

# Forward Framework: A Weekly Devotional

## Introduction Activity (for Groups):

Have everyone write the name of 1 well known person (Famous or Biblical) on a post-it note. shuffle the post-it notes and have Each person draw a note and place it on their mask. Then each person will need to ask the group questions to help them to figure out who the person is on their mask

## God Encounters:

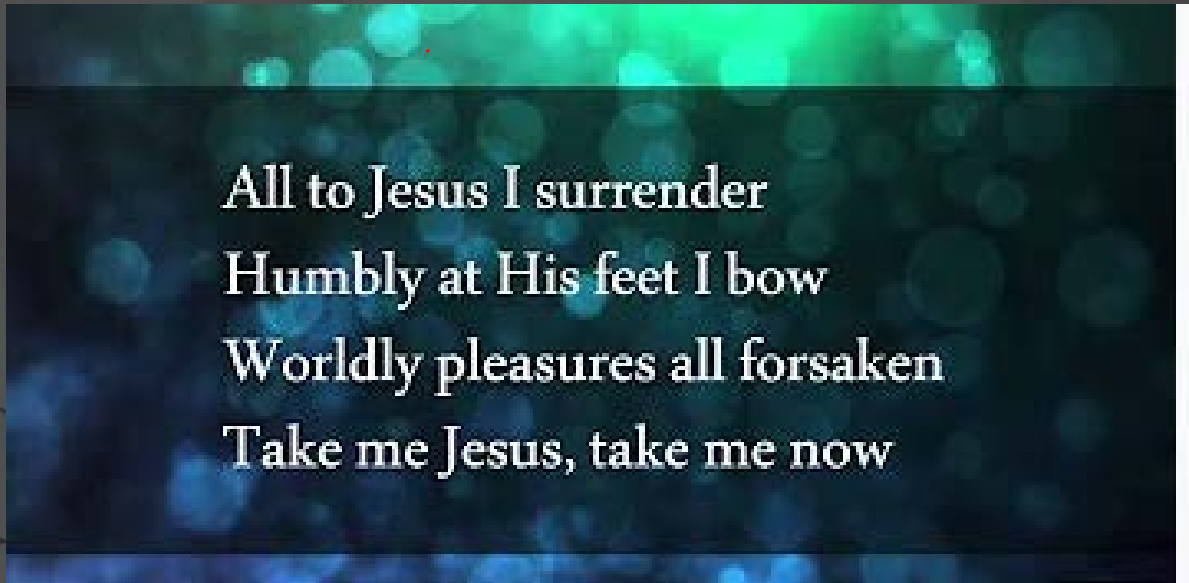
Journal, Think about, or discuss with your group how you have encountered God in your life this week.

Real Talk: This is a time to be authentic, with yourself and others. Share how you're doing with God personally and pray for one another.

## Worship Song:

Click in this area for a hyperlink to Youtube or search for:

I Surrender All - Jadon Lavik



All to Jesus I surrender  
Humbly at His feet I bow  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken  
Take me Jesus, take me now

## Sermon Summary:

The author of the book of Acts, Luke, is someone we may relate to. Luke was a doctor -- someone who studied and learned and used all that knowledge to help people. He was a Gentile -- an outsider who came to believe in Jesus through the testimony of others. Something in Luke's life prompted him to write an account of the Gospel (the book of Luke) and follow that story through to the life of the early church (the book of Acts). At some point in Luke's life, he connected with the apostle Paul and travelled with Paul for quite some time.

There's an important section in Acts Chapter 16. Up to this point, Luke has been narrating to us what's been happening: they (the church) did something. He (Paul) preached the Gospel. Other people are called to serve. In Acts 16, we see the language Luke uses change from talking about other people spreading the Gospel and being called by God to Luke himself working alongside other Christians to spread the Good News. Luke doesn't make a production of it; there's no conversion story or self-referential narrative. Luke just switches his story from the objective -- about them -- to the subjective -- about us. In the shift of a few words, with no fanfare or overt acknowledgement, we see Luke become a minister of the Gospel and a participant with, rather than observer of, the early church.

Sometimes it's so easy to sit in pews, to watch a YouTube video, to check a box, that we forget we are called to activity. We observe the work of spreading the gospel and remark on its holiness and goodness, but we refrain from participating in it. Maybe we're scared or busy or we just don't know how. Whatever the reason, we know God has called us to more. The inadvertent pastor, Luke, shows us how God has called us to participation in His kingdom. As our church continues learning about the early church and leaning into Biblical community, may we lean deeply into whatever God has called us to.

Read: Acts 1: 1-11

What stands out to you?

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Discuss:

Did anything stand out to you? Did anything catch your attention that hasn't before?

What Bible translation do you own/read from? Why?

Did you not "like" any portions? Why?

What themes do we see throughout the books of Acts?

What is your personal and our corporate heart pull reading Acts?

Memory Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." *Acts 1: 8*

Prayer:

Dear God,

How fortunate we are that you have provided an instruction manual for living our lives. How grateful I am that you have blessed my church with leadership that bases their teaching on scripture because we know all scripture is inspired by you, Father, and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. Please open my eyes to your wisdom as I learn about the early church and help me to utilize their example in living my own life, faithful to your will. As Psalm 119:8 says, "Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instruction."

In Your Holy Name,  
Amen