

DIG DEEP



“I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT HE IS LIKE WHO COMES TO ME AND HEARS MY WORDS AND PUTS THEM INTO PRACTICE. HE IS LIKE A MAN BUILDING A HOUSE, WHO DUG DOWN DEEP AND LAID THE FOUNDATION ON ROCK. WHEN A FLOOD CAME, THE TORRENT STRUCK THAT HOUSE BUT COULD NOT SHAKE IT, BECAUSE IT WAS WELL BUILT.” - LUKE 6:47-48

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INTRODUCTION

This workbook was created to help Christians to grow in their knowledge of God and to experience Christ on a deeper level. The format is designed to help you develop a foundation in your faith. The topic each week revolves around a different component of the Christian life. The weekly plan is set up to help you spend a small amount of time each day praying, reading the Bible and answering questions that will guide you in applying it's truths to your life. Here is what each week will contain:

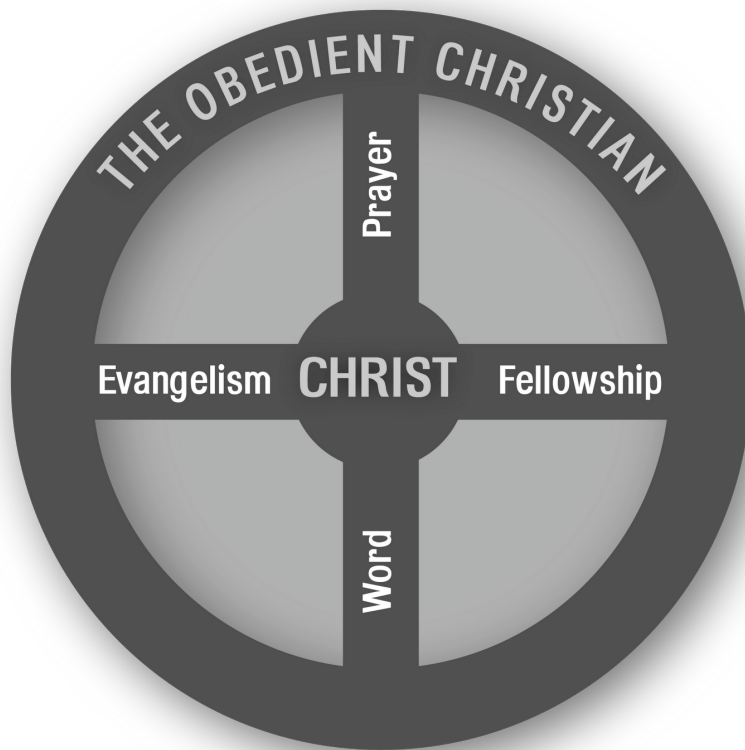
- **DAY 1 - DAY 5** – prayer, bible reading, meditation, answering question and scripture memory review
- **DAY 6** – read the article or do the exercise provided
- **DAY 7** – review, catch up if you missed a day or read other Bible verses of your choice

You have the freedom to adapt this study however you choose to help you grow closer to God, but each day should consist of the following major components in some fashion.

- **PREPARATION**: Prepare your mind and heart to meet with God. This is not just a mental exercise or another to do on your list; this is preparation for life change! Pray that God would help you focus and make the most of this time.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION**: Next, you will read and study the Bible. You will focus on specific passages of scripture and try to comprehend what they mean through answering a set of questions. The goal is not to merely fill in the blanks but to write the Word of God on your heart, letting it's Truth change your perspective.
- **APPLICATION**: This component is crucial in order for you to see transformation in your life. It will help you to learn how to apply God's word to your life through asking questions like:
 - Does your life demonstrate that you are remembering these truths?
 - What sins do you need to confess in light of this?
 - What do you learn about yourself from these verses?
 - What are one or two practical ways to apply what you've learned?
- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**: For each week there is a verse to memorize and meditate upon. This is a necessary discipline for growing Christians who desire to live in line with God's Word.
- **PRAYER**: Close your time each day by talking to God, praising him, confessing your sins and presenting your requests. Remember, you are talking to the Creator of the universe that loves you immensely!

You will benefit most from this study if you find a small group to meet with regularly. In this small group, you should spend time encouraging each other, discussing what you have learned, and praying for each other.

Like anything else in life, as you go through this study you will reap what you sow. There is nothing magical about this combination of scriptures and questions that will mystically bring you closer to God. You could easily read all the verses and fill in all the blanks with a cold heart without truly benefiting from them. Or you could focus the gaze of your soul on your Savior and believe God's promise that when you seek the Lord with all your heart, you will find Him.



● **THE HUB: CHRIST THE CENTER – 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17; GALATIANS 2:20**

The hub of a Christian's life (The Wheel) is Jesus Christ. Surrendering totally to Christ's authority and leadership is an act of your will. It creates within you the desire to do what He wants you to do. This must be the driving force of your life - the hub of your wheel. From Christ alone comes your life, your sufficiency and your power to be victorious.

● **THE WORD SPOKE – 2 TIMOTHY 3:16; JOSHUA 1:8**

The Word of God is a vital element for Christian growth and maturity. God speaks through the Bible to reveal Himself to you, to give you His principles for life and ministry and to reveal His plan for salvation through Jesus Christ, whom is worthy of your unequalled allegiance. Personal intake of God's Word is necessary for spiritual health and nourishment.

● **THE PRAYER SPOKE – JOHN 15:7; PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7**

Prayer is your natural response to God as you hear Him speak through His Word. It is sharing your heart with the One who longs for your companionship and who cares about your concerns. Prayer builds intimacy with the Father, transforms your heart and unleashes the power of God into your personal battles and the lives of others.

● **THE FELLOWSHIP SPOKE – MATTHEW 18:20; HEBREWS 10:24-25**

Learning from and encouraging others in Christ creates love and chemistry that is pleasing to God. No one can follow Christ in isolation; you need other believers and they need you to faithfully glorify the Lord. God directs Christians to build each other up in the faith and depend on each other in loving relationships, which distinguishes from others in the world.

● **THE EVANGELISM SPOKE – MATTHEW 4:19; ROMANS 1:16**

The natural overflow of a rich and vibrant Christian life is desiring to share with others how they too can have this life. God has given believers the great privilege and responsibility of telling others the gospel (good news) of Christ's death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins. You do this as you serve and build friendships with those who don't know Christ.

● **THE RIM: OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST – ROMANS 12:1; JOHN 14:21**

The rim of The Wheel represents your obedience to Christ. When you are actively following God, it is apparent in the way you live. Your internal faith will be evident in outward actions. The proof of your love for God is your obedience to Him. In fact, none of the spokes of the wheel will hold together unless they are rimmed by this essential element of obedience. This is where the "rubber meets the road" in your life.

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 JOHN 5:11-15 & ROMANS 6:23

• How does someone gain eternal life? Is it something that you can earn?

• Is it possible to know for sure if you will go to heaven? Why or why not? (1 John 5:13)

• According to 1 John 5:11-15, where should your confidence about your salvation come from?

2 TIMOTHY 1:8-12

• Paul is in prison while he writes this letter to Timothy. “In whom” does Paul place his confidence in verse 12? What has He done for us? (v. 9-10)

• What was Paul’s attitude in this passage despite facing suffering? Why do you think this is his attitude? (v.12)

● **APPLICATION:** Have you asked Jesus for the gift of eternal life? If not, what is holding you back? How can you be certain that your salvation is secure in Christ? Is your confidence based on the good things that you do or on the finished work of Christ? Why?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** NUMBERS 23:19 & 1 CORINTHIANS 1:20 & 25

- What do you learn about God in these verses? How does this bring assurance & confidence?

- Do you think God would ever change His mind about someone He saves? Why or why not?

JOHN 3:36 & JOHN 5:24

- What promises does Jesus make about eternal life in these passages? Can you trust these promises?

- What do you think it means to “believe” in these verses? (Hint: different than James 2:19)

● **APPLICATION:** What do you think most college students would say it takes to be saved? Why do you think they think that? What have you learned about salvation from these verses?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **ROMANS 7:14-25**

- What does Paul say about his own goodness in this passage?

- What is Paul's struggle in this passage?

- What conclusion does Paul come to in verse 24 & what question does he ask?

- Where does Paul find assurance and hope in this passage? (v. 25) Why?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you find a similar struggle as Paul in your own life: you want to do good but you end up doing what you hate? Does this ever cause you to doubt your salvation? What is one thing you want to tell yourself to remember when you do sin in the future?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:17**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 1:13-14** & **EZEKIEL 36:26-27**

- What do we receive when we truly put our trust in the gospel?

- What will be the result or evidence that we have received it? Why do you think this will be the result?

- What does this guarantee? (Ephesians 1:14)

ROMANS 8:15-16 & **JOHN 16:7-14**

- What are some of the roles that the Holy Spirit will have in our lives?

● **APPLICATION:** Is there evidence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Explain. If so, what does this guarantee?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:17**

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MATTHEW 7:13-23

- Which path will most people choose in this life? Why do you think that this is the case?

- What does “fruit” mean in the tree illustration? Is it possible for a good tree to bear bad fruit? Explain.

- What distinguishes those who say they believe (i.e. the ones who say, “Lord, Lord” and yet do not enter God’s kingdom) versus those who truly believe?

GALATIANS 5:16-25

- List the fruits of the flesh & the fruits of the Spirit. (*“Flesh” here refers to sinful appetites of our body and is different than the heart of “flesh” in Ezekiel 36:26, which refers to a sensitive heart that is responsive to God*)

- How does someone stop producing bad fruit & start producing good fruit? (John 15:4-5)

● **APPLICATION:** Is your life characterized most by fruits of the flesh or fruits of the Spirit? Explain. What is one area or fruit you hope to grow in? What is one practical goal you can set in this area?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 1: ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

DAY 6: EXERCISE

● **REVIEW:** Briefly look over the first five days this week to review what God taught you

● **RECITE:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Re-write this verse *in your own words*. Is this transformation evident in your life? Explain.

EVALUATE YOUR LIFE

In a few sentences, write about your spiritual past. What is your church/spiritual background? What were you living for before you became a Christian?

In a few sentences, explain how you have come (or are coming) to understand what Jesus has done for you on the cross? When did the gift of faith in Christ become a reality in your life?

In a few sentences, explain how this has changed your life. How are your desires and motivations different? What evidence is there that you are a new creation? What old things have gone and what new things have come?

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:**

- Read the following verses and record in the table what is true about someone before having a relationship with Christ. Then record what is true of a person once he/she is in Christ.

<u>VERSE</u>	<u>BEFORE CHRIST</u>	<u>IN CHRIST</u>
COLOSSIANS 1:21-22		
GALATIANS 3:23-27		
EPHESIANS 2:12-14		
2 THESSALONIANS 1:8-10		

- How does Jesus' death and resurrection change someone's identity? Why did He have to die and raise to life in order to do so?

● **APPLICATION:** Which is harder for you: to believe what you used to be or to believe what is true about you now in Christ? Explain. Why is it important to know the truth about who we were before knowing Christ?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:**

- Read the following verses and record in the table what is true about someone before having a relationship with Christ. Then record what is true of a person once he/she is in Christ.

<u>VERSE</u>	<u>BEFORE CHRIST</u>	<u>IN CHRIST</u>
COLOSSIANS 1:13-14		
EPHESIANS 2:1-10		
TITUS 3:3-7		
JOHN 15:14-16		

- How is someone saved? What role do your actions have in your salvation?

● **APPLICATION:** When you look at *this* chart, is it harder for you to believe what you used to be or to believe what is true about you now in Christ? Explain. Why is it important to know the truth about our *new identity* in Christ?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 1:4-7**

- When did God choose you to be holy and blameless? How does this make you feel?

- Why did God decide to adopt you as His child? Was it because of anything you did or would do?

JOHN 6:44 & 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4

- What do these verses teach you about your ability to seek and choose God on your own?

- What did God do in order for you to seek Him?

- What does this mean for those around you who do not have an interest in Jesus?

● **APPLICATION:** What things in your life do you find pride in? What things do you often boast about? Why does the gospel prevent you from being able to boast in anything, especially your faith? (Galatians 6:14)

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:21**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 1:7** & **HEBREWS 9:1-14**

- What does the word redemption (redeem) mean? What was the price required to redeem us?

- According to Hebrews 9:12, how long does our redemption last?

- How is Jesus' blood different from the sacrifices of animals made in the Old Testament? (Hebrews 9:13-14)
What does this mean about God's forgiveness of our sins? (Psalm 103:12)

ROMANS 3:23-28 & **GALATIANS 3:23-26**

- What does the word justify mean? How are we justified before God?

- How does Jesus' death on our behalf demonstrate God's justice? (Romans 3:25-26)

- What is the purpose of God's laws if following them cannot make us right with God? (Galatians 3:24)

● **APPLICATION:** When you are struggling with sin, how can the truth about what Jesus has done for you help you to fight against sin? What are some sins that you have been struggling with this week?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:21**

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 5

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21
 - What should be your motivation to live for Christ? What often motivates you to live righteously? (v.14-15)

 - What is one way your perspective of the world & people changes when you become Christians? (v.16-17)

 - What does reconciliation (reconcile) mean? What is the “message of reconciliation” that we’ve been given?

 - What does it mean to be an ambassador for Christ? What are some things that an ambassador for Christ might do on a daily basis?

 - Rewrite verse 21 in your own words.
- **APPLICATION:** How can Christ’s love and sacrifice motivate you to live selflessly today? What are one or two ways you can be an ambassador for Christ this week?
- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21
Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.
- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 6: EXERCISE

● READ & REFLECT:

LIVING IN LIGHT OF YOUR IDENTITY

SATAN OFTEN ATTACKS OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST BY LYING TO US ABOUT WHO WE ARE. HIS TACTICS ARE USUALLY SUBTLE TWISTS OF THE TRUTH IN OUR HEARTS. READ THROUGH THESE COMMON LIES AND THE THE TRUTH THAT SETS YOU FREE.

❖ LIE #1: I MUST MEET CERTAIN STANDARDS TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF.

THE TRUTH: I am completely forgiven for all my sin and failures. I can't do anything that will cause God to love me any more or any less than He presently does! I no longer need to be afraid to fail.

- VERSES: PSALM 103:12 ROMANS 3:19-25 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 TITUS 3:3-5
- KEY WORD: JUSTIFICATION - declared "not guilty" before God, just as if I never sinned & just as if I had always obeyed

❖ LIE #2: I MUST MEET THE APPROVAL OF CERTAIN OTHERS TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF.

THE TRUTH: In Christ, I am totally accepted by God, absolutely pleasing to God. Because of Jesus, God approves of me and is never disappointed in me. I no longer have to fear rejection.

- VERSES: ROMANS 5:10 GALATIANS 1:10 COLOSSIANS 1:21-22
- KEY WORD: RECONCILIATION - restoration to an intimate relationship with God in which I am fully loved

❖ LIE #3: BECAUSE I FAIL, I AM UNWORTHY OF LOVE AND DESERVE TO BE BLAMED AND PUNISHED.

THE TRUTH: I am deeply loved by God and forgiven of my sin and failures. Christ made me worthy of God's love. I no longer have to fear punishment or punish others.

- VERSES: ROMANS 5:8 ROMANS 8:1, 38-39 1 JOHN 3:1 1 JOHN 4:9-10
- KEY WORD: PROPITIATION - Jesus' death satisfied God's wrath completely, so I am not condemned.

