

REFLECTION GUIDE

1.14.24

INTRO

The phrase “God helps those who help themselves” holds a half-truth. Suggesting that God only acts in response to our efforts is contrary to our beliefs about how God constantly works in our lives to help us help each other.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Loving God, I trust you to be my help and strength, even when I have nothing to offer in return. Instill in me the confidence to seek your help at all times. Grow me into a person who can extend your help and strength to others who may desperately need them. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Have you ever gone through a time when you did not have the necessary knowledge or ability to get out of a tough situation? How did you handle it?
- Have you ever experienced God working through another person to help you? Did you attribute that to God at the time? How do you feel about it, looking back?
- To an orphan or widow in Israel’s patriarchal society, it would have been nonsense to say, “God helps those who help themselves.” With no social status or legal standing, a female or a child had no way to help themselves on their own. Yet, in many places in the Psalms and Israel’s laws, we see evidence that God cares passionately about helping those who cannot help themselves. Read Psalm 68:4-6 and Psalm 82:1-4.
 - What stands out to you in these scriptures?
 - Psalm 82:4 specifically tells us to “rescue the weak and the needy.” Does that change any feelings you have experienced toward people in need?
- Sometimes, we think we need to base our requests for God’s help on some level of “deserving” on our own part. This can translate into expectations about our effort or spiritual purity; however, there are many instances in the Bible where we see someone requesting and receiving God’s help at their lowest point. How hard is it for you to approach God when you have nothing to offer but a deep need?