Friends do not consider any scriptures, including the Bible, to be the final Word of God. Robert Barclay cautioned that the scriptures are only a declaration of the source and not the source itself. Friends believe in “continuing revelation” arising from ongoing communion with the Living God. This expands our sensitivity in relationships with one another and likewise our knowledge of the universe.

EXCERPTED FROM PYM FAITH AND PRACTICE, 2018

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.”

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16

So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

PSALM 71:18

The glory of young men is their strength, but the splendor of old men is their gray hair.

PROVERBS 20:29

Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent.

PSALM 71:9

Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.

PROVERBS 16:31
Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days.

**JOB 12:12**

The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

**PSALM 92:12-15**

Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

**PROVERBS 17:6**

Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

**PROVERBS 23:22**

Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated.

**DEUTERONOMY 34:7**

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

**PSALM 73:26**

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

**JOEL 2:28**

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

**PSALM 90:12**
Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

**DEUTERONOMY 32:7**

A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**PSALM 23:1-6**

My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me like a shepherd’s tent; like a weaver I have rolled up my life; he cuts me off from the loom; from day to night you bring me to an end.

**ISAIAH 38:12**

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

**PSALM 90:12**
1. How to Use Grounding Quotes

Below are some suggestions for exploring the introductory essays, texts, and videos in the Grounding section of each topic. Be creative and consider using different processing techniques over time in order to spark the various learning styles of your participants: discussion, personal reflection, artistic expression, music, worship sharing, creative writing, and deep listening.

2. Friendly Bible Study

The Friendly Bible Study process applies to Scripture as well as other materials. This process is good for a group of newcomers and old-timers, allowing participants to speak about what is exciting and what is problematic about the text.

3. Find the Truth

Choose one idea or sentence that rings true for you. Share with a partner an experience you have had that relates to that sentence/idea.

4. What Do You Notice?

Shorter variations might be: What one phrase or idea sticks out for you? Sit with it for a few minutes and see what rises for you. Now journal/share with a partner.

5. Art Response

Draw or doodle in response to this text. Allow yourself to be Spirit-led – what color do you want to pick up, and how do you want to use it? This is not art for to view. This is exploration and expression. Alternatively, invite participants to make a visual or 3D response to the text using art materials such as clay or play dough, magazines for collage, paint, mural paper, pipe cleaners, objects from nature (acorns, feathers, grasses, flowers, seeds, bark), or building blocks or Legos.

6. Visit the Text in Worship

Sit in worship with this material. Let it work on you. Try not to “think” about it – just let it sit on your lap and soak in. Now, turn to your partner and share something about your visit with this text.
7. Journaling
Write your reaction to the text, how it applies to your life today, what you’re grappling with, or what you’re grateful for. Use one of the General Questions for Reflection or free-write. In general, journal writing is kept confidential.

8. Set it to Music
If you have a group that is willing to be creative, break into small groups and ask each group to write a tune for the quotation or an excerpt (or assign a different quotation to each group). Tunes are a great way to “memorize” quotations so that they will stick with you. Check out Timeless Quaker Wisdom in Plainsong for some beautiful examples.

9. Worship Sharing
Settle into worship and invite participants to speak into the silence and share their thoughts about a query. Craft a query directly related to the text or choose one of the General Questions for Reflection. A more detailed description of worship sharing can be found here.

10. Homework
Share a quotation, introductory essay, QuakerSpeak video link, or set of quotations with group participants. In preparation for the next Spiritual Deepening group session, give the participants some “homework” to do. This could include:

1. reflecting on the text during their daily spiritual practice or during Meeting for Worship
2. journaling about their response to the text
3. rewriting the message in their own words
4. writing a prayer about the topic
5. finding a song, object, or image that represents to them the theme of the message
6. creating a piece of art that illustrates their response

As part of your next group sessions, invite participants to share or report back on their homework assignment.
11. Lecto Divina
Treat the quotation as a holy text and pay attention to how it speaks to you. Learn more about the Lectio Divina process.

12. Group Brainstorm
Ask a question that will elicit one-word answers or short phrases. On a flipchart paper, record the responses as participants share. Consider questions such as:

13. Writing Prompts
Invite participants to briefly contemplate the quotation and then respond to a writing prompt. Create a prompt specifically related to the text or choose one of the General Questions for Reflection.

14. Pair-Share or Triads
Divide the group into pairs or sets of three to discuss the quotation. Return to a large group and share any themes that arose.

15. Group Discussion
Ask a question directly related to the text or choose one of the General Questions for Reflection.

16. Make it Personal
Rewrite the quote in your own words or to reflect contemporary society and language.

17. General Questions for Reflections
Rewrite the quote in your own words or to reflect contemporary society and language.

    1. How is the Divine/Truth/Love speaking to me through this text?
    2. What experience in my life reflects the message of this text?
    3. What do I have to learn from this message?
    4. What resonates with me in this quotation?
    5. What stands out to me in this text?
    6. What surprised me about this message?
REFLECT AND RESPOND

7. What questions arise about my life as I contemplate this message?
8. What canst thou say? (What do I have to say in response to this message?)
9. What feelings arise in my body as I consider this message?
10. An image that comes to mind as I listen to this quotation is...
11. Where is the growing edge for me around this issue?
12. If I could rephrase the message in my own words, I would say...
13. This truth tastes like... (smells like... sounds like... feels like... looks like...)
14. In relation to this topic, I used to be..., but now I’m...
15. I’d like to ask Spirit/The Universe/God/the Inward Teacher.... about this message.
16. The point on my spiritual journey when this idea has been most alive in me was...

Discover more activities in the Spiritual Deepening Library: www.fgcquaker.org/SDLibrary