❖ LIE #4: I AM WHAT I AM; I CANNOT CHANGE; I'M HOPELESS.

THE TRUTH: Because I am in Christ, I am a new creation, and God is changing me into the image of Christ everyday. I am absolutely complete in Christ. I no longer need to experience shame.

- VERSES: JOHN 3:3-6 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 PHILIPPIANS 1:6 2 CORINTHIANS 3:18
- KEY WORD: REGENERATION - the process of being renewed and changed into Jesus' image

❖ LIE #5: YOUR WORTH = YOUR PERFORMANCE + OTHERS' OPINION

THE TRUTH: Your Worth = What God Says About You

- VERSES: NUMBERS 23:19 JEREMIAH 31:3 JOHN 8:35,36 EPHESIANS 2:8,9
- KEY WORD: GRACE - God's unmerited favor given to His children at Christ's expense

WEEK 2: GOSPEL IDENTITY

DAY 6: EXERCISE

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- When do you *feel* most valuable? (i.e. - when you perform well, when others affirm you etc.) What does this indicate about where you find identity & significance?

- Which LIE in this exercise are you most prone to believe? Why? (This will depend on your individual personality)

- How do you feel and act when you believe this lie?

- How would your feelings and actions change if you believed the truth instead of this lie?

GOSPEL IDENTITY: EXTRA RESOURCE

WHO AM I IN CHRIST?

I AM ACCEPTED...

John 1:12	I am God's child.
John 15:15	As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1	I have been justified.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in Spirit.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20	I have been bought with a price and I belong to God.
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of Christ's body.
Ephesians 1:3-8	I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child.
Colossians 1:13-14	I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
Colossians 2:9-10	I am complete in Christ.
Hebrews 4:14-16	I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.

I AM SECURE...

Romans 8:1-2	I am free from condemnation.
Romans 8:28-29	I am assured that God works all circumstances out for my good.
Romans 8:31-39	I am free from condemnation; I can't be separated from the love of God.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22	I have been established, anointed and sealed by God.
Colossians 3:1-4	I am hidden with Christ in God.
Philippians 1:6	I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me.
Philippians 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven.
2 Timothy 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.

I AM SIGNIFICANT...

John 15:5	I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life.
John 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am God's temple.
2 Corinthians 5:17-21	I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
Ephesians 2:6	I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm.
Ephesians 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Ephesians 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Hosea 2:19-20	I am the Lord's bride; He is fully committed to me.

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11 & REVELATION 1:12-18

- What do these verses say about Jesus Christ?

- When you think about Jesus, how do you usually view Him? How does it compare to these descriptions?

JOHN 13:13 ACTS 2:36 REVELATION 19:16

- What are the various titles given to Jesus in these verses?

- In your own words, what does it mean that Jesus is Lord?

- What are some of the things over which Jesus Christ has authority?

● **APPLICATION:** How has your view of Jesus changed from reading these verses? What things in your life do you struggle to give Jesus control of? (i.e. relationships, finances, future, career, family etc.) Why?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** LUKE 9:23

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MATTHEW 11:28-31 & JEREMIAH 29:11

- Do these verses encourage or discourage you to surrender everything to Christ? Why?

MATTHEW 7:21-23 & LUKE 6:46-49

- How do the people in these verses address Jesus? Are they sincere?

- What are the indications that Jesus is truly the Lord of someone's life?

- Do your actions demonstrate that Jesus is Lord in your life? Explain.

MATTHEW 6:24

- Rewrite this verse in your own words.

● **APPLICATION:** What things/people in your life are you tempted to serve instead of Christ? How might your life look different if you surrendered everything to Christ? What hesitations do you have in doing this?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** LUKE 9:23

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **LUKE 18:18-30**

• What did Jesus ask this man to do? Why do you think He asked him to do this?

• Why did the man walk away really sad?

• What promise does Jesus make in verses 29-30?

MATTHEW 13:44

• Compare this man to the man in Luke 18. Why was his attitude different than the first man's? Was his treasure the same or different than the man's in the first story?

● **APPLICATION:** What are the most important things to you in this life? Who are the most important people to you? What would you do if Christ called you to sacrifice these things/relationships to follow Him? Why?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **LUKE 9:23**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** LUKE 9:23-26

• If *anyone* wants to come after Christ, what three things must he/she do? How often must this be done?

• Rewrite verse 24 in your own words. Elaborate on what you think it means.

• What could you *gain* if you don't submit to Christ? What do you *forfeit* if you don't submit to Him? (v 24-25)

ROMANS 12:1

• What are we encouraged to do in this verse in order to worship God? What do you think that means?

• Why do you think the writer reminds us of God's mercy? How might this motivate us to offer ourselves to God?

● **APPLICATION:** What are ways that you can deny yourself in order to follow Christ? What is one step that you will take this week to give yourself more fully to Christ? Share this commitment with one person.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** LUKE 9:23

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** LUKE 14:25-33

- What things must someone willingly sacrifice in order to come follow Jesus? Does this seem radical to you?

- What do you think Jesus meant when he told them to *hate* their family and their own lives?

- What two analogies does Jesus give for someone wishing to follow Him? What is He encouraging the people to do before committing to follow Him?

JOHN 6:60-69

- Why did many of Jesus' disciples stop following Him?

- Why did the twelve disciples decide to stay with Jesus? What do you think it cost them to make this decision?

● **APPLICATION:** Have you ever really considered what it might cost you to truly follow Jesus? Make a list of what you might have to give up? Is Jesus worth following if you lose all these things? Why or why not?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** LUKE 14:27

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 3: LORDSHIP

DAY 6: EVALUATE

Read through and answer the following questions; honestly evaluate your heart

DO MY PLANS & DECISIONS DEMONSTRATE THAT JESUS IS MY LORD?

- MATTHEW 6:19-34** **Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, not wealth or providing for felt needs.**
Do my plans reflect that growing in righteousness and contributing to God's kingdom are my *first* priority?
- MATTHEW 9:36-38** **God wants laborers in the harvest field, where people are harassed and helpless.**
Will my plans help me to become more of a contributor to the needs of the harvest (the lost in the world)?
- HEBREWS 3:12-13** **HEBREWS 10:24-25** **Have daily and consistent fellowship with the body of Christ**
Will my plans allow for consistent encouragement and accountability with God's people? Who in my life will help me with my spiritual growth?
- PSALMS 1:1-2** **JOSHUA 1:8** **Apply God's word daily, for this will lead to spiritual prosperity.**
Will my plans make *daily* study and application of God's word easily attainable or challenging? What factors contribute to this?
- MATTHEW 28:18-20** **Make disciples and teach them to follow Christ's commands**
Will my plans allow me to be involved in discipleship relationships by allowing me to lead others spiritually? Do my plans provide outlets for me to be trained in evangelism and to consistently share Christ?
- MATTHEW 26:41** **Guard yourself from temptation**
What are my temptations? Will my environment help protect me from temptation and the cravings of my flesh? Could my environment be contributing to my temptations?
- LUKE 9:58-62** **LUKE 14:26** **LUKE 18:22** **Be willing to make dramatic sacrifices in order to follow Jesus**
Could God be asking me to sacrifice something that is really precious to me in order to follow Him more closely?
- 2 CORINTHIANS 1:16-23** **PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11** **Consider changing your plans to accomplish God's best**
Am I holding on to a commitment that isn't the best for me spiritually? Are my plans fully surrendered to God?
- MATTHEW 7:21** **LUKE 9:23-25** **Do the will of the Father, for this is Christianity.**
Am I truly committed to the Father's will over my own wants and plans? How do you discover God's will?

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

• In what areas of life should we *avoid* boasting? How is this different than what the world tells us?

• What are we encouraged to boast about in these verses?

• What do you learn about God in these verses?

PHILIPPIANS 3:4-11

• How does Paul describe His life before He came to Christ? (v. 4-6) How does this relate to Jeremiah 9:23-24?

• How did Paul's perspective of these things change? (v.7-8) Why do you think his perspective changed?

• What was the most valuable thing to Paul? What were his goals in life?

● **APPLICATION:** What are your top three priorities right now in your life? Why are these the most important things to you? How high of a priority is your knowledge of God and your relationship with Him? Why is that so?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **JOHN 17:3**

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** PSALM 90:2 & ACTS 17:24-27

- What do you learn about God in these verses?

- Where did God come from? Where did people come from?

JOHN 14:8-10 COLOSSIANS 2:9 & HEBREWS 1:3

- What do these verses say about Jesus?

- Where did Jesus come from? (John 1:1-3)

● **APPLICATION:** Have you ever considered that God (Father, Son & Holy Spirit) created you and caused you to exist in this time and place in history? How does this make you feel? What implications does this have for your life?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** JOHN 17:3

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **PSALM 145:8-9** & **PSALM 103:8-13**

- What do you learn about God in these passages? What is the definition of mercy?

- How does God demonstrate His mercy & love towards us?

JOHN 8:1-11

- How does Jesus demonstrate the mercy of God in this passage?

MATTHEW 18:21-35

- What does Jesus teach about mercy in this passage?

● **APPLICATION:** What are some of the sins God has forgiven you of? When is it difficult for you to show mercy to others? Thank the Lord for His abundant mercy & ask Him to help you be like Him in this.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **JOHN 17:3**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** JOB 34:10-15 PSALM 146:7-9 & ROMANS 12:19

- What do you learn about God in these verses? What is the definition of justice?

- What does God's justice mean for those who sin against God and others? What does it mean for those who suffer injustice and oppression?

MATTHEW 21:33-41

- Why do you think Jesus told this parable? What does it symbolize? How does it emphasize God's justice?

MATTHEW 25:31-46

- What will Jesus do when He comes back in glory? How will this demonstrate God's justice?

● **APPLICATION:** How do you feel when you read these verse about God's justice? Why is it important for us to remember & meditate on God's justice? Praise the Lord for His justice today.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** JOHN 17:3

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 JOHN 4:9-10 & ROMANS 5:6-8

- What is the greatest demonstration of God's love and mercy?

ROMANS 8:3-4 & 1 PETER 2:22-24

- How is the cross of Christ a demonstration of God's perfect justice?

- In your own words, explain how God can be completely fair yet still forgive us when we sin against Him?

2 CORINTHIANS 1:20

- What do you think it means that all of God's promises are "Yes and Amen" in Christ?

● **APPLICATION:** Would you consider yourself to be a "good" person in the eyes of the world? Would you consider yourself to be a "good" person according to God's standards? What do you deserve? What has God given you instead?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** JOHN 17:3

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 4: KNOWING GOD

DAY 6: EXERCISE

ATTRIBUTES & PERFECTIONS OF GOD

- **READ & REFLECT:** Read through the following attributes of God and the definitions
- ❖ **ETERNAL & INFINITE:** God has always existed and will always exist. He has no beginning and no end. He was not created but instead is the Creator of all things, things in heaven and on earth. God exists above and apart from time and space, for He caused and created them both.
- EXODUS 3:14 PSALM 90:1-2 ISAIAH 40:28 ISAIAH 41:4 COLOSSIANS 1:15-18 REVELATION 1:8
- ❖ **FAITHFUL & TRUE:** God is absolutely and completely dependable. He always does what He says He will do. God is the Truth; therefore He is 100% reliable 100% of the time. God fulfills every promise He makes. He does not fail, forget, or falter in any way. The unfaithfulness of the believer cannot alter the faithfulness of God.
- NUMBERS 23:19 PSALM 36:5 JOHN 14:6 2 THESSALONIANS 3:3 HEBREWS 6:18 2 TIMOTHY 2:13
- ❖ **FOREKNOWING:** God knows every future event and gives consent each of them. God dictates what will happen and therefore understands and knows what will be. God knows and determines everyone and everything that ever takes place. No human choice can change what God has already decided, yet this does not eliminate human responsibility and accountability.
- JEREMIAH 1:5 PSALM 139:16 ECCLESIASTES 3:1-2 ROMANS 8:28-29 EPHESIANS 1:4-5 1 PETER 1:20
- ❖ **GOOD:** God is the source of everything good, and He alone defines what is good. All that He is and all that He does is always perfectly good. Nothing can be added to God to make Him any better or taken from Him to make Him any worse. His goodness is beyond human comprehension, though we can experience aspects of His goodness. His goodness prompts Him to act with kindness and love towards His creation.
- PSALM 25:8 PSALM 24:8 PSALM 118:1 PSALM 145:8-9 NAHUM 1:7 LUKE 18:19 JAMES 1:17
- ❖ **GRACIOUS:** God is kind, compassionate and loving towards His creatures, despite their sin and rebellion against Him. God's grace is His unmerited favor given to His chosen people through Jesus Christ. God is gracious in that He gives us what we don't deserve by forgiving our sins, adopting us as children and granting to us an eternal inheritance. God's grace is free, eternal and given to those whom He chooses.
- PSALM 86:15 PSALM 103:8-12 PSALM 116:5 ISAIAH 30:18 JOEL 2:13 EPHESIANS 2:8-9
- ❖ **HOLY:** God is set apart and completely different from everyone and everything. He is utterly pure and completely separate from sin, unable to tolerate any evil in His presence. In this sense, God's holiness is impossible to fully comprehend or define. Holiness is also the only attribute of God in the Bible that is repeated three times consecutively (Holy, Holy, Holy) emphasizing its utmost importance.
- EXODUS 15:11 ISAIAH 6:3 HABAKKUK 1:13 1 PETER 1:15 1 JOHN 1:15 REVELATION 4:8 REVELATION 15:4

- ❖ **IMMUTABLE**: God does not and cannot change, for that would mean He could grow, develop or improve in character. No amount of time or circumstances cause Him to vary in His nature. Everything that He is, He always has been and always will be. *“God cannot change for the better, for He is perfect; and being perfect, He cannot change for the worse.”* - A.W. Pink
 - DEUTERONOMY 32:4 PSALM 102:25-27 ECCLESIASTES 3:14 MALACHI 3:6 HEBREWS 13:8 REVELATION 1:8

- ❖ **INCOMPREHENSIBLE**: God is beyond comprehension. Though we can know God personally and know many things about Him, we can never fully understand Him. As finite beings in a universe limited by time and space, we cannot grasp or comprehend an infinite and unlimited being. Moreover, all that can be known about God must first be revealed to us by God.
 - ECCLESIASTES 3:11 ISAIAH 40:25-28 ISAIAH 55:8-9 ROMANS 11:33-36 1 CORINTHIANS 2:16

- ❖ **JEALOUS**: God is jealous for his creatures to love, desire and worship Him alone because He alone is worthy. Jealousy is often self-centered and destructive, although God is righteously jealous when His people give their hearts and adoration to other things and people. God’s jealousy is not a petty emotion, but it describes His understandable intolerance towards any and every idol that steals His worship. Jealousy is God’s rightful demand for our exclusive affection and loyalty.
 - EXODUS 20:4-5 EXODUS 34:14 DEUTERONOMY 4:23 PSALM 79:5 ZEPHANIAH 1:18 JAMES 4:4-5

- ❖ **JUST**: God is perfectly fair and unbiased in everything He does. He gives everyone what they deserve, punishing evil and defending those suffering injustice. God not only created the Law but He upholds this Law perfectly and fulfills this Law fully through Jesus Christ. God is completely righteous in all that He does.
 - DEUTERONOMY 32:4 JOB 34:12 PSALM 67:4 PSALM 146:6-9 ISAIAH 45:21 2 TIMOTHY 4:8

- ❖ **LOVING**: God is Love and demonstrates love in everything He does. His character and nature define love, which is the greatest of attributes, above faith and hope. God demonstrates His love most vividly in sending His Son Jesus to die for the sins of the world. It was love for the world that compelled God to sacrifice Him.
 - ISAIAH 49:15-16 JEREMIAH 31:3 JOHN 3:16 ROMANS 5:8 1 CORINTHIANS 13:13 JOHN 4:9-10, 16-17

- ❖ **MERCIFUL**: God withholds from us what we deserve, namely His righteous judgment and wrath. God is merciful because He does not destroy humanity and the earth, even though all are broken and sinful, deserving of punishment and death.
 - PSALM 31:7-8 PSALM 145:9 MICAH 7:18 LUKE 1:78-79 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3 EPHESIANS 2:4

- ❖ **OMNIPOTENT**: God is all-powerful and has unlimited authority and strength. He has the ability to do whatever He decides. God has control over everything in creation all the time. Everything is equally effortless for Him. The only limits that God has are limits on His character; for example, God cannot be unfair; He cannot lie; He is unable to sin etc. but all things are possible for Him.
 - JOB 42:2 PSALM 33:6-7 JEREMIAH 32:17 MATTHEW 19:26 MATTHEW 28:18 REVELATION 11:17

❖ **OMNIPRESENT:** God is not limited by space; He is everywhere all the time. There is no need for God to travel, for is already at His destination. There is no place in the universe that man can go to hide from God. God is never too big or too small, for He has no physical limitations. He sees everything at every moment, whether in the darkness or in the light.

