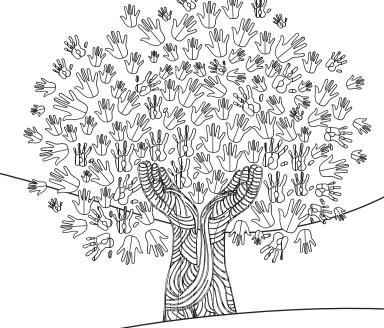
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You who are not Jews by birth, here is what I want you to remember. You are called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "circumcised." But they have only been circumcised in their bodies by human hands. Before you believed in Christ, you were separated from him. You were not considered to be citizens of Israel. You were not included in what the covenants promised. You were without hope and without God in the world. At one time you were far away from God. But now you belong to Christ Jesus. He spilled his blood for you. That has brought you near to God. Christ himself is our peace. He has made Jews and non-Jews into one group of people. He has destroyed the hatred that was like a wall between us. Through his body on the cross, Christ put an end to the law with all its commands and rules. He wanted to create one new group of people out of the two. He wanted to make peace between them. He planned to bring both of them as one body back to God because of the cross. Christ put their hatred to death on that cross. He came and preached peace to you who were far away. He also preached peace to those who were near. Through Christ we both come to the Father by the power of one Holy Spirit. So you are no longer strangers and outsiders. You are citizens together with God's people. You are members of God's family. You are a building that is built on the apostles and prophets. They are the foundation. Christ Jesus himself is the most important stone in the building. The whole building is held together by him. It rises to become a holy temple because it belongs to the Lord. And because you belong to him, you too are being built together. You are being made into a house where God lives through his Spirit.

(Ephesians 2:11-22)

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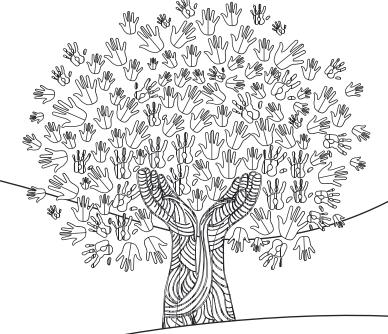
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July 25 Ephesians 4:1-16

I am a prisoner because of the Lord. So I am asking you to live a life worthy of what God chose you for. Don't be proud at all. Be completely gentle. Be patient. Put up with one another in love. The Holy Spirit makes you one in every way. So try your best to remain as one. Let peace keep you together. There is one body. There is one Spirit. You were appointed to one hope when you were chosen. There is one Lord. There is one faith and one baptism. There is one God and Father of all. He is over everything. He is through everything. He is in everything. But each one of us has received a gift of grace, just as Christ wanted us to have it. That is why Scripture says, "When he went up to his place on high, he led a line of prisoners. He gave gifts to people." (Psalm 68:18) What does "he went up" mean? It can only mean that he also came down to the lower, earthly places. The One who came down is the same as the One who went up higher than all the heavens. He did it in order to fill all of creation. He is the One who gave some the gift to be apostles. He gave some the gift to be prophets. He gave some the gift of preaching the good news. And he gave some the gift to be pastors and teachers. He did it so that they might prepare God's people to serve. If they do, the body of Christ will be built up. That will continue until we all become one in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son. Then we will be grown up in the faith. We will receive everything that Christ has for us. We will no longer be babies in the faith. We won't be like ships tossed around by the waves. We won't be blown here and there by every new teaching. We won't be blown around by the cleverness and tricks of people who try to hide their evil plans. Instead, we will speak the truth in love. We will grow up into Christ in every way. He is the Head. He makes the whole body grow and build itself up in love. Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work. It supports the other parts. In that way, the body is joined and held together.

(Ephesians 4:1-16)

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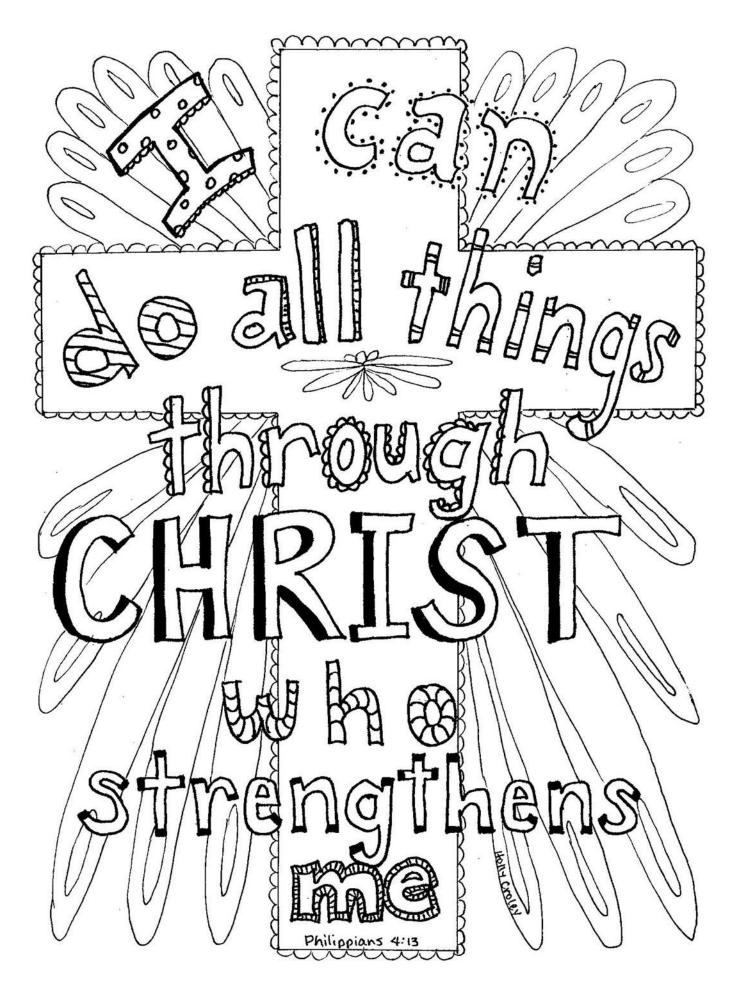
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JOSHUA