



Alive in God's Word

Share with a partner or your group: Share with a partner or your group: What Sunday school teacher --in elementary, middle, or high school or an adult Bible class leader --- has influenced your faith-life?

Answers will vary, but encourage everyone to share. Make it clear that everything confided within the group stays within the group. The leader should start to begin discussion with an example of her own.

Opening Prayer: Dear God, Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus to be our Savior from sin, death, and the power of the devil. In Holy Baptism, You make us Your chosen people. May Your Spirit continue to guide us through the study of Your Word and help us to boldly live and proclaim it. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Living Word. Amen.

As God's chosen people, redeemed by our Savior Jesus and given saving faith in Baptism, we want to study, live, and proclaim His Word to all nations and all generations. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!* (Psalm 33:12).

Study His Word

According to the following passages, how does God view us, His chosen people? What does He promise us?

Deuteronomy 7:6

⁶"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. We are treasured by Him, we are holy to Him because of Jesus saving work

Galatians 3:26–29

²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

We are His sons and daughters in Christ and there is no distinction; we are His heirs, with a promised inheritance.

1 Thessalonians 1:4

⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

He has chosen us and, through the Holy Spirit, engendered faith in Jesus through the Gospel message

1 Peter 2:9–10

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his

marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

God chooses us; we are royal, holy, and His own; we are God's people, receiving His mercy

In **Psalm 119:105**, the psalmist declares: *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* What specific truths does God Word give to us?

See **John 20:31**, **Romans 3:21–28**, and **Ephesians 2:8–10**.

John 20:31: ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Jesus is the Word made flesh and our Savior: He is the Son of God; we will have eternal life if we believe this Good News

Romans 3:21-28: ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

We all sin and deserve God's wrath and eternal punishment, but Jesus took our sins upon Himself and took the punishment we deserved; He fulfilled the Law and gives us His righteousness and God looks on us in mercy and grace; He gives us the faith in Jesus as Savior which saves us.

Ephesians 2:8-10: ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We were dead in our sins; by fulfilling God's merciful plan, Jesus has given us new life by grace; God's great gift of faith helps us to believe in Jesus and be saved.

What is Paul's advice to Timothy — and us — in **2 Timothy 3:14–15**?

2 Timothy 3:14-15: ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been

acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

We are encouraged to continue in the Word of God, knowing from whom we learned it

Name specific ways that each of us can follow this directive. Answers will vary, but could include such things as regularly attending worship to hear the Word preached, being involved in Bible study groups, or having a personal and daily Bible reading plan.

What does **Psalm 119:111** tell about the Word?

Psalm 119:111: ¹¹¹ Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart
The Word is our heritage — our legacy — passed down through generations; the Word brings joy.

Where did Timothy learn the Good News of salvation in Jesus? See **2 Timothy 1:5**.

⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

Grandmother Lois and mother Eunice

Faith Talk: As a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, teacher, and friend, how are you doing in sharing your faith with the next generation? Share specific ways you have done or could do this.

Answers will vary, but encourage everyone to share. This question is meant to positively share ideas of ways to pass the Good News to the next generations.

Live His Word

Read **2 Timothy 3:16–17**. Paul declares that *all Scripture is breathed out by God*. The Greek word for this phrase is “*theópneustos*” — divinely inspired or God-breathed. How does God's divinely inspired Word work in our lives through the Spirit?

2 Timothy 3:16-17: ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Word teaches, reproves, corrections, and trains us to live lives of godliness.

What does **Hebrews 4:12** tell us about God's Word?

Hebrews 4:12: ¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The Word is alive and active in our lives and is at work in our lives to discipline and guide us; it offers both Law and Gospel

How does the Spirit work in our lives?

See **Luke 11:28**, **1 Corinthians 11:23–25**, and **Galatians 3:26**.

Luke 11:28: ²⁸ But he [Jesus] said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

1 Corinthians 11:23-25: ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵ In

the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Galatians 3:26: ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

God's Word and Sacraments (Lord's Supper, Baptism)

What promises of God does **Isaiah 43:1–3a** give us? (Note especially the inevitability of trials and tribulations in life because of sin.)

Isaiah 43:1–3a: ¹ But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. ³ For I am he Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

He redeems us, calls us by name, tells us we are His and that He will be with us through the trials we will inevitably endure; He is the Lord

What specific Spirit-led behaviors are listed in **Galatians 5:22–23** and **Colossians 3:12–17**?

Behaviors in *red italics* below.

Galatians 5:22–23: ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness, self-control*; against such things there is no law.

Colossians 3:12–17: ¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, *compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,* ¹³ *bearing with one another* and, if one has a complaint against another, *forgiving each other*; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on *love*, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the *peace of Christ rule in your hearts*, to which indeed you were called in one body. And *be thankful.* ¹⁶ *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.* ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, *do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus*, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Faith Talk: How do you live the Word in your home? In your church? In your community? Share with a partner or small group.

Answers will vary, but encourage everyone to share. The leader should have specific examples such as showing love and respect in the home, disciplining children in love, encouraging fellow Christians by caring for them in crisis and praying with them, or donating to community food banks or other community needs

Proclaim His Word

Reread **1 Peter 2:9**. What are God's people directed to do?

1 Peter 2:9–10: ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Proclaim the Good News about Jesus

The account of a demon-possessed man healed by Jesus is given in **Luke 8:26-39**. Focus on what the healed man and Jesus discussed in verses **38** and **39**. What does the man want to do? What does Jesus tell him to do? What is his response?

Luke 8:26-39: ²⁶ Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time, he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me." ²⁹ For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) ³⁰ Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. ³⁴ When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵ Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ³⁶ And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. ³⁷ Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

The man wanted to be with Jesus. Jesus told him to go home and tell people what had happened to him by Jesus.

What does **Psalm 78:4** declare? Who needs to hear God's Word from us?

Psalm 78:4: ⁴ We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

The psalmist declares that God's people will tell of the things the Lord has done.

The next generation

Faith Talk: Discuss the words of the hymn "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage" (LSB 582). How does this hymn sum up studying, living, and proclaiming His Word? Answers will vary, but encourage everyone to participate. The leader might want to take each line separately to aid in discussion.

God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever;
To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure Throughout all generations.
(Public Domain)

Being alive in God's Word includes studying, living, and proclaiming His Word to His glory. We praise Him with the psalmist in Psalm 9:1: *I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.*

Faith Walk: Thank God for His life-giving Word. Make a date to talk to a loved one about the precious Word of God and the treasure that it is for you. As the Holy Spirit guides, share the Good News of salvation in Jesus with an important person in your life and the assurance that eternal life is yours through faith in the Savior. Live as Spirit-led chosen people of God!

Closing: Sing "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage" (LSB 582).

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