- DEUTERONOMY 4:39 PSALM 139:7-12 ISAIAH 66:1 JEREMIAH 23:23-24 AMOS 9:2 ACTS 17:27

❖ **OMNISCIENT:** God knowledge is unlimited. He knows everything including things that are actual and possible, things in the past, things in the present, and things in the future. There is nothing that God does not know. He is not ignorant or unaware. He sees and hears everything at every moment. He knows every detail, even the exact number of hairs on your head. God never learned anything; that would imply that at one point He did not know it.

- PSALM 94:11 PSALM 139:1-4, 14-16 PSALM 147:5 PROVERBS 15:3 ISAIAH 65:24 1 JOHN 3:20

❖ **PATIENT (LONG-SUFFERING):** God is slow to anger; He is not swift to judge rebellious sinners. He is self-controlled in His emotions, including rage and anger against His offenders and the most derogatory sins. Though we all deserve death and wrath for sin, God bears with us in love in order to graciously bring us to faith in Christ.

- NUMBERS 14:18 PSALM 103:8-10 EZEKIEL 20:17 NEHEMIAH 9:17 NAHUM 1:3 ROMANS 9:22

❖ **SOVEREIGN:** God can and does anything He desires whenever He desires to do it. God has absolute and complete control of everything. God is the ultimate authority in every sphere and place. Kings and rulers must obey Him; the wind and the waves must submit to His command. There is nothing that happens that God did not first determine and allow to take place. God does not answer to anyone but everyone answers to God.

- PSALM 115:3 DANIEL 4:25 ROMANS 9:15-23 COLOSSIANS 1:17 1 TIMOTHY 6:15 REVELATION 4:11

● **APPLICATION:**

- Choose at least one attribute that you want to understand more and read the corresponding verses.
- Write a short letter to God, simply to praise and adore Him for specific attributes that you admire.

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION::** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

• What does this passage mean when it says, “God-breathed”? Do you study the Bible like this is true?

• Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the following words.

Teach:

Rebuke:

Correct:

Train:

• What are the differences between these words? Why are each of them important?

• What will be the result of reading and applying God's Word? (verse 17)

● **APPLICATION:** How do these verses show the value of God's Word? Do your actions show that God's Word is valuable to you? What's one or two practical applications you can make to grow in this area?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PSALM 19:7

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **HEBREWS 4:12-13**

- What does it mean that the word of God is living and active? How does this make it different than other books you read?

- Read Jeremiah 17:9-10. What do you learn about your heart from that passage?

- Why is the Word of God so vital in helping us understand your heart? (verse 13)

PSALM 19:7-11

- What adjectives do these verses use to describe God's Word?

- What will God's Word produce in you when you apply it to your life?

● **APPLICATION:** How do *these* verses show the value of God's Word? Do your actions show that God's Word is this valuable to you? How can you apply these truths to your life?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PSALM 19:7**

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** LUKE 10:38-42

- What was Mary doing in this passage? What was Martha doing?

- How did Jesus respond to Martha's complaint? Does this surprise you?

• Why do you think that Jesus said that Mary had chosen the better thing?

• What do you think that Mary believed about Jesus for her to want to sit and learn from Him?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you think you can relate better to Martha or Mary? Why? What are some things that regularly distract you from enjoying time with God?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PSALM 19:7

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MATTHEW 4:1-11

- Why did Jesus go into the desert? What happened while He was there?

- To what did Jesus compare God's Word in verse 4? How does this stress the necessity of God's Word?

- How did Jesus resist Satan's temptations? How does this stress the necessity of knowing God's Word?

PSALM 119:9-11

• According to these verses, how do you stay pure & fight sin & temptation in your life? How did Jesus do this in the verses above?

• What does it mean to hide God's Word in your heart?

● **APPLICATION:** What are some common temptations in your life? Find one or two verses to help you when you feel tempted & write them down somewhere where you can see them regularly.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PSALM 19:7

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 5

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **JOSHUA 1:1-9**
 - What is going on in the passage? Who is God speaking to? What is the situation?

 - Why did God put such an emphasis on the book of Law from Moses? What did this book contain? (v.7-8)

 - What were some of the instructions that God gave Joshua concerning that book?

 - What do you think it means to meditate on God's Word? How can you do this day and night?

 - It seems that two major ideas in this passage are to be courageous and to value God's word. Do you think there is any connection between these two?
- **APPLICATION:** What things in your life have been causing anxiety or fear? Find one or two verses about this issue and meditate on them throughout the day. Write them somewhere that you can see them easily.

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PSALM 19:7**
Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 5: GOD'S WORD

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

IS THE BIBLE GOD'S WORD?

BY: RANDY POPE

Men and women throughout the ages have debated the two most important questions in life. The first is, "If there is a God who is knowable, how does one get to know Him?" The second is, "If there is a literal heaven, how can one be certain he will live there after death?" The Bible says that the answer to both questions is one and the same. The Bible quotes Jesus Christ who says, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). To "come to the Father" includes both knowing God and gaining qualification to enter heaven upon death.

However, to believe the credibility of this quote of Jesus presumes, among other things, that the writings of the Bible are reliable. Christians throughout history have argued that the Bible is God's Word. They most often agree that as God's Word, it is both inspired (God-breathed) and infallible in its original writing.

THE FIRST ISSUE TO INVESTIGATE

It would be easy to argue from logic that a book written with human hands could not be authored by God. Even if it were believed to be so, a strong case could be made for expecting that writing to be significantly altered through the hundreds of years of duplicating by hand the various manuscripts.

Yet, in spite of such logic, very intelligent and scholarly giants have persistently believed in the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. Many of those who do, boldly insist that in doing so they have not "shelved their brains," and agree that there is a solid, historical rationale for such a belief.

THE BIBLE'S INCREDIBLE UNITY

The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years by over 40 human authors writing in three different languages. These men and women lived in three different continents and wrote on a variety of controversial subjects. One would expect that these authors, living in such different cultures, would contradict each other. Yet there is an amazing unity throughout the Bible without error or contradiction. This unity would suggest that the Bible was written by one author, namely God.

THE BIBLE'S HISTORICAL ACCURACY

Throughout the years skeptics have claimed that many of the stories in the Bible had no historical foundation. One after another of these accusations are being abandoned. A favorite target was the Old Testament account of the city of Jericho. The Bible recounts that Joshua and the Israelites marched around the city of Jericho once each day for six days. On the seventh day they walked around the city seven times. The priests then blew their trumpets, the walls of Jericho collapsed and the city was invaded. Those who deny the existence of the supernatural have dismissed this account as fanciful. Their skepticism was strengthened by the fact that there was no city where the Bible claims Jericho to have existed-only desert.

However in the 1930's archaeologists made an incredible find. Going to the Bible location of Jericho, they began to dig and discovered an ancient city buried beneath the sand. Finding a vase with the name of the city on it, they learned that it was, in fact, Jericho. Furthermore, during the excavations, an archaeologist concluded that "the walls fell outward so completely that the attackers would be able to clamor up and

over the ruins into the city." One would expect the walls of the city to fall inward during an invasion, and yet the walls of Jericho fell outward in accordance with the biblical account.

Commenting on the historical accuracy of the Bible, archaeologist William E. Albright states, "Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of the innumerable details and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history."

THE BIBLE'S FULFILLED PROPHECIES

The Bible contains countless prophecies about future events. If the Bible were not inspired, the odds of these prophecies being fulfilled would be no better than chance. Yet, we find an incredible accuracy in the Bible's foretelling of the future. For example, over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament, written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, refer to the coming Messiah, Christ. All 300 came true. The following are examples of these prophecies, their Old Testament references and their New Testament fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

- a. Messiah to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2 - Matthew 2:1-6)
- b. Messiah to be a descendant of David (Jeremiah 23:5 - Luke 3:31)
- c. Messiah to enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9 - Matthew 21:1-9)
- d. Messiah to be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9 - Matthew 26:47-50)
- e. Messiah to be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12 - Matthew 27:9)
- f. Money thrown in God's house (Zechariah 11:13 - Matthew 27:5)
- g. Money given for potter's field (Zechariah 11:12,13 - Matthew 27:7-8)
- h. Messiah's side, hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16 - John 20:25)
- i. Messiah crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:12 - Luke 23:32-43)
- j. Messiah's clothes divided and lots cast for them (Psalm 22:18 - John 19:23-24)
- k. Messiah's bones not broken (Psalm 22:17, Psalm 34:20 - John 19:31-33)
- l. Messiah to be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9 - Matthew 27:57-60)

Mathematical probability indicates that the chances of only eight of these prophecies being fulfilled in the same man are 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. These odds are statistically impossible apart from a sovereign God who knows the future.

THE BIBLE'S MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION

It would be reasonable to expect errors in the transmission of the Bible in the last 3500 years, especially since copies were duplicated by hand. How do we know the Bible we have today is same as the original?

Until 1947, the oldest known Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament were dated from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. They were copies of only the first five books of the Bible.

Then, in 1947 came the remarkable discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. These were early manuscripts from the library of the Jewish religious groups, which flourished at Qumran about the time of Jesus. These manuscripts were written about a thousand years earlier than the ninth century documents. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls are copies of every Old Testament book except Esther. Upon this discovery, the question was raised whether the ninth and tenth century manuscripts would match up to these ancient manuscripts. Would errors have been made in transmission over those 1000 years?

The impact of this discovery is vividly illustrated in the virtual duplication of the Isaiah scroll (dated 125 B.C.) in the Masoretic text of Isaiah (A.D. 916) written 1000 years later. This demonstrates the unusual accuracy of the copyists of the scripture over a thousand year period. Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, only seventeen letters have been questioned. Ten of these letters are a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes, such as a conjunction. The remaining three letters comprise the word "light", which is added in verse 11 and does not greatly affect the meaning. Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a thousand years of transmission-and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage. Comparisons of other Bible passages show even closer duplications. This incredible preservation of the Bible over time can best be explained by God's doing. Desiring to keep the Scriptures in accord with His original revelation, God ensured that the Bible would be accurately copied over the centuries.

There is no better way to investigate the claims of Christianity than by reading the Bible itself. And there is no better place to begin one's reading than in the Gospel of John. This Gospel is written by one of Jesus' closest disciples, John, who seeks to convey the historical account of the life and teaching of the one whom claimed to be the Christ.

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

• Read John 5:18-47

- a. What did Jesus' enemies accuse Him of claiming?

- b. What did Jesus' promise in 5:24? How does one receive these promises?

- c. John 5:39 states why Jesus said the Scriptures were written. What is the aim & reason for the Scriptures?

• Write out the following verses:

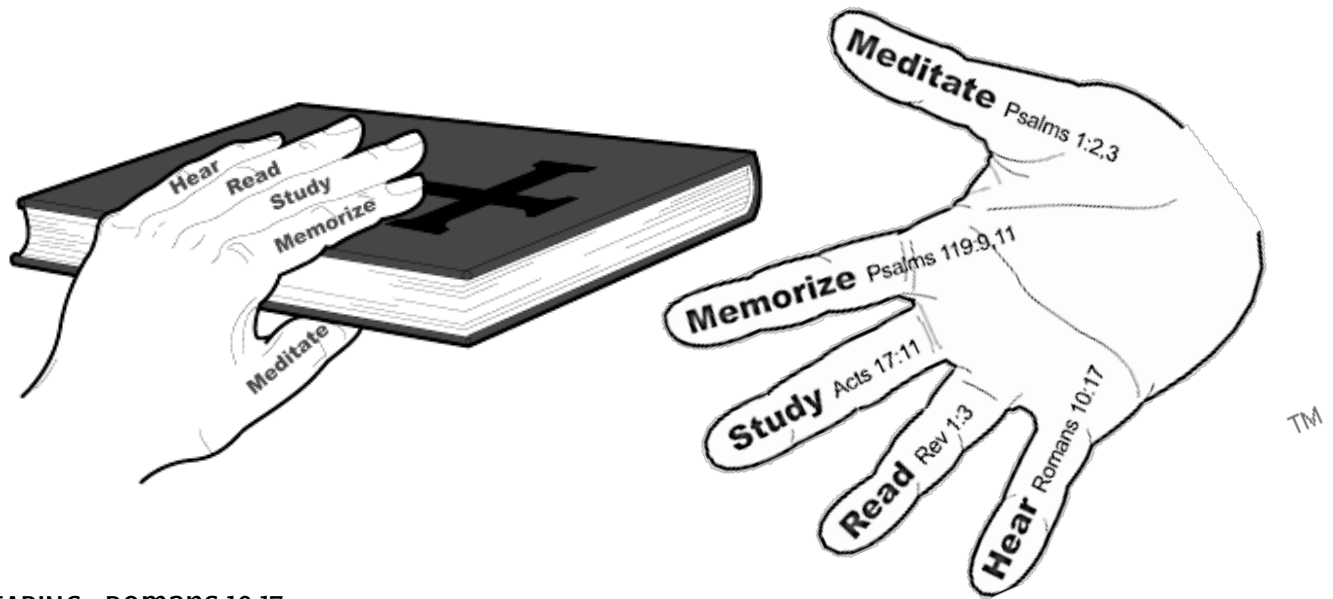
a. Mark 13:31 -

b. Psalm 119:160 -

c. John 20:31 -

d. II Peter 1:21 -

GOD'S WORD: EXTRA RESOURCE
"GET A GRIP" ON GOD'S WORD



● **HEARING: ROMANS 10:17**

Hearing the Word from godly pastors and teachers provides insight into others' study of the Scriptures; it also stimulates your own appetite for the Word.

- "So faith comes from _____ and hearing through the _____ of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

● **READING: REVELATION 1:3**

Reading the Bible gives an overall picture of God's Word. Many people find it helpful to use a daily reading plan, which guides them systematically through the Bible.

- "Blessed is the one who _____ aloud the words of this prophecy..." (Revelation 1:3)

● **STUDYING: ACTS 17:11**

Studying the Scriptures leads to personal discoveries of God's truths. Writing down these discoveries helps to you organize and remember your thoughts.

