

P52

WEEKLY BIBLE READING PROGRAM



**PENTECOSTALS
OF BILLINGS**

where miracles still happen

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Foreword

God is a God of process. The first introduction of God to humanity as recorded in the Bible finds God in the midst of a PROCESS – Creation. Each day God was at work. He had a specific strategy. His plans were thought out, outlined, well-defined, and meticulously detailed. No one could ever dispute that fact that God could have chosen to instantly, in a moment, with one motion of His hand, complete creation in fullness. He has the power to do such a thing. However, He chose to demonstrate PROCESS. God had a precise agenda and purpose for each day. The creation account recorded in Genesis reveals a thoughtful plan carried out to perfection. *God is a God of process.*

We see PROCESS continuously at work throughout the Bible. Noah followed a process as he constructed the ark under the direction of God. Although he was anointed as a lad to be king of Israel, David walked through a process of becoming such a leader. John the Baptist spent time in the wilderness in preparation to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ. He certainly experienced a process of development. Paul found himself in seclusion for a period of time prior to entering into his full time ministry. He submitted to the training process of God. And finally, Jesus Himself faithfully and methodically followed the directions of His Father and completed the process of redemption for you and me.

There is no doubt God can do things instantly and suddenly, but the growth of your spiritual maturity is not an instant and sudden act of God. God has never taken a short cut in the spiritual expansion of His followers. It takes time, effort, sweat, and PROCESS to become a fully devoted Christ-follower – a disciple.

P-52 has a focus. The main drive of this publication is to aid you to become more like Jesus by getting you involved in the process of meeting with Him and His Word on a daily basis. As you commit yourself to spending time in God's Word and in His presence, you will begin to reflect Who He is and become a fully functioning disciple.

Each week you will have a different chapter of the Bible to read. Some chapters are from the Old Testament and some are from the New Testament. You will read a specified chapter every day for seven days. The attention is on the quality of your reading rather than the quantity or the number of chapters you can read in a year's time. We want the Word of God to find its place in your heart so that it molds, matures, and increases your Christ-likeness.

This kit was compiled so the PROCESS can begin in your life! Enjoy the ride and let's discover the wonderful things God has for us over the next 52 weeks.

Karen Smith

WEEK 1 – We All Matter!

**“Relying on God has to start all over everyday as if nothing has yet been done.”
C.S. Lewis**

Overview: In Ephesians 4, the Apostle Paul explains that the Body of Christ is to be equipped to do the work of the ministry. He goes on to say that every believer should walk in a level of maturity and unity with each other. He shows how each person operating in the gifts God has given them will cause the Church, the Body of Christ, to grow! In the latter portion of the chapter, Paul addresses the conduct of a believer, encouraging us to live and walk in the newness of Christ and not in our old ways. For example, he gives direct instructions concerning the words we speak.

Memory verse: 29 – *Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.*

Ephesians 4

¹I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴*There is one body and one Spirit*, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

⁸Therefore He says:

*“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.”*

⁹(Now this, *“He ascended”*—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

¹⁷This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

²⁰But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²²that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵Therefore, putting away lying, *“Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,”* for we are members of one another. ²⁶*“Be angry, and do not sin”*: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷nor give place to the devil. ²⁸Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³²And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Confession: I will do my part to be equipped to do the work of the ministry. I will minister along side other believers as we minister in our giftings and callings. I will see the Body of Christ grow and the Church move forward. I will be cooperative, teachable, and supportive. My desire is to conduct myself in such a manner that will glorify the Lord Jesus. I will act maturely and responsibly. I will be careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit in my speech.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 2 – My Shepherd

“God will one day hold us each accountable for all the things He created for us to enjoy, but we refused to do so.” Rabbanic Saying

Overview: David’s 23rd Psalm is familiar to most people because it is so often quoted and read at funerals. Because of this, the chapter sometimes seems to take on a “sad” tone and it seems so *final*. However, at a closer look, one will certainly determine that this is a Psalm of power, life, and promise! David’s intent in this chapter is to express his trust and peaceful confidence in God. This is not a “woe is me” message. This is a declaration of the goodness and the faithfulness of God and how He empowers, protects, and provides for His children. There is no way you will feel defeated or weary as you read through each verse. This chapter lets you know that even in the face of death, Jesus will walk you *through* it all! Verse 5 of the chapter says that He even prepares a glorious table just for His children in the very *face* of the enemy.

Memory verse: 6 – *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name’s sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You *are* with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

Confession: I will not ever want for anything because I have everything I need through Him. I will not fear because He is with me in every situation. The devil will not win in my

life because Jesus made a public spectacle of him and took away his power through the work of the Cross (Colossians 2:15).

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 3 – Why me?

“Blessed be God’s voice for it is true, and falsehoods have to cease before it!”

