

DEVOTION  
Session Five

**Scripture:** Matthew 28: 16-20

**Song:** “Lead Me Lord” (UMH #473)

**Reading:** *God’s Ways Are Not Our Ways*

We desire pleasure and freedom from pain.

God invites us to growth and maturity.

We seek escape from difficulty.

God encourages us to engage the world’s brokenness.

We want quick answers to our questions.

God asks us to “Be still and know that I am God.”

We demand solutions to our problems.

God teaches life-long learning amid inconvenience, conflict, and pain.

We want power and recognition.

God calls us to humility.

We want relief from stress.

God gives us hope in harsh realities.

We want safety and security.

God beckons us to sacrificial servanthood.

We want health and comfort.

God offers inner serenity and peace.

We want happiness—now.

God delivers joy all through life.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways,  
and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

(Pete Hammond, *Lessons, Prayers, & Scriptures on the Faith Journey* [Intervarsity/USA Marketplace], 93.)

**Prayer:** God, you are like a baker.

The leaven you provide raises our hopes.

You shape our lives with your hands—they are strong, yet gentle.

We ask that you warm us in the oven of your love.

Form our common lives by your grace

so that we may in turn nourish hope in the world.

We trust in you. Amen.