- "...they received the word with all eagerness, _____ the Scriptures daily..." (Acts 17:11)

● **MEMORIZING: PSALM 119:9, 11**

Memorizing God's Word enables you to use of the sword of the Spirit to overcome Satan and temptations and to have it readily available for witnessing or helping others with a "word in season."

- "I have _____ you word in my _____ that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:11)

● **MEDITATING: PSALM 1:2,3**

Meditation is the thumb of the Word Hand, for it is used in conjunction with each of the other methods. Only as you meditate on God's Word, thinking of its meaning and application in your life, will you discover its transforming power at work within you.

- "But his delight is in the law of the LORD and on his law he _____ day and night." (Psalm 1:2)

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 1

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **MARK 1:32-36** **LUKE 5:15-16** & **LUKE 6:12-13**
 - What do these verses teach you about Jesus' relationship with God the Father?

 - In Mark 1:35, when did Jesus go out to pray? What time do you think he went to sleep the night before based on the proceeding verses? What does this reveal about how much He valued prayer?

 - In Luke 5, Jesus had constant opportunities to minister to others. Why didn't He take more advantage of those opportunities?

 - In Luke 6, what did Jesus do before he made a big decision? What do these verses tell you about how much Jesus depended on prayer for direction?

 - Why do you think Jesus had to get away from people to pray? Couldn't he just pray while he was working?
- **APPLICATION:** What are some common things that distract you from praying? What sacrifices do you think God wants you to make to grow deeper in your prayer life?

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PSALM 42:1-2**

Write out the verse, including the reference.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 2

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7
 - What does Paul encourage the Philippians to do instead of being anxious? What does he promise will happen when they do this?

 - Do you think there is a connection between rejoicing in verse 4 & prayer? Explain.

 - Do you think there is a difference between prayer and petition? Explain.

 - Why do you think that thanksgiving plays such a big role in our prayers?

 - What is the ultimate source of the peace promised in verse 7? Who is the “prince of peace”? (Isaiah 9:6)
- **APPLICATION:** What are some things that often cause you to be anxious? Apply these verses by praying about these things, asking God for specific help in these areas.

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PSALM 42:1-2
Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 3

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **MATTHEW 7:7-11**
 - What do you learn about prayer in these verses? Do you think there is a difference between asking, seeking & knocking?
 - What rhetorical questions does Jesus ask to help his listeners understand the biggest part of his teaching. What point is He trying to make?
 - What did Jesus mean when he said that we are evil? Have you ever thought to describe yourself this way?
 - What do you learn about God from the passage? How is He different than us?
- **APPLICATION:** Do you feel like you have any wrong thoughts about God that need to be adjusted? What are they? Why is it crucial to have an accurate understanding of God's character when you approach Him in prayer?
- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PSALM 42:1-2**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** LUKE 18:1-8

- Why did Jesus tell this parable according to verse 1?

- How does Jesus contrast the unrighteousness judge with God?

- Why do you think God desires for us to persevere in prayer? What do we learn through the process?

LUKE 18:9-14

- Why did Jesus tell this parable according to verse 9?

- What kind of attitude should we have when we come to the Lord in prayer? What does Jesus warn will happen if this is not our attitude?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you feel like you have ever persevered in prayer for something? Did God give you an answer? What makes it difficult to be persistent like the widow in prayer?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PSALM 42:1-2

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 6:10-19**

- Why do you think the passage talks about the Christian life like it is a struggle or a fight?

- Do you think that the Christian life would be best described as a journey or a war? Explain.

- Do you think our prayers play a vital role in the ultimate outcome of the war we are fighting? Explain.

- What do verses 18-19 say about prayer? How often should we pray? What should we pray for?

- What impact did Jesus' life, death and resurrection have on the war we are fighting?

MATTHEW 9:35-38

- What did Jesus tell His disciples to pray for? Why did He tell them to pray for this?

● **APPLICATION:** If someone were to hear your prayers, would they understand that you are fighting in a spiritual war? What are some specific things that you are asking God to do currently?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PSALM 42:1-2**

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: PRAYER

DAY 6: EXERCISE

- **READ:** Read the following prayer method and the corresponding verses that support it. Then, spend some time praying, using this method. Begin with prayers of adoration and end with prayers of supplication.

A.C.T.S. PRAYER METHOD

The following is a suggested pattern for prayer. It is not the only way to pray, but a helpful tool to guide you in prayer. You may want to make this part of your time alone with God each day, or set aside separate times in the week for extended prayer. Be careful not to get into a mechanical rut. A balance of structure and variety will keep your prayer time both consistent and fresh.

ADORATION - PRAISE GOD FOR HIS ATTRIBUTES (WHO HE IS). MEDITATE UPON GOD'S GREATNESS.

MATTHEW 6:9 *This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...*

JEREMIAH 32:17-19 *Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. You show love to thousands...*

REVELATION 5:12 *...Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!*

*** Also, you can praise God for His attributes listed at the end of Week 4 (pages 32-34)

CONFESSION - ASK FORGIVENESS FOR THE SINS YOU HAVE COMMITTED. BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISED GRACE.

MATTHEW 6:12 *And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*

PSALM 51:3-4 *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.*

1 JOHN 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

THANKSGIVING - EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S GRACE, BLESSINGS AND ANSWERS TO YOUR PRAYERS

DANIEL 2:23 *I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you...*

1 CORINTHIANS 15:57 *But thanks be to God! He give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

PSALM 118:21 *I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.*

SUPPLICATION - ASK FOR SPECIFIC REQUESTS THAT COME TO MIND FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

MATTHEW 6:11,13 *Give us today our daily bread....And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

PSALM 86:11 *Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.*

PRAYER: EXTRA RESOURCE

WHAT TO PRAY FOR NON-CHRISTIANS : H.E.A.R.T. CHANGE

HHEART: PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE THEM NEW HEARTS & PUT HIS SPIRIT IN THEM

- **EZEKIEL 36:26-27** *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.*
- **JEREMIAH 17:9-10** *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? "I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.*

EEYES AND EEARS: PRAY THAT THEIR EYES AND EARS WOULD BE OPENED TO SEE AND HEAR THE GOSPEL. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BE AWARE OF THEIR SIN AND THEIR NEED FOR A SAVIOR.

- **JOHN 12:40** *He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.*
- **MATTHEW 13:15** *For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.*

ATTITUDE: PRAY THAT THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOD AND THEIR SIN WOULD CHANGE. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD HATE THEIR SIN AND FALL IN LOVE WITH CHRIST.

- **ACTS 26:17-18** *...I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.*
- **2 CORINTHIANS 2:15-16** *For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life...*

RELLEASE: PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BE SET FREE FROM SATAN'S GRIP AND THE SLAVERY OF SIN. PRAY THAT SATAN WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BLIND THEM ANY LONGER FROM SEEING THE BEAUTY OF THE GOSPEL.

- **2 CORINTHIANS 4:4** *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*
- **2 TIMOTHY 2:26** *and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will*

TRANSFORMATION: PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BECOME A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST AND BE TRANSFORMED BY THE GOSPEL FROM THE INSIDE OUT. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BECOME SPIRITUALLY ALIVE BY GOD'S GRACE.

- **2 CORINTHIANS 5:17** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has gone, the new has come!*
- **EPHESIANS 2:4-5** *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

WEEK 7: EVANGELISM

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MATTHEW 4:18-22

- What did Jesus ask these disciples to do? What did he promise would happen if they did?

- What do you think it means to be “fishers of men”?

- What was the response of these men at Jesus’ invitation? What did they give up to follow Christ?

MATTHEW 28:16-20

- After these disciples had *followed* Jesus in His ministry, He gave them this commission before He ascended into heaven. What things does He tell them to go & do in these verses?

- What promise does Jesus make in verse 20? How does this give comfort & confidence in the mission?

● **APPLICATION:** Are there things in your life that you are unwilling to give up to follow Jesus? Confess them to God. What fears or hesitations do you have in evangelism? Ask God to help you work through these.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** MATTHEW 4:19

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 7: EVANGELISM

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **JEREMIAH 1:4-9**

- What was Jeremiah's biggest fear? How can you relate this to your evangelism experiences?

- What promise can we claim from this passage that will help us when we are afraid to share with someone?

EPHESIANS 6:19

- What does Paul ask the Ephesians to pray for him? Have you ever prayed for this?

2 CORINTHIANS 3:4-6

- According to this verse, where does our competence & sufficiency come from? How does this affect your view of evangelism?

● **APPLICATION:** What specifically are you afraid of in evangelism? Make a list. Write the names of people with whom you feel afraid to share the gospel. Pray for them & ask God to give you boldness & opportunities.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **MATTHEW 4:19**

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 7: EVANGELISM

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **COLOSSIANS 4:2-6**

- What role does prayer play in evangelism? What did Paul ask the Colossians to pray for? What attitude did he tell them to have about prayer?

- What do you think is the balance between God needing to work in a person's heart and our responsibility to grow so that we can more clearly present the gospel?

- What does it mean to have your conversation "full of grace" and "seasoned with salt"? How does this help us have an answer for everyone?

1 PETER 3:15

- What does this verse tell us to be prepared for? Why *do you* have hope in your life?

● **APPLICATION:** What doors are you currently praying for God to open? Does your lifestyle cause those around you to be curious about the hope that you have? Explain. How can you be a light in the darkness this week?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **MATTHEW 4:19**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 7: EVANGELISM

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **ROMANS 10:13-15**

- Salvation is often a process. What is the process that Paul lays out for us in these verses?

- What happens to people who have never heard the gospel?

ACTS 8:26-40

- How do you see the process Paul described in the story of Phillip and the Ethiopian Eunuch? What steps of faith did Phillip have to take before he was able to share the gospel?

ROMANS 1:16-17

- What does the gospel have the power to do? What do people gain when they put faith in the gospel?

● **APPLICATION:** Is there anyone in your life who has never heard the gospel? What steps of faith can you take this week to move towards sharing it with them or others? Do you ever feel ashamed of the gospel? Explain.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **MATTHEW 4:19**

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 7: EVANGELISM

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **MARK 2:13-17**

- What are the qualifications necessary to follow Jesus?

- Why didn't the Pharisees & religious teachers understand Jesus' ministry?

- Who are the "sinners" and/or outcasts on the college campus? How does Jesus view them?

LUKE 5:17-26

- What took place in this story in order for the paralytic to be saved and fully healed? What did the paralytic do in order to be healed? What did he do after he was healed?

- Whose faith did Jesus notice in verse 20? What did he do because of this?

● **APPLICATION:** What is your honest view of the "sinners" on your campus? Is it the same as Jesus' view of them? What challenges and sacrifices accompany friendships with "sinners"? How could your love and faith for these people change their lives?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **MATTHEW 4:19**

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 6: EVANGELISM

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING

ASKING QUESTIONS IS OFTEN THE BEST WAY TO CONNECT WITH A NON-CHRISTIAN.

Questions open doors into another person's life. Good questions aren't easy to formulate or use. It's simpler to make statements and express opinions than to ask questions. Asking questions requires us to focus on the other person. It also implies that we need to listen to and value what the other person has to say. Learning to ask questions that create conversations is a skill any of us can master. Asking questions demonstrates that we care. As people feel heard and valued, they will tell us more in response to good questions.

"What do you think about the Virgin Mary?" Kathy, a nursing colleague, asked me as we sat down with our cups of coffee. "Excuse me?" I said, blinking in surprise. As she repeated her question, my mind raced. Did she want information about the Virgin Mary? Or did she want to spar with me, knowing I was a Protestant?

I didn't know her very well, but I had a hunch there was something else on her mind. "That is one of the most interesting questions anyone has asked me in a long time," I responded. "Why do you ask?"

She replied, "Well, I know that you're religious. I was wondering, well, we were wondering. . . ." Now it was her turn to scramble a bit.

I drew her out by saying: "I find it fascinating that you think I'm religious. Tell me, what makes you say that?" Kathy explained that the other nurses discussed how much I knew about the Bible and said that religion was very real for me. She added that while she had attended religious schools growing up, she did not know much about the Bible.

I probed further. "I think you're telling me you want to know more about the Bible. Is that correct?" When Kathy nodded, I asked, "A lot of people think the Bible is irrelevant. May I ask why you'd like to know more about it?"

Kathy's eyes filled with tears. She told me her marriage was in trouble and that she was desperate for help. She had tried everything but religion. Now things were so bad she was seeking help from the Bible. I asked her what she thought it would offer to her. Kathy quietly said, "Hope."

When I asked her if she'd like to study the Bible together, she smiled and responded, "I was hoping you'd say that. I didn't know how to ask you, and, well, would you mind if my sister and my mom joined us? I've already told them about you."

Kathy's question about the Virgin Mary was the most religious question she could think to ask someone she considered religious. Her real need was for counsel and help. Had I responded with a theological treatise, I would have missed her heart by miles. Instead, I asked a few questions. I was learning the value of what I call the "question connection"—asking questions to create a conversation in which real issues can be discussed. Even before Kathy and I talked, I had been learning about the power questions have to create conversations. A friend of mine is fond of repeating a statement she heard at a conference: "Behind every question is a statement, behind every statement is a feeling."

She had experienced this truth years earlier when she had gingerly asked a trusted mentor, "How do you handle depression?" Her mentor quipped, "Oh, I just go out of one depression into the next." End of discussion. My friend longed to talk to her about how depressed and overwhelmed she felt. Behind her question was a statement: "I am depressed." Behind that statement lingered feelings of fear: She was afraid her depression would swallow her up, so she turned to a person she hoped would help her. Had this mentor responded with a few questions rather than a glib statement, the two of them could have connected about what was really going on.

GOING DEEPER

Real conversations take place when we get to the feelings behind statements. Asking questions is one way to do this. Questioning further uncovers the feelings behind the statements. When we can talk about how we truly feel, our lives change.

We miss out on real ministry when we fail to ask good questions. Take evangelism, for example. When most of us learn the nuts and bolts of sharing our faith, we learn to articulate information, to explain the key elements of the gospel. We may even learn to anticipate certain common objections and memorize verses to counter opposition.

These are valuable skills to master. Yet we rarely spend much time learning how to create a conversation within which we can hear what the other person is thinking and feeling. What could happen if we would slow down the verbal exchange by asking good questions, listening intently to hear what the other person is thinking, and, in the spirit of conversation, to talk, truly talk, about the gospel?

When we are ready with answers before we know what the questions are, we miss opportunities to discern people's honest questions. Not too long ago, I was at a retreat with several nursing colleagues. After lunch one day, I went walking along the lakeshore with a coworker. Out of the blue she asked, "Do you believe that only people who are 'born again' go to heaven?" I was thrown off guard by her question. I sensed that there was a story behind it. Pushing back my finely honed evangelism skills, I instead replied, "What an interesting question. What's behind it?"

What tumbled out was a story of years of unrelenting criticism this nurse had received from a family member because she was not "born again." As I listened, I realized that a theological exegesis of several Bible passages about the conversion experience wouldn't have ministered to my friend at all. Instead I asked a series of questions that helped her explore feelings about the criticism that had been heaped on her over the years. In the safety of having been heard, this woman went on to ask me to explain what being born again really meant.

Creating conversations by asking good questions is a skill. Jesus was a master at asking questions. When I read through the Gospel of Mark to track the way Jesus used questions, I found that throughout His ministry of teaching and healing Jesus used questions to explain principles and to expose faulty thinking. He used questions to help people articulate what they wanted from Him. He answered questions with questions. Four types of questions enhance our effectiveness in getting to the real issues people have: probing questions, personal questions, process questions, and provoking questions.