Thomas Carlyle

Overview: James, the brother of Jesus, is believed to be the author of the New Testament book of James. He encourages his readers to demonstrate the validity of their experiences with Christ by doing what Christians are suppose to do - live godly. Chapter one of James deals with trials and temptation and how a believer is to respond. The writer assures us that God can and will do a work in us during these times that will make us stronger and mature in Him. If, however, we do not respond properly to temptation and trials, we can “give birth” to sin in our lives. The remainder of the chapter encourages self-examination so that we are not deceived into believing we are something that we aren’t. Finally, James strongly implies that believers live and “do” the Word, not just hear the Word with no change in our lives.

Memory verse: 2 – 3 *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

James 1

¹James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:
Greetings.

²My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸*he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, ¹⁰but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. ¹¹For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

¹²Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no

variation or shadow of turning. ¹⁸Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

¹⁹So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

²¹Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. ²⁷Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Confession: I will "count it all joy" (remain in calm delight) when trials come my way. I know God will show me how to remain faithful and I will be approved (v.12). I will develop in maturity and my faith will increase during times of trial. I will do what God's Word says, not just read it. I will examine my own heart and I will not be deceived by the enemy.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 4 – Where It All Went Wrong

“Restlessness and impatience change nothing except our peace and joy. Peace does not dwell in outward things, but in the heart prepared to wait trustfully and quietly on Him Who has all things safely in His hands.” Elisabeth Elliot

Overview: Jewish tradition lists Moses as the author of the first five books of the Bible including Genesis. Jesus said, “If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me” (John 5:46). Genesis 3 records the fall of man. Two truths are made very apparent: (1) God is a personal and redemptive God, and (2) man is sinful and was/is in desperate need of a Savior. One will never totally understand the Bible until he or she fully grasps hold of these two truths. Satan, the deceiver, the enemy, is introduced in this chapter. We see him as cunning, tricky, and one who maneuvers with patience and purpose. As he conversed with Eve in Adam’s absence, a choice was made that impacted all of mankind. Still, in His love and faithfulness, God covered the sin of man and made a way to restore mankind back to Himself.

Memory verse: 1 – *Now the serpent was more cunning (crafty and smooth) than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made...*

Genesis 3

¹Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

⁸And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

⁹Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?”

¹⁰So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

¹¹And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

¹²Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

¹³And the Lord God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴So the Lord God said to the serpent:

"Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel."

¹⁶To the woman He said:

"I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;
In pain you shall bring forth children;
Your desire *shall be* for your husband,
And he shall rule over you."

¹⁷Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

"Cursed *is* the ground for your sake;
In toil you shall eat *of* it
All the days of your life.

¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
And you shall eat the herb of the field.

¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
For dust you *are*,
And to dust you shall return."

²⁰And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

²¹Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

²²Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— ²³therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Confession: I will be aware of the enemy's voice in my life. I will know the Word concerning him and I will not allow him to have influence in my hearing. I understand that he is defeated and has no power over me unless I grant him power.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 5 – Be a Doer

“The soul hardly ever realizes it, but whether he is a believer or not, his loneliness is really a homesickness for God.” Hurbert van Zeller

Overview: First Peter was authored by the Apostle Peter as he addresses Christians living in various parts of Asia Minor who are suffering rejection in the world because of their obedience to Christ. We see Peter constantly reminding them of their heavenly inheritance throughout the book. I Peter 2 is packed with Peter’s exhortations to live godly, obedient lives and to understand who we are in Christ. Jesus is the Cornerstone and we are chosen by Him to proclaim the Gospel of the Cross. We proclaim that Gospel not only in word, but in action. Peter speaks of submission to authority, honor, and following the example of Christ before others.

Memory verse: 9 – *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

1 Peter 2

¹Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, ²as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

⁴Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, ⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

⁶Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion

A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,

And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

⁷Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient,

“The stone which the builders rejected

Has become the chief cornerstone,”

⁸and

“A stone of stumbling

And a rock of offense.”

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

⁹But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

¹¹Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹²having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they

speaking against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

¹³Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—¹⁶as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. ¹⁷Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

¹⁸Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. ¹⁹For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. ²¹For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

²² *"Who committed no sin,*

Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

²³who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Confession: I have tasted and seen that the Lord is good! He is my chief Cornerstone. I have been chosen by Him and I am of a royal priesthood. I will proclaim His goodness. I will follow Him as my example, do good to others, and love my brothers. I will have a reverential fear of the Lord.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 6 – When I’m in Trouble

**“Fretting springs from a determination to get our own way.”
Oswald Chambers**

Overview: The idea behind Psalm 46 is that no matter what happens in a believer’s life, the Lord’s people are happy and secure. This Psalm is often called The Song of Holy Confidence because of the great confidence the writer had in the Lord God no matter the circumstances he faced. The psalmist magnifies God as the believers’ sure Defense at all times. He explains that God’s presence makes us secure from all our enemies. According to this Psalm, God is our “very present help (aid) in trouble.” This means a help that has been found to be a reliable stronghold in the past so that any future challenge or problem is no reason to fear.