PROBING QUESTIONS

One type of question to master is a probing questions. With probing questions we go after more information. Consider Jesus in Mk. 3:1-6. He encountered a man with a withered hand, who was probably unable to work and provide for himself. Jesus, sensing the Pharisees were waiting for Him to break the Sabbath by healing the man, probed: "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?" Jesus wanted to probe their hearts, to expose their stubbornness, and to appeal to a higher sense of mercy. By asking rather than accusing, His probing question exposed the hardness of their hearts.

Probing questions can be overused. Since probing questions go after information, the questioner needs to be careful not to seek more information than the person is willing to disclose. One way to soften a probing question is to state an observation first, then ask about the observation. When Kathy asked me about the Virgin Mary, a probing question such as, "Why are you asking that?" would have been abrupt. I softened the probe by acknowledging her curious nature when I said, "That is one of the most interesting questions anyone has asked me in a long time." Then I added, "Why do you ask?" By focusing on my observation, I didn't put her on the spot.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Personal questions are a form of probing question. But more than drawing out additional information, personal questions help people reveal their inner feelings. When I said to Kathy, "A lot of people think the Bible is irrelevant. May I ask why you'd like to know more about it?" I asked her a very personal question. Going beyond her interest or knowledge of religious topics, I asked her why she wanted to know more about the Bible. It was no surprise that Kathy teared up. Her desire to know more about the Bible was linked to the distress she felt in her marriage. My question revealed very personal facts. Because of the potential for personal questions to expose people, it's a good idea to word personal questions in a way that asks permission.

In Mark 8:27-33, Jesus was talking with His disciples as they walked between villages. Jesus asked, "Who do people say I am?" He probed for information and they replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

Then Jesus took the level of questioning deeper when He asked, "But what about you? . . . Who do you say that I am?" Jesus wanted them to disclose what they personally thought. He was asking them to declare themselves.

Later, when Jesus was entering Jericho, a blind man named Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus. The crowd tried to shush him, but Jesus stopped to interact with him. He threw his cloak aside, jumped to his feet, and came to Jesus (Mark 10:46–52).

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man replied, "Rabbi, I want to see."

Jesus met Bartimaeus right where he was and asked him a very personal question— what did he want? I can almost see the crowd around them, shoving and pushing to get a closer look at what was going on. But in the middle of the commotion, Jesus had a private exchange with a man who responded to a very personal question by asking for the most important thing he could imagine— sight.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

Process questions guide what's going on during a conversation. When I was talking to my nursing colleague by the lake, I sensed that she was divulging more than she had wanted to say. I backed up the conversation and said, "I sense this is difficult for you to talk about. Is this something you want me to know about? I'm glad to listen."

That gave my colleague permission to stop the conversation or choose to continue. She told me, "I'm glad I can talk to someone about this. I never have before today."

I didn't know how hurtful this family member's criticism has been to me until now. So I've never wanted to talk about religion."

Process questions also give the questioner insight into how another person is handling a situation. Recently, an 85-year-old woman was informed that her kidneys were shutting down and that she needed to begin dialysis to stay alive. Her decision was literally a life-and-death decision. This woman asked her daughter what to do. The daughter gently responded, "Mom, I can't tell you what to do. The decision needs to be yours." The mother decided not to go on dialysis, but to let nature take its course.

When the daughter described this exchange to my friend, she helped her process the events by asking, "What is it like for you to know your mother is choosing to die?" Questions like these helped that daughter process her feelings, to tell someone about the weight she was carrying.

PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS

Provocative questions generate thoughtful conversations. They get to the heart of the matter. One time I said to a group of nurses who were waiting for a patient to arrive, "You all mention the name of Jesus freely. Tell me, what do you really think about Him?" After the snickers died down, my question provoked a lively conversation. Each of them had plenty to say. No one had ever asked them before. Over the next several days, conversations about the Lord grew out of this discussion.

Jesus excelled at provocative questions. He sparred with those who tested Him, with those who refused to believe. When the teachers of the law and the elders approached Him and asked, "By what authority are you doing these things?" Jesus answered them with a provocative question: "I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism— was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!" (Mk. 11:27–33). Though they had tried to trap him, Jesus' provocative question put them on the defensive.

Provocative questions create conversation and discussion. Behind opinions reside statements. And behind statements reside feelings—even in a lively exchange. Sometimes an energized discussion will allow feelings and opinions to emerge that otherwise would stay hidden.

Questions open doors into another person's life. Good questions aren't easy to formulate or use. It's simpler to make statements and express opinions than to ask questions. Asking questions requires us to focus on the other person. It also implies that we need to listen to and value what the other person has to say. Learning to ask questions that create conversations is a skill any of us can master. Asking questions demonstrates that we care. As people feel heard and valued, they will tell us more in response to good questions.

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APPLICATION QUESTION: What was helpful about this article? How can you apply it to your life?

EVANGELISM: EXTRA RESOURCE

“WINNING” PEOPLE TO CHRIST

WIN #1 - WIN THEIR SMILE By generating a positive response to your presence (Luke 19:2-6)

- Find Common Ground (Acts 17:21-23)
- Small talk – exchange names, hometown, major, etc.
- Help them move in or drive them to the store
- Compliment them
- Identify interests: sports, fraternity/sorority, shopping, TV shows, video games etc.
- They leave saying, “I want to see him/her again.” (Acts 17:32)

WIN #2 - WIN THEIR TRUST By demonstrating personal interest in them and showing that you care

- Show them that they are important (Phil 2:3-4)
- Remember their name and information about them (John 11:1-15)
- Look for ways to serve them (Mark 10:45)
- Invite them to a fun event or go with them to do something they enjoy
- Listen to them and learn from them (Acts 17:17-18a)
- They leave saying, “Wow, he/she didn’t have to do that.” (John 13:3-5, 13-14)

WIN #3 - WIN THEIR CURIOSITY By addressing spiritual things in a non-threatening way (John 3:1-21)

- Share your story (John 4; Acts 26:4-29)
- Ask them about their story/spiritual background
- Ask them about their interest in spiritual things
- Share other people’s story with them
- Tell them about Campus Outreach and your involvement
- They leave saying, “I’d like to talk about that some more.” (Acts 17:19-20, 32)

WIN #4 - WIN THEIR TIME By securing an intentional time to talk about God. (John 3:1-21)

- Inspire them to want to get together (John 3:2)
- Invite them to a meal or to read the Bible with you (Acts 28:30-31)
- Communicate willingness to pay for a meal
- Secure the time to get together
- They leave saying, “I plan on being there.”

WIN #5 - WIN THEIR INVOLVEMENT By creating a relevant & engaging spiritual environment (Luke 8:9-10; Matt 13:36-52; Mark 4:35-41)

- Spend a lot time with them, beyond just discussing spiritual things (Matt 4:19)
- Take advantage of opportunities to ask spiritual questions or share your faith
- Begin an investigative Bible study (Acts 19:8-10)
- Continue to identify and overcome barriers that prevent them from having faith in Christ
- Meet one-on-one for lunch, coffee, etc
- They leave saying, “I never knew that God and the Bible could be this relevant to my life.”

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** PHILIPPIANS 2:1-5

- From the passage, describe how we should relate to others.

- What was the attitude that Christ had? (look at verses 6-11)

- What would be some descriptions of a humble person? Who is the most humble person you know?

- What do you think it means to consider others as *better* than yourself?

- Why do you think that humility is important in order to rightly relate to others?

● **APPLICATION:** When you consider the relationships in your life, would you say that you consider others before yourself? What are one or two ways that you can do that this week?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PHILIPPIANS 2:3

Write out the verse, including the reference.

PRAYER: Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-28

- What is the body that is being described in this passage? What is the main point of this analogy?

- How should the members of the body of Christ interact with one another?

- According to this passage, are any parts of the body more important than others? Do you always think this way about members of the body of Christ?

- What do you think your role in the body of Christ is? How do your spiritual gifts play a part in this?

- Have you seen a church operate as this passage describes? What did it look like or what might it look like?

● **APPLICATION:** What are some things that you are naturally gifted at? How might you use your gifts to build up other people? What are some of your weaknesses? How might the body of Christ help you with these?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PHILIPPIANS 2:3

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **HEBREWS 10:24-25**

- Write verse 24 in your own words.

- What does this passage encourage believers NOT to do? Why do you think this is important?

- What does this passage command believers TO do? Why do you think this was especially important to believers in the early church?

HEBREWS 3:12-13

- Why does this passage say that we need to encourage one another? How often does the word tell us to encourage each other?

● **APPLICATION:** What can you do this week to encourage a brother or sister in Christ? Is there someone you know who is going through a hard time that you could encourage in a special way this week?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PHILIPPIANS 2:3**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 4:29-32**

- What is considered to be unwholesome talk in light of this passage of scripture?

- What kind of language do these verses say we should use?

- What must we get rid of in order to avoid grieving the Holy Spirit? (v.31)

- How are we to treat others in the body of Christ? (v. 32) How much has Christ forgiven you?

ROMANS 13:9-10

- How does God sum up how to treat other people? What do you think this means practically?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you build others up or tear them down with your speech? Why do think this is so? What are some practical ways that you can love other people as you love yourself?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **PHILIPPIANS 2:3**

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** JOHN 13:34-35

• What character trait did Christ say will be evident in all believers? Who should notice that we are His disciples?

• Why do you think Jesus said this was a new commandment when we are commanded to love many other times in scripture? (Ex. - Leviticus 19:18) What do you think is different about this command?

• In what ways has Christ shown love to us?

• How do you think the world would be different if Christians truly loved one another like Christ?

JOHN 13:3-17

• How did Jesus specifically demonstrate love to the disciples right before giving this command?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you ever find it difficult to love other believers? Why or why not? Have you ever thought that you are disobeying God when you are unloving towards someone? Ask God to help you grow in your love for others?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** PHILIPPIANS 2:3

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 8: FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

DAY 6: EXERCISE

● READ & REFLECT:

FELLOWSHIP: MATTHEW 18:20

BY: LEROY EIMS

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”
Matthew 18:20

Jesus assumed that His followers would gather together for regular fellowship in His name. I'm sure He would have been surprised by the notions of some modern believers who speak of worshipping God in nature at the beach or in the mountains, on the golf course or tennis courts while they neglect the assembling together in the life of the church. But for the faithful who gather for fellowship, He makes a blessed promise: He is in their midst.

What is the purpose of this fellowship? Actually, there are quite a few reasons to gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus. The context of this vital Bible verse gives us one of them: “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father, who is in heaven” (Matthew 18:19).

There are many places in Scripture where we are promised answers to the prayer of faith. But here we have particular encouragement to joint prayer. When believers meet by appointment together at the throne of grace to pray about some special need or activity, they are assured of His answer.

It is interesting to note that the Lord spoke specifically here of a small gathering in His name. Too often we evaluate the success or failure of a church meeting by the number of people present. If you ask a person: “How was the meeting?” He or she is likely to answer, “Oh, it was a great meeting. The place was packed out!” It is assumed that if a large group shows up, the meeting will be a success. But if few people come, the meeting will border on failure. We must remember that it is not numbers that determine the effectiveness of Christian fellowship. It is the faith and devotion of those present.

We can gather for any number of reasons. We can meet together to grow in our knowledge of Christ. We can meet to advance the work of Christ or to be equipped in our service for Christ. But the point is this: the Christian who desires to be obedient to the Lord Jesus will actively seek the fellowship of other believers whether personally, or in small prayer and Bible study groups, or in the corporate worship of the whole assembly.

We are members of one body, the body of Christ. As such we are dependent upon each other. We need the mutual encouragement, admonition, and sharpening of our lives that Christian fellowship uniquely offers.

When the church was born, they saw it as essential. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Fellowship depends on relationships. Keep the lines clear between yourself and your brother in the Lord. Jesus was quite insistent on this point. “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against thee, leave your gift before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24). Forgiveness, reconciliation, patience and love are vital ingredients of true Christ-centered fellowship.

This vital Bible verse is just one of 60 carefully selected scriptures that are contained in The Navigators Scripture Memory course. Topics include all of the basics of the Christ-centered Spirit-filled life, sharing your faith, and growing on to maturity in your walk with God. May God bless you as you fill your life with His Word!

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● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is fellowship with the body of Christ important for all believers regardless of their maturity in the Lord?

2. Do you ever neglect time spent with other believers? If so, what are your reasons for doing so? What things do you often prioritize over fellowship?

3. Who are one or two other believers that you can spend time with to get to know and to encourage?

FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY: EXTRA RESOURCE

ONE ANOTHER COMMANDS IN THE BIBLE

ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER: Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (Romans 15:7)

ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS: Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

BEAR WITH ONE ANOTHER: Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians 4:2)

BUILD UP ONE ANOTHER: Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification (original=build up one another). (Romans 14:19)

CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER: So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. (1 Corinthians 12:25)

COMFORT ONE ANOTHER: Therefore encourage each other (original=comfort one another) with these words. (1 Thess. 4:18)

CONFESS SINS TO ONE ANOTHER: Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

BE DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER: Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. (Romans 12:10)

ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER: Therefore encourage one another and build each other up (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another. (1 John 1:7)

FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Eph. 4:32)

GREET ONE ANOTHER: Greet one another with a holy kiss. (Romans 16:16)

BE HONEST WITH ONE ANOTHER: Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices (Col. 3:9)

HONOR ONE ANOTHER: Honor one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)

BE HOSPITABLE TO ONE ANOTHER: Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. (1 Peter 4:9)

BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Eph. 4:32)

LOVE ONE ANOTHER: Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another . . . (Romans 13:8)

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER: Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

SERVE ONE ANOTHER: You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature ; rather, serve one another in love. (Galatians 5:13)

SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON: And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)

SUBMIT TO ONE ANOTHER: Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:21)

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** JOHN 8:31-36

- What does Jesus say is true about everyone who commits sin? What does this mean?

- How can we be set free from sin? What does this mean for us if we try to fight against sin in our own strength?

ROMANS 6:11-18

- What do verses 12-13 encourage us to do and not to do with regard to sin in our lives?

- If Christ forgives us of our sins by His grace, why can't we just keep on sinning? (v.15-16)

- What was true of you before you came to Christ? What is true of you now that you are in Christ? (v.17-18)

● **APPLICATION:** Are you most frequently living as a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness? How do you know? What are practical ways that you can "offer the parts of your body to God as instruments of righteousness"?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 2

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 CORINTHIANS 10:12-13
 - What warning is given in these verses? What promise does God give for someone being tempted?

JAMES 1:13-15

- What is *not* happening when we face temptation? What *is* happening when we face temptation?

- Where does sin begin? What will *always* be the end result of allowing sin to harbor in our lives?

1 PETER 5:8-9

- What do you learn about the devil in this passage?

 - What do these verses command as a result of this? How do you think we can do this practically?
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- **APPLICATION:** What are some common temptations that you face? Are there any continual sins that you are allowing to take root in your life? Find one or two verses that will help you stand firm in the face of temptation.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MATTHEW 5:27-30

• What kind of attitude does Jesus command us to have towards our sin? How do you know?

• Do you think that Jesus is being literal in these verses? How do you know?

• What do you think is Jesus' main point in these verses?

HEBREWS 12:1-3

• What does verse 1 encourage believers to do in order to persevere in the race God has marked out for them?

• How might focusing on Jesus and considering what He endured help you in your fight against sin?

● **APPLICATION:** Would you say that you are aggressive about cutting sin out of your life? What are some things that are currently hindering your running hard after Christ? What would it take to cut those things out of your life?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 JOHN 3:1-6

• What “hope” do we have as God’s children in verse 2-3? What should we do as a result of this hope? (v. 3)

• How does verse 4 define sin? What is our only way to fight and defeat sin in our lives? (v.5-6)

• In Christ, what will our association with sin be like? Does this mean that we will not sin at all? Explain.

COLOSSIANS 3:1-8

• What do verses 1-3 say is true about those who are united with Christ?

• What do these verses say that we should do *because* of our union with Christ?

● **APPLICATION:** Why is it important to understand your identity in Christ when fighting against sin? Think of a time when you have sinned recently. What lies were you believing about your identity? (Example: you gossip to gain people’s approval because you doubt that God fully accepts you)

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 JOHN 1:7-9

• Walking in the light refers to living authentically, with your true self exposed to others. How might a person walk in darkness with regard to sins in their life? (v. 8)

• What does God's word promise will be the result of walking in the light? (v.7)

• According to verse 9, what should you do when you sin? What does God promise will happen as a result?

James 5:13-20

• What is the role of the body of Christ in our fight against sin?

• What is the role of prayer in our fight against sin?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you have sin in your life that you are hiding in the dark or that you have failed to confess to God and others? Who are one or two mature believers that can hold you accountable in your fight against sin? Who are one or two people who you can hold accountable in their fight against sin?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 TIMOTHY 2:22

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 9: FIGHTING SIN

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

FIGHTING SIN WITH WORSHIP

BY TONY REINKE | JULY 12, 2012

(The following post has been transcribed and edited from Tim Keller's sermon "Sin as Slavery," which can be downloaded for free at <http://sermons2.redeemer.com/sermons/sin-slavery>)

Every one of our sinful actions has a suicidal power on the faculties that put that action forth. When you sin with the mind, that sin shrivels the rationality. When you sin with the heart or the emotions, that sin shrivels the emotions. When you sin with the will, that sin destroys and dissolves your willpower and your self-control. Sin is the suicidal action of the self against itself. Sin destroys freedom because sin is an enslaving power.

In other words, sin has a powerful effect in which your own freedom, your freedom to *want* the good, to *will* the good, and to *think* or *understand* the good, is all being undermined. By sin, you are more and more losing your freedom. Sin undermines your mind, it undermines your emotions, and it undermines your will.

SIN IS ADDICTION

All sin is addiction. Whether it's bitterness, whether it's envy, whether it's materialism, whether it's laziness, whether it's impurity — every sinful action becomes an addiction. And every sinful action brings into your life a power that operates exactly like addiction cycles and addiction dynamics begin to operate.

In other words, in the specific addictions of alcohol or drug addiction, or voyeurism, or exhibitionism, or sexual addictions, you actually have a microcosm of how sin works in general.

You know how addiction works. It starts like this: There's some kind of disappointment or distress in your life. As a result you choose to deal with that distress with an agent; it might be sex, it might be drugs, it might be alcohol. The agent promises transcendence. The agent promises freedom, a sense of being in control, a sense of being above all this, a sense of being liberated, a sense of escape. And so you do it. But when you do it, when you take the addicting agent as a way of dealing with life, the trap is set.

The trap is set because three things begin to happen:

1. TOLERANCE:

You get trapped into what the experts call the "tolerance effect." In other words, the tolerance effect is that today *this* or *that* amount of alcohol or drugs, or *this* kind of sexual experience, will pale in comparison to your desires tomorrow. The same activity will not give you that same experience any more, and you will find you need more and more and more. What brought you joy yesterday will not be enough to give you joy tomorrow, because your emotions are shriveling and numbing. There's a tolerance effect.

2. DENIAL:

Addiction destroys because of denial. We all know part of addiction patterns is that your craving makes you rationalize and justify. It twists your thinking. You become selective in your reasoning, selective about your memory. You'll do all sorts of tortured rationalizations, but you refuse to think clearly and objectively. You can't.

3. DEFEAT:

Addictions destroy willpower. You know you are an addict when you are trying to escape your distress with the very thing that brought you your distress. And when you are in that spiral, you are stuck forever — down and down and down and down.

Sin in general operates like that. When you think disobedience to God is going to bring freedom, the very act that promises freedom is taking the freedom. The very act that you think is putting you *in* the driver's seat of your life is taking you *out* of the driver's seat of your life.

PLAYING WITH FIRE

The Bible defines sin as craving something more than God. Sin is making something *more* important than God. If you're just religious occasionally, if God is on the outskirts of your life, that is the essence of sin, and that sin grows.

Jonathan Edwards says sin turns the heart into a fire. Just as there has never been a fire that said, "Enough fuel, I'm fine now," so there has never been a sinful heart that said, "I have had enough success. I've had enough love. I've had enough approval. I've had enough comfort." Oh, no. The more fuel you put into the fire, the hotter it burns, and the hotter it burns, the more it needs, the more oxygen it is sucking and the more fuel it requires.

And this is the heart of the fire. Next time you are crabby, or grumpy, or irritable, or scared to death, or in the pits, ask yourself: What am I telling myself would make me happy *if only* I had it? There is an *if only* at the bottom of this. Whatever is your *if only*, that becomes your slave master. It destroys your will.

This explains how lies necessitate other lies. Envy necessitates more envy. Racism necessitates more racist thoughts. Jealousy necessitates more jealous thoughts. Bitterness necessitates more bitter thoughts. In the beginning when you first tell a lie you still have an appetite for the truth, but it won't take long. Sin is a power. And the things you crave become your slave masters because in your heart those things burn with this idea: *if only*. Everything would be fine *if only* I had *that*. This creates a suction in your life. The more you throw in, the more it wants.

WINNING THE FIREFIGHT

If you are a Christian and you are dealing with enslaving habits, it's not enough to say, "Bad Christian, stop it." And it is not enough to beat yourself up or merely try harder and harder and harder.

The real reason that you're having a problem with an enslaving habit is because you are not *tasting* God. I'm not talking about *believing* God or even *obeying* God, I'm saying *tasting* — *tasting* God.

The secret to freedom from enslaving patterns of sin is worship. You need worship. You need great worship. You need weeping worship. You need glorious worship. You need to sense God's greatness and to be moved by it — moved to tears and moved to laughter — moved by who God is and what he has done for you. And this needs to be happening all the time.

This type of worship is the only thing that can replace the little *if only* fire burning in your heart. We need a new fire that says, “*If only* I saw the Lord. *If only* he was close to my heart. *If only* I could feel him to be as great as I know him to be. *If only* I could taste his grace as sweet as I know it to be.”

And when that *if only* fire is burning in your heart, then you are free.

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● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

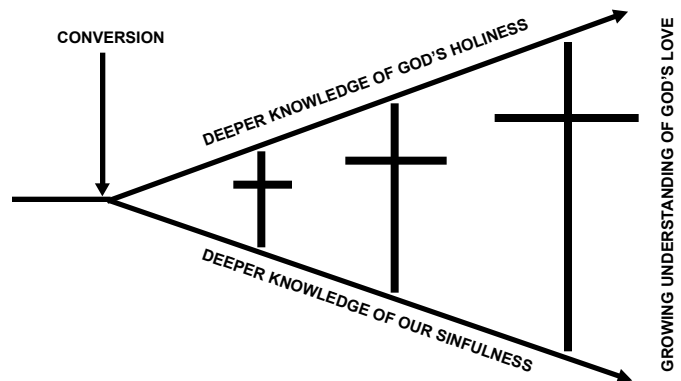
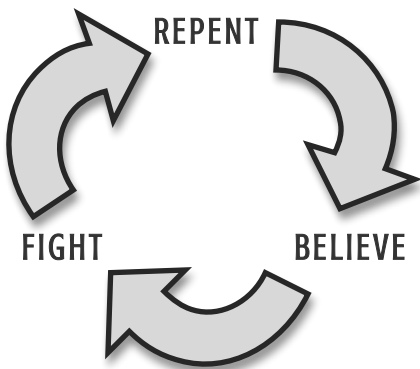
1. When you are feeling down or stressed, what are some things you usually think you will need to make you happy?

2. Can you see some ways where you might be addicted to these things in your life? Explain.

3. How can you replace your craving for these things with love and worship for God?

FIGHTING SIN: EXTRA RESOURCE

FIGHTING SIN AS A BELIEVER IN CHRIST



REPENT:

- Confess the sin and make no excuses
- What was your immediate response to your sin? Did you try harder, justify it, run to Christ etc?
- Meditate on Christ's death, which already paid for that specific sin
- Meditate on the ugliness of sin (not just the consequences of it) and the beauty of Christ

BELIEVE:

- Trust in Christ's forgiveness (1 John 1:9)
- Understand the design of grace (Titus 2:11-13)
- Ask yourself:
 - What is the lie or deception that you have fallen for? (James 1:13-15)
 - What is the truth to counter that lie?
- Read the warnings & promises of God regarding temptation; trust in them (1 Corinthians 10:12-13)
- Trust that Christ can & will deliver you from the sin (Romans 7:24, 25) & change your heart (Philippians 1:6)

FIGHT:

- Listen & respond immediately to the Spirit's resistance (Romans 13:14; 2 Timothy 2:22; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)
- Focus on the Lord and be consumed by him in worship
- Understand how the flesh works
 - When are you most susceptible to this sin?
 - What are ways you make concessions or "compromises" with your flesh or sinful desires?
- Apply yourself to the means of grace (Acts 20:28)
 - Pray: ask the Lord for a hatred of this sin and a greater love for Christ.
 - Find verses that speak to this particular sin (or it's righteous counterpart) & memorize & meditate on them. Renew your thoughts according to God's Word (Romans 12:1-2)
 - Find a brother/sister in Christ who can encourage and challenge you in this area of sin. Establish open and honest communication with one another. Give each other PMR (private meddling rights)
- Give thanks to the Lord as you experience victory, understanding that the Lord is at work in your life, enabling you to resist the sin.

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** JOHN 14:16-17 & JOHN 14:25-26

- How does Jesus describe the Holy Spirit? What does this reveal about His (the Spirit's) character?

- What did Jesus promise about the Holy Spirit and his relationship with the world and with us?

JOHN 7:37-39 & JOHN 16:7-15

- How does Jesus describe the Holy Spirit in these verses? What role will He have in our lives?

- Why did Jesus say that the disciples had not yet received the Holy Spirit? When would they receive Him?

● **APPLICATION:** What are ways that you have become more aware of the Spirit's work in your heart and in the world from reading these verses? Thank God for the Holy Spirit and ask him to make you more aware and submissive to His work in your life.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** GALATIANS 5:16

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** JOHN 15:26-27 & ACTS 1: 8-11

- What did Jesus promise would happen when the Holy Spirit finally came?

ACTS 2:1-24; 37-41

- What happened when the disciples were filled with the Spirit? How were foreigners able to understand them?

- What was Peter's message when he stood up and addressed the crowd?

- How did the people feel when they heard what Peter had to say? (v.37) What was the result? (v.38-41)

● **APPLICATION:** Describe a time if you ever experienced the Holy Spirit speaking through you like He did through Peter and the disciples. How is this different than when you speak about Christ in your own strength and wisdom? How is it similar? Ask God to give you words to speak to someone about Christ this week.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** GALATIANS 5:16

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 1:13-14** & **LUKE 11:11-13**

- When do Christians receive the Holy Spirit? What must believers do in order to have the Spirit?

- What does the Holy Spirit guarantee for us?

ROMANS 8:5-17 & **ROMANS 8:26-27**

- What is true about those who belong to Christ? (v. 9-11, 14,17)

- What does the Holy Spirit within us help us to do? (v.13, 16, 26)

● **APPLICATION:** How do you know that you have the Holy Spirit living inside of you? What are some ways that you currently experience the Spirit? What are some other ways that you could experience the Spirit? What verses support this? (Example: I fight sin in my own strength but Gal. 5:16 says life in the Spirit will help me to fight sin)

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **GALATIANS 5:16**

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 4:30-32** & **1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-19**

- What does it mean to grieve or quench the Holy Spirit?

- How can you tell if you have grieved the Holy Spirit? How can you prevent this from happening?

EPHESIANS 5:16-20

- What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? (v.18) Does the term “filled” refer to quantity or control of the Spirit? Explain your answer.

- How is being drunk like being filled with the Spirit & how is it different? How is someone filled with the Spirit?

● **APPLICATION:** Make a list of sins in your life that quench the Spirit and keep you from experiencing the full power of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to give to you power to put these sins to death so that He might fill you and empower you to live a holy life.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **GALATIANS 5:16**

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 5

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** GALATIANS 5:16-25
 - What is the relationship between your sinful nature and the Spirit within you? How do you experience this?

 - What will be the results when we keep in step with or walk by the Spirit? What are the results when we don't?

JOHN 15:1-5

- What does it mean to abide or remain in Christ? How does someone do this?

- Explain the illustration of the vine and the branches? What is Jesus' main point in these verses?

- What happens to those who do not abide in Christ and remain dependent on Him?

- **APPLICATION:** Is your life characterized most by fruits of the flesh or fruits of the Spirit? Explain. What are some ways that you are relying on your flesh instead of trusting in Christ? What will it take to live by the Spirit in these areas?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** GALATIANS 5:16

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 10: SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

THE HOLY SPIRIT & HIS ROLE

The Holy Spirit is often misunderstood and can be confusing to many Christians, and while the Spirit is mysterious in many ways, this confusion is unnecessary. God reveals Himself to us through His Word, which has much to say about His Spirit. By studying the Scriptures that speak of the Holy Spirit, we can grow in our understanding of who He is and what role He will play in our lives.

The first thing to know is that the Spirit is always referred to in the Bible as “He” rather than “it,” indicating that the Holy Spirit is a person, not simply a force. We can know Him personally and have a relationship with Him, as we do with the Father and the Son. As a person, He has a personality and because He is God, His personality is constant and unchanging.

Secondly, we can learn much about the Holy Spirit by examining the names given to Him. In the Bible (and still in some parts of the world), a person’s name carries much significance. We usually choose names that we like or that sound good to us, whereas biblical names are often descriptors of the person himself (i.e. Peter means rock and Nabal means fool). The third person of God is most often called by the name, “Holy Spirit,” emphasizing that He is “set apart” (holy) and distinct from any other spirit. Examine the following list to see some of the other names given to the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

NAMES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- HELPER/COUNSELOR: JOHN 14:17, JOHN 15:26, JOHN 14:26, JOHN 16:7
- SPIRIT OF TRUTH: JOHN 14:17, JOHN 15:26, JOHN 16:13, 1 JOHN 4:6
- SPIRIT OF THE LORD: ISAIAH 11:2, ISAIAH 61:1, LUKE 14:26, ACTS 5:9
- SPIRIT OF GOD: JOB 27:3, JOB 33:4
- SPIRIT OF HIS SON: GALATIANS 4:6
- SPIRIT OF CHRIST: ROMANS 8:9, 1 PETER 1:11
- SPIRIT OF JESUS: ACTS 16:7, PHILIPPIANS 1:19
- SPIRIT OF THE FATHER: MATTHEW 10:20, ISAIAH 61:1
- GOOD SPIRIT: PSALM 143:10, NEHEMIAH 9:20
- SPIRIT OF WISDOM: ISAIAH 11:2, EPHESIANS 1:17
- SPIRIT OF REVELATION: EPHESIANS 1:17
- SPIRIT OF HOLINESS: ROMANS 1:4
- SPIRIT OF GLORY: 1 PETER 4:14
- SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT: ISAIAH 4:4, ISAIAH 28:6
- SPIRIT OF GRACE: ZECHARIAH 12:10, HEBREWS 10:29
- SPIRIT OF ADOPTION: ROMANS 8:15
- SPIRIT OF LIFE: ROMANS 8:2, 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6, REVELATION 11:11

What do you learn about the Holy Spirit and His personality from examining His different names? What is He like?

Lastly, the Scriptures are fairly explicit about the role that the Holy Spirit has in the world and in the lives of Christians. When we are familiar with how the Spirit acts, we can better identify when He is working in our lives. This will also guard us against misinterpreting the Holy Spirit or being led away from God by other spiritual forces at work in the world. Read the following list of roles that Holy Spirit has in our world today.

ROLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- GIVES LIFE: (JOB 33:4, PS. 104:30, JOHN 6:63, ROMANS 8:6,11, 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6)
- FILLS BELIEVERS: (LUKE 1:15, ACTS 2:4, ACTS 9:17, ACTS 13:52, EPHESIANS 5:18)
- GLORIFIES JESUS: (JOHN 7:39, JOHN 16:14, EPHESIANS 1:14, 1 JOHN 4:1-3)
- DWELLS WITHIN CHRISTIANS: (EZ. 36:27, JOHN 14:17, ROMANS 8:9-11, 1 COR. 3:16-17, 1 COR. 6:19)
- UNIFIES BELIEVERS IN FELLOWSHIP: (1 COR. 12:13, 2 COR. 13:14, EPH. 2:18, EPH. 4:3-4, PHIL. 2:1-2)
- HELPS BELIEVERS TO PRAY GOD'S WILL: (ROMANS 8:26-27, EPHESIANS 6:18)
- SPIRITUALLY REGENERATES CHRISTIANS: (JOHN 1:33; 3:5-8, ROM. 8:10-11, 1 COR. 6:11, TITUS 3:5-6)
- SETS CHRISTIANS FREE FROM SIN & DEATH: (ROMANS 8:2-6,13, GALATIANS 5:5,16-18)
- BEARS CHRIST-LIKE FRUIT IN CHRISTIANS' LIVES: (2 COR. 3:18, GALATIANS 5:22-23)
- HELPS PEOPLE KNOW GOD & DISCERN HIS WILL: (EPHESIANS 1:17, COLOSSIANS 1:9)
- EMPOWERS CHRISTIANS TO TESTIFY ABOUT CHRIST: (MATT. 10:16-20, JOHN 15:26-27, ACTS 1:8; 4:8)
- TEACHES BELIEVERS & GUIDES THEM INTO ALL TRUTH: (JOHN 16:13, JOHN 14:17, 1 COR. 2:12-13)
- SEALS CHRISTIANS & GUARANTEES THEIR INHERITANCE: (2 COR. 5:5, EPH. 1:13-14, EPH. 4:30)
- ASSURES BELIEVERS THAT THEY ARE CHILDREN OF GOD: (ROMANS 8:15-16, 1 JOHN 4:13)
- GIVES CHRISTIANS SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO SERVE THE CHURCH: (1 COR. 12:4-11)
- CONVICTS THE WORLD OF SIN, RIGHTEOUSNESS & JUDGMENT: (JOHN 16:8, ACTS 7:51, GAL. 5:16)

When you examine your life, is there evidence that you are living by the Spirit? How have you seen the Holy Spirit fulfill these roles in your own life? In what areas do you need to be more sensitive to the Spirit's work?

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **EPHESIANS 5:1-10**

• What is God commanding us to do in verses 1 and 2? Why does He say that we should act this way?

• What are the things that are improper for God's people? (v.3-5)

• How does someone live as a child of light? (v.8-9) How does someone find out what pleases the Lord? (v.10)

2 CORINTHIANS 3:16-18

• What is true about anyone who turns to the Lord?

• What happens to believers as they see the glory of the Lord? How does this happen?

● **APPLICATION:** Are you currently living a life that imitates and reflects the love and character of Christ? Explain. How can you be transformed more into Christ's image? Does this happen by your own effort? Explain.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **1 PETER 1:15**

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** MARK 10:35-45

- What were James and John seeking from Jesus? What does this reveal about their hearts?

- How did the other disciples respond when they discovered this? What does this reveal about their hearts?

- How did Jesus respond to the disciples? How did He define greatness? How did He model this?

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23 & 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5-6

- How did the apostle Paul view himself with regards to other people? Why did he choose act this way?

- How was Paul's perspective different than the disciples in Mark10? How was it similar to Christ?

● **APPLICATION:** When you think about becoming great, do you think like James, John & the disciples (being exalted by others) or do you think like Paul & Jesus (being a servant)? Why do you think this way?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 1 PETER 1:15

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** PHILIPPIANS 2:5-16

- What is the command in verse 5? How is this similar to the command in 1 Peter 1:15-16?

- What was Jesus' attitude or mindset? What did He *do* that revealed this was His mindset? (v.6-8)

- What did the Lord do in response to Jesus' humility? What will happen at the name of Jesus? (v.9-11)

- What does verse 12 command *us* to do? How do we do that? (v.13)

- What should we avoid if we are to stand out as lights in this dark world? (v.14-15) How can we do that? (v.16)

● **APPLICATION:** What are some ways that you can humble yourself and serve others like Christ this week? Are you more likely to depend more on Christ or your own strength to do this? Ask the Lord to give you the mind of Christ.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 1 PETER 1:15

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 JOHN 2:15-17

- In order to truly love God, what must you refuse to love? How does verse 16 define “everything in the world”?

TITUS 2:11-14

- What does God’s grace teach us to refuse? (v.12) What does God’s grace teach us to pursue? (v.12-13)

- Why did Jesus give Himself up to death according to verse 14? What did He want to create?

ROMANS 12:2

- What must we do in order to avoid conforming to the world? How do you think that you can do this?

● **APPLICATION:** Does your lifestyle look more like the world or God’s word? Do you obey God’s will for your life written in His word or do you obey what the world tells you to pursue? Think of one or two application steps that will help you to know and follow God’s word.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 1 PETER 1:15

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 5

- **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.
- **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 2 CORINTHIANS 2:14-16
 - What analogy is used to describe Christians in these verses? How does God use us in the world around us?

 - What will be the two responses to a Christian's life and message? Why?

JOHN 15:18-20

- What does Jesus promise will happen if we have Christ-like character and live differently than the world?

2 TIMOTHY 3:12-14

- What should we expect to encounter if we pursue a godly life? What should we continue to do anyway?

- What can we expect that the sinful world and people around us will continue to do? (v.13)

- **APPLICATION:** Have you ever been persecuted for your faith? Why or why not? What fears or barriers do you have to following Christ into persecutions? Is it worth it to you to pursue a godly life in Christ?

- **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 1 PETER 1:15

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

- **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 11: CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

SEE YOUR SAVIOR

BY: ELYSE FITZPATRICK

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

It’s part of the life cycle of every living thing to grow and mature. It’s also natural for us to hope that we will be better people today than we were yesterday and that the things that trouble us at present will somehow be resolved in the future. No matter where we turn in the world—to radio talk shows and daytime television, the Internet, and particularly our email inbox—snake-oil salesmen are touting the latest cure for whatever problem or impediment we might face. No matter if our problem is acne, anger, ever-increasing debt, impending divorce, shyness, depression, or unruly children, there is someone right around the corner telling us how he will make our life better.

RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED

We frantically search through a myriad of solutions; our eyes are drawn in a thousand differing directions. And while there is no end to these pseudo answers to our difficulties, it is apparent from their mere proliferation that none really effects change, at least not over the long haul. Sure, we might have some temporary successes, but after a while we find ourselves right back where we started. Nothing that the world has to offer can change the human heart. Yes, of course we can learn to rearrange the furniture of our lives so that we seem tidier, more together, but no merely human means can ever free us from ourselves.

We are all hoping for change and progress, Christian and non-Christian alike. In contrast to our culture’s unabashedly self-exalting approach to personal perfectibility, serious Christians are intent on something more than merely “getting it together.” We are hoping instead for growth in godliness, or what is commonly referred to as sanctification. Rather than seek a quick fix, we look inward, at our own sinfulness. We diligently practice confession and repentance. We are encouraged to examine ourselves, to search out sin and unbelief.

Although we are commanded to tackle sin in this way, there is a problem here too. If we focus too narrowly on our failures and never take our eyes off ourselves, we can become mired in endless navel-gazing, and, even as Christians, simply looking at ourselves doesn’t have the power to transform us. If we keep our eyes riveted on ourselves, even as we routinely practice confession and repentance, we will stay bogged down with the same old sins. We need to set our eyes on something beyond ourselves or our failures. We need to glimpse something that is more powerful. We need to see Jesus Christ and the transforming glory of God.

WHAT PAUL DID

As we do, the Corinthians longed to be more like their Savior. They, too, needed grace to battle the materialism that infected their culture, faith to fight the idolatry and impurity that had marked their own lives, and wisdom to know the difference between an outward show of goodness and true inward holiness. They needed to know how to be effective witnesses for Christ. So Paul pointed them toward the true locus of change. He wrote, “We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

In light of the Corinthian context, Paul’s counsel is astonishing. As an orthodox Jew speaking to Gentiles, he could have said that they would be transformed by looking at God’s law. The message of moral improvement through strict law keeping was certainly a popular one among his contemporaries, including both observant Jews and ethically sensitive Gentiles. Instead he called this use of the law a ministry of death (2 Corinthians 3:7). Paul might have told

them to look to teachers who were outwardly religious, powerful, successful, or popular. Instead, he called such teachers insincere, boastful peddlers of God's Word (2 Corinthians 2:16).

Although advertising his past achievements in Jewish law keeping and his present accomplishments in Christian ministry might have helped Paul to look good outwardly and given him a leg up in pastoral prestige, he intentionally humbled himself and refused to lean on any sort of self-made righteousness. He didn't want the Corinthians to look at him. In contrast to the false teachers, he regarded his good reputation and former blameless law keeping as dung (Philippians 3:8). Instead of boasting about his accomplishments, Paul boasted about his frailty, his unpopularity, and his weakness and persecutions (2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:9–10). He deliberately humbled himself and refused to boast in his abilities so that the Corinthians would not be drawn to focus on him. He wanted them to know that the power to transform heart and life belongs to God and not to man (2 Corinthians 4:7–11; 13:4).

BEHOLD THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Paul's one all-encompassing passion was to preach, honor, and exalt Jesus Christ, and so he counseled the Corinthians (and us) to look away to the glory of the Lord. He knew that they weren't going to be transformed by gazing at their own glories or the glory of any other mere human. He knew they wouldn't progress in sanctification by observing their sin and failure. He told them how true transformation takes place: by beholding the glory of the Lord.

In one sense, Paul's insight—that we can be transformed only by the glory of the God on whom we gaze—should have been familiar to any Jew or Gentile who knew the Old Testament Scripture. After all, Paul was simply echoing, unpacking, and applying the ancient account of Moses' experience at Sinai, when he beheld God's glory on the mountaintop and then descended to the Israelites, his face radiating glory, reflecting the splendor of the Lord who had spoken to him (Exodus 34:29–33). Paul insisted that Moses' and Israel's experience of the visible display of God's glory foreshadowed Christians' spiritual experience of our "beholding" God's glory in an even deeper, life-transforming, longer-lasting way.

That's all well and good, you might be thinking, but exactly how can we behold God's glory? After all, he's invisible, and we can't see into heaven. Where will we see unseen and eternal things (2 Corinthians 4:18)? Should we head out to the beach and watch a sunset or perhaps wander into a cathedral to gaze upon beautiful stained glass representations of him? How can we see what is invisible and thus experience the transformation we so desire? Where will we see his glory? We will see it in the gospel, of course.

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This article is adapted from Elyse's book, Counsel from the Cross © 2012 Crossway*

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What is your typical response when you see unholiness in your life? What did you learn in this article about biblical sanctification? How might it help you grow in Christ-like character?

CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER: EXTRA RESOURCE

In Philippians 1:6 we are told that God will carry on to completion the work He began in us. This grid is a tool to help you identify areas of your character where growth is needed. Evaluate your life in respect to each trait. Remember the purpose of this exercise is to help you know your areas of strength and weakness in order to utilize and develop them for God's glory.

<p>ENDURANCE vs. Giving-up</p> <p>The inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish God's best Galatians 6:9</p>	<p>FLEXIBILITY vs. Resistance</p> <p>Not setting my affections on ideas or plans which could be changed by God or others Colossians 3:2</p>	<p>PERSUASIVENESS vs. Contentiousness</p> <p>Guiding vital truth around another's mental roadblocks 2 Timothy 2:24</p>	<p>WISDOM vs. Natural Inclinations</p> <p>Seeing and responding to life situations from God's frame of reference Proverbs 9:10</p>	<p>RESOURCEFULNESS vs. Wastefulness</p> <p>Wise use of that which others would normally overlook or discard Luke 16:10</p>	<p>THRIFTINESS vs. Extravagance</p> <p>Not letting myself or others spend that which is not necessary Luke 16:11</p>
<p>DISCRETION vs. Simple-mindedness</p> <p>The ability to avoid words, actions, and attitudes which could result in undesirable consequences Proverbs 22:3</p>	<p>TOLERANCE vs. Prejudice</p> <p>Acceptance of others as unique expressions of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity Philippians 2:2</p>	<p>HOSPITALITY vs. Loneliness</p> <p>Cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into my life Hebrews 13:2</p>	<p>REVERENCE vs. Disrespect</p> <p>Awareness of how God is working through the people and events in my life to produce the character of Christ in me Proverbs 23: 17-18</p>	<p>LOYALTY vs. Unfaithfulness</p> <p>Using difficult times to demonstrate my commitment to God and to those whom He has called me to serve John 15:13</p>	<p>ORDERLINESS vs. Disorganization</p> <p>Preparing myself and my surroundings so that I will achieve the greatest efficiency 1 Corinthians 14:40</p>
<p>ATTENTIVENESS vs. Unconcern</p> <p>Showing the worth of a person by giving undivided attention to his words and emotions Hebrews 2:1</p>	<p>SENSITIVITY vs. Callousness</p> <p>Exercising my senses so that I can perceive the true spirit and emotions of those around me Romans 12:15</p>	<p>HUMILITY vs. Pride</p> <p>Recognizing that God and others are actually responsible for the achievements in my life James 4:6</p>	<p>ALERTNESS vs. Unawareness</p> <p>Being aware of that which is taking place around me so that I can have the right responses Mark 14:38</p>	<p>DILIGENCE vs. Slothfulness</p> <p>Visualizing each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to accomplish it Colossians 3:23</p>	<p>FAITH vs. Presumption</p> <p>Visualizing what God intends to do in a given situation and acting in harmony with it Hebrews 11:1</p>
<p>FORGIVENESS vs. Rejection</p> <p>Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and allowing God to love them through me Ephesians 4:32</p>	<p>LOVE vs. Selfishness</p> <p>Giving to others' basic needs without personal reward or convenience as my motive 1 Corinthians 13:3</p>	<p>OBEDIENCE vs. Willfulness</p> <p>Freedom to be creative under the protection of divinely appointed authority 2 Corinthians 10:5</p>	<p>VIRTUE vs. Impurity</p> <p>The moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiate from my life as I obey God's word 2 Peter 1:5</p>	<p>JOYFULNESS vs. Self-pity</p> <p>The spontaneous enthusiasm of my spirit when my soul is in fellowship with the Lord Psalm 16:11</p>	<p>THOROUGHNESS vs. Incompleteness</p> <p>Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work if neglected Proverbs 18:15</p>
<p>INITIATIVE vs. Unresponsiveness</p> <p>Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it Romans 12:21</p>	<p>PUNCTUALITY vs. Tardiness</p> <p>Showing high esteem for other people and their time Ecclesiastes 3:1</p>	<p>SINCERITY vs. Hypocrisy</p> <p>Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives 1 Peter 1:22</p>	<p>COMPASSION vs. Indifference</p> <p>Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others 1 John 3:17</p>	<p>BOLDNESS vs. Fearfulness</p> <p>Confidence that what I have to say or do is true and right and just in the sight of God Acts 4:29</p>	<p>GENEROSITY vs. Stinginess</p> <p>Realizing that all I have belongs to God and using it for His purposes 2 Corinthians 9:6</p>
<p>DEPENDABILITY vs. Inconsistency</p> <p>Fulfilling what I consented to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice Psalm 15:4</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY vs. Unreliability</p> <p>Knowing and doing what both God and others are expecting me to do Romans 14:12</p>	<p>SELF-CONTROL vs. self-indulgence</p> <p>Instant obedience to the initial promptings of God's Spirit Galatians 5:24-25</p>	<p>DECISIVENESS vs. Double-mindedness</p> <p>The ability to finalize difficult decisions based on the will and ways of God James 1:5</p>	<p>GENTLENESS vs. Harshness</p> <p>Showing personal care and concern in meeting the needs of others 1 Thessalonians 2:7</p>	<p>CONTENTMENT vs. Covetousness</p> <p>Realizing that God has provided everything that I need for my present happiness 1 Timothy 6:8</p>
<p>GRATEFULNESS vs. Unthankfulness</p> <p>Making known to God and others in what ways they have benefited my life 1 Corinthians 4:7</p>	<p>SECURITY vs. Anxiety</p> <p>Structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away John 6:27</p>	<p>PATIENCE vs. Restlessness</p> <p>Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it Romans 5:3-4</p>	<p>CAUTIOUSNESS vs. Rashness</p> <p>Knowing how important right timing is in accomplishing right actions Proverbs 19:2</p>	<p>DETERMINATION vs. Faint-heartedness</p> <p>Purposing to Accomplish God's goals in God's timing regardless of the opposition 2 Timothy 4:7-8</p>	<p>DEFERENCE vs. Rudeness</p> <p>Limiting my freedom in order not to offend the tastes of those God has called me to serve Romans 14:21</p>
<p>JUSTICE vs. Immorality</p> <p>Personal responsibility to God's unchanging laws Micah 6:8</p>	<p>TRUTHFULNESS vs. Deception</p> <p>Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts Ephesians 4:25</p>	<p>CREATIVITY vs. Under-achievement</p> <p>Approaching a need, a task, an idea from a new perspective Romans 12:2</p>	<p>ENTHUSIASM vs. Apathy</p> <p>Expressing with my spirit the joy of my soul 1 Thessalonians 5:16,19</p>	<p>MEEKNESS vs. Anger</p> <p>Yielding my personal rights and expectations to God Psalm 62:5</p>	<p>DISCERNMENT vs. Judgment</p> <p>The God-given ability to understand why things happen 1 Samuel 16:7</p>

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 1

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **HEBREWS 11:1-6**

• What is the definition of faith? (v.1) What do you think that this means? What is our greatest hope?

• What is one thing that we must believe & trust by faith? (v.3)

• What does verse 6 say is required in order to please to God? What must we believe if we come to God?

James 1: 5-8

• When we pray, what do you think it mean to ask in faith?

• Explain the analogy that James uses to describe doubt? Why do you think that this displeases the Lord?

● **APPLICATION:** Would you say that you “live by faith” in Jesus or that you trust in other things more? What are some things in which you trust? (i.e. your own strength, intellect, other people, society, wealth, science etc.) What’s is the correlation between trusting these things and feeling like a “wave tossed by the wind”?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:7**

Write out the verse, including the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 2

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** 1 CORINTHIANS 1:25 - 2:5

- Why does God choose to use the weak and foolish things and people of the world? (v.29)

- Why did Paul say that he resolved to only preach Christ crucified and to speak simply? (v.5)

EPHESIANS 2:8 & GALATIANS 2:20

- What role does faith play in the Christian's salvation and life in Christ? Is faith a one-time trust in the gospel or an ongoing choosing to trust? Explain.

- In whom does the Christian place his/her faith? Why?

ROMANS 10:17 & ROMANS 1:16-17

- How does someone get faith and grow in faith?

● **APPLICATION:** Do you ever feel like you need to be wise and popular in the world's eyes in order to influence others for Christ? Explain. In what should you trust instead of these things? How can you take steps to grow in your faith this week?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

Spend some time praying or journaling about this verse.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 3

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** LUKE 7:1-10

- Why was Jesus amazed at the centurion's words?

- What did the centurion's words and actions reveal about his faith? What did he believe about Jesus?

MARK 9:14-29

- What was Jesus' attitude when he learned that his disciples couldn't heal the boy? Why did He feel this way?

- What did the father ask Jesus for? How did Jesus respond to his request?

- Why did Jesus say that the disciples were unable to drive out the demon?

● **APPLICATION:** Can you identify more with the faith of the disciples or the faith of the centurion? Why? What makes it difficult for you to trust Christ to do amazing things? Pray that God would overcome your unbelief.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

Write out the verse two times with the reference. Check yourself after you write.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 4

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** James 2:14-23

- What is the proof that someone has true faith in Jesus Christ?

- Why is it not enough to just claim to believe in Christ?

- Who did James use as an example of faith? What did he do that proved his faith in God?

HEBREWS 11:17-19 & ROMANS 4:18-25

- What compelled Abraham to believe that he would have a son at age 100? Then, what did he believe that made him willing to sacrifice his son?

- What did God credit to Abraham because of his faith? What implication does this have for our faith? (v.23-25)

● **APPLICATION:** Examine your life decisions and daily actions. What evidence is there that you have faith in Christ? What decisions and actions reveal areas where you still lack faith? What promises of God are you failing to believe?

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

Recite the verse out loud three times using the reference.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 5

● **PREPARATION:** Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Review your notes from yesterday.

● **OBSERVATION & INTERPRETATION:** **MARK 10:13-15**

- What did Jesus say is necessary to enter the kingdom of God? What do you think that this means?

- What do children do that shows that they have faith in their parents? How is this similar to how we should have faith in God, our Heavenly Father?

MATTHEW 6:25-34

- What is one major indication that we have little faith? Why does this reveal unbelief?

- What promise does Jesus make about the Father that should increase our faith?

- What does Jesus say we should center our lives upon in verse 33?

● **APPLICATION:** What are some ways that you doubt that God is your loving Father? How is God different than your earthly father? Find and claim promises in His word to overcome these barriers to childlike faith.

● **SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** **2 CORINTHIANS 5:7**

Recite the verse from memory to yourself & to one other person.

● **PRAYER:** Spend time talking to God by 1) Praising Him 2) Confessing sins 3) Presenting requests

WEEK 12: WALKING BY FAITH

DAY 6: ARTICLE

● READ & REFLECT:

FAITH STUDY

BY: ERIN FRANCISCO

Dawson Trotman was an ordinary man yet used by God to build a world-wide discipleship ministry. Why? He trusted his God. A man used by God to accomplish great things is always a man of great faith. Paul instructs Timothy to be about “furthering the administration of God, which is by faith.” Dawson Trotman was a man with a keen eye for identifying promises from scripture and acting on them in full confidence that God would keep His promise. The following is a quote by Trotman:

Do you know why I often ask Christians, “What’s the biggest thing you’ve asked God for this week?” I remind them that they are going to God, The Father, the Maker of the Universe, The One who holds the world in His hands. “What did you ask God for? Did you ask for peanuts, toys, trinkets, or did you ask for continents?” I want to tell you ... it’s tragic! The little itsy-bitsy things we ask of our Almighty God. Sure, nothing is too small – but also nothing is too big. Let’s learn to ask for our big God some of those big things He talks about in Jeremiah 33:3: “Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not.” I used to have a map of the world that I kept before me. I’d put my fingers on some of the islands—Australia, New Zealand, Okinawa, Formosa—and say, “Lord, let me win men for You in these places.” I was challenged to do this by Jeremiah 33:3. In the previous chapter Jeremiah had said to the Lord, “Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee.” Then just a few verses later He says, “All right, if you believe Me, call unto Me and I will answer.”

Do you want to be a man or woman used by God to accomplish great things? So many people say that a roller coaster is the best analogy for the Christian life. They are up for a while only to sink back into a spiritual decline. What stabilizes your walk with God? Psalm 125:1 says, “Those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion” The Psalmist says that a man of great faith has great stability. A mountain cannot “be moved but abides forever.” Do you want to develop stability in your personal walk with God?

Every Christian desires a stable, fruitful walk with God. Faith is the key. A man with faith enough to act on God’s promises will be fruitful. A man with faith grounded in God’s character will be stable. Are you a man or woman of faith? What is faith? How can I develop my faith? A walk of faith is a walk of stability and fruitfulness.

WHAT IS FAITH?

Scripture gives us a clear definition in Hebrews 11:1. It says that , “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Assurance and conviction communicate the same thought. Faith is a certainty, not a maybe. In your ministry, the one who is most beneficial is the one, when given an assignment, is certain to do it! He is a faithful man. You’re certain he will do what he’s been asked to do. Faith attributes that same certainty to God.

Furthermore, faith is a certainty that things we can’t see or simply hope for will be provided. Faith has to do with provision. God has taken responsibility to meet the needs of His children. I am so thankful for my

parents. They took personal responsibility to provide for my needs as I was growing up. In an even greater way, God has taken personal responsibility to care for His children.

To summarize what Hebrews 11:1 says about faith, we can hold the following as our definition of faith:

Faith is a certainty that God will provide as He has promised.

Certainty is rooted in God's character. Because of who God is our faith in Him is certain. How does God's character add certainty to faith?

First, He is unchanging. James 1:17 identifies this aspect of God's character: "In him there is no variation or change." Second, He is faithful. "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man that he should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19) The faithfulness cannot be more clearly expressed than it is in this verse. If God says it, He does it. It is a certainty. Third, He is able. Jeremiah 32:17 says, "...Nothing is too difficult for thee." Nothing exceeds the ability of God. Take a moment and allow the awesomeness of that statement to grip you. Nothing exceeds the ability of God. From these three expressions of God's character, we can begin to understand that God's character is the foundation of certain faith. Every aspect of God's character adds to the certainty of faith.

Provision is rooted in the promises of God. The Bible records numerous promises from God. Every promise God makes, He keeps. His track record is unblemished. He promised Noah a flood and it flooded. He promised Abraham a son and Isaac was born. He has kept His promises. He provided according to His promises. Romans 4:21 says that what He promises, He performs. In summary, we can obey God's promises by doing our part, because we are certain that God will do His part. He will act according to His character and His promises.

HOW CAN WE DEVELOP OUR FAITH?

One way is to develop faith is to increase our knowledge of the character of God. Another is to identify and memorize the many promises of God. In addition to these, we also need a proper perspective on circumstances. Culturally, we've been conditioned to follow the path of least resistance. Many times, God's will leads us into uncomfortable circumstances that force you to trust God. The bottom line in developing your faith is to boldly do your part in God's promises. If we do, our faith will grow as God faithfully does His part. What actions must we take as men and women of faith? The following are simple guidelines for walking by faith:

1. Identify a promise = Find a promise in scripture that relates to your situation
2. Identify your part = Determine your part in the promise with regards to your situation
3. Identify God's part = Determine God's part and trust Him to do it in His way and in His timing

This applies to any situation we may face. For example, in my ministry I want to be an effective witness for Christ. Matthew 4:19 says that if I follow Christ, He'll make me an effective witness. My part is to follow Christ and His part is to make me effective in evangelism. In my prayer life, I want to pray with confidence. Psalm 34:4 says that if I delight myself in the Lord, He will give me the desires of my heart. My part is to find my delight in the Lord. If he truly is my delight, then when I pray I can be certain He will provide. In my self-image, I want to see myself as God sees me. In Isaiah 41:9,10 God says that I am His servant. He has chosen me and fear is out of the picture because He is with me and has promised to strengthen, help and uphold me. No longer will I view myself by any other standard than the standard of God's promise to me.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO WALKING BY FAITH?

Instead of walking by faith, we can walk by our feelings. If we feel like God is with us then we can be confident that God is pleased with us. But what happens when our feelings are mixed up? Do you think God wants us to relate to Him on the unstable basis of our emotions? We can also walk by circumstances. If our circumstances are positive, then we are stable and confident. But what do we do when our circumstances seem negative? Do we assume God is refusing to do His part? Obviously, God doesn't want us to live by circumstances. Another alternative is to walk by your own gifts and abilities. Jesus said, however, "apart from me, you can do nothing." There are no good alternatives to the life of faith.

There is no greater walk than the walk of faith. It is a fruitful, stable walk with our precious Lord. Prior to learning how to walk by faith my life was ruled by emotional swings and plagued by self-doubt. This simple principle of faith has enabled me to live above my emotions. I now view myself according to the promises of God, and I can maintain a stable, fruitful walk with God. Would you, right now, choose to live above circumstances, feelings, and abilities? Will you live according to the promises and character of God? Trust Him to work in and through your life in a way that is consistent with His promises and character.

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● APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What do these verses reveal about God's character?

a. Jeremiah 32:27 -

b. John 10:11-13 -

c. Numbers 23:19 -

d. Isaiah 46:9-11 -

2. Fill out the following chart with God's part and your part in each of these verses.

	GOD'S PART - PROMISE	MY PART - ACTION
Jeremiah 33:3		
Isaiah 26:3		
Matthew 6:24-33		
John 14:21		

CONCLUSION

Congratulations! You finished this Bible study, which was hopefully helpful for your spiritual growth. In order to fully absorb what you have learned over the past three months, take some time to look skim back through this Bible study. Write down the three major lessons or truths that God taught you. This will help you to evaluate what you have learned and protect you from forgetfulness as you continue to grow.

LESSON #1

LESSON #2

LESSON #3

DON'T STOP THERE!

Please continue to find ways to grow in your relationship with Christ! Continuing to study God's word and pour your heart out in prayer in the context of a gospel-centered community, people who will push you to follow hard after Jesus and to share your faith with your friends who do not yet believe in Christ. Perhaps, one day soon, you could lead someone else through this same Bible study.

Here are resources to help you as you move forward:

RECOMMENDED BOOKS	HELPFUL WEBSITES
<p><u>The Explicit Gospel</u> by Matt Chandler <u>Calvary Road</u> by: Roy Hession <u>We Would See Jesus</u> by: Roy Hession <u>50 Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die</u> by: John Piper <u>Don't Waste Your Life</u> by: John Piper <u>The Cross Centered Life</u> by: C. J. Mahaney <u>The God You Can Know</u> by: Dan Dehaan</p>	<p>www.campusoutreach.org/resources www.desiringgod.org www.thegospelcoalition.org www.discipleshiplibrary.com www.biblegateway.com www.esvbible.org</p>