Memory verse: 10 – *Be still and know (see) that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!*

Psalm 46

- 1 God *is* our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
- 3 *Though* its waters roar *and* be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its swelling.
Selah (*Selah is a Hebrew word that stresses the importance or reality of what was just said. The idea is to ‘rest and think on these things.’*)
- 4 *There is* a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God,
The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the Most High.
- 5 God *is* in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;
God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.
- 6 The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved;
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
- 7 The Lord of hosts *is* with us;
The God of Jacob *is* our refuge.
Selah
- 8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
Who has made desolations in the earth.
- 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two;
He burns the chariot in the fire.
- 10 Be still, and know that I *am* God;

I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!

¹¹ The Lord of hosts *is* with us; The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*

Confession: God, You are my shelter and security. You give me aid in times of distress and anguish. When things are tight, You are faithful and I do not have to be afraid. You, Lord, are not moved, so I will not be moved no matter what comes my way. I remember Your works and I know You will not fail me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 7 – Bring on the Fruit

“Language is the apparel in which your thoughts parade before the public.”
George Crane

Overview: The words of Jesus recorded in John 15 are some of the most powerful and strong instructions given to the disciples of Jesus, current believers included. In this chapter, John, called “the beloved disciple,” writes of Jesus’ discussion of the union of Himself with His followers by the parable of a vine and its branches. He encourages His followers to mutual love; He calls His followers His friends, and He promises to lay down His life for us. In this chapter, Jesus tells us to bear fruit even in the face of opposition. He also assures us of the promise of the Holy Spirit; the Spirit will be the Comforter.

Memory verse: 16 – *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give to you.*

John 15

¹“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵“I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

⁹“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. ¹²This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

¹⁴You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another.

¹⁸“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²²If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘*They hated Me without a cause.*’

²⁶“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Confession: You will remain in a close relationship with me as I remain in a close relationship with You. I know I can do nothing without you. My life will bear fruit! I will produce disciples as I become more like you. I can do all things as I remain in You.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 8 – Under the Shadow

“You can live opposite of what you profess, but can you live opposite of what you believe?” Dallas Willard

Overview: Because the psalmist was convinced that there was security in trusting in God, he encouraged himself that he would be delivered from the various attacks of the wicked. He knew that the Lord had appointed His angels over him to protect him. The key to releasing the promises found in this passage is located in verses 9 and 10. When a believer makes the Lord God his refuge, his hiding place by trusting Him, he enters into a sheltered place of promise. The words of this psalm should be spoken over your life on a daily basis. It will build assurance that, no matter what you face, the Lord can be trusted as a safe dwelling place. We must find ourselves resting in Him and set our love on Him (v. 14). He promises to be with us and deliver us.

Memory verse: 9-10 – *Because you have made the Lord, Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;*

Psalm 91

- 1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say of the Lord, “*He is* my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust.”
- 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.
- 4 He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth *shall be your* shield and buckler.
- 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow *that* flies by day,
- 6 Nor of the pestilence *that* walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction *that* lays waste at noonday.
- 7 A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.
- 8 Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.
- 9 Because you have made the Lord, *who is* my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place,
- 10 No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

11 For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.
12 In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.
13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.
14 “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him on high, because he has known My name.
15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I *will be* with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
16 With long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.”

Confession: I will remain in Your secret place and You will overshadow me with protection. I will not be afraid of sickness, or the night, or the enemy. You have given angels an assignment over me. You will keep me. I will set my heart on You and You will answer me, be with me in trouble, and honor me. I will love you all my days!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 9 – Opened Windows

**“True repentance is to cease from sin.”
St. Ambrose**

Overview: Malachi was one of the prophets of the Old Testament. He is credited with the writing of the book which bears his name. The book of Malachi deals with the fallen state of the nation of Israel as God rightfully accuses Israel of misconduct and evil. Even the priests were misleading the people in many ways such as in the area of tithes and offerings. Their own wrongdoing was bleeding down to the people, causing the entire nation to be guilty of robbing God. The name Malachi means, “messenger of Jehovah” and that is exactly what Malachi does – he brings a warning to a people who had seen the faithfulness of God and knew better than to fall into such a sinful state. Malachi chapter 3 still applies today in that we are to be faithful in the area of stewardship so that God may respond on our behalf (v. 11).

Memory verse: 10 – *Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”*

Malachi 3

- 1 “Behold, I send My messenger,
And he will prepare the way before Me.
And the Lord, whom you seek,
Will suddenly come to His temple,
Even the Messenger of the covenant,
In whom you delight.
Behold, He is coming,”
Says the Lord of hosts.
- 2 “But who can endure the day of His coming?
And who can stand when He appears?
For He *is* like a refiner’s fire
And like launderers’ soap.
- 3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver;
He will purify the sons of Levi,
And purge them as gold and silver,
That they may offer to the Lord
An offering in righteousness.
- 4 “Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem
Will be pleasant to the Lord,
As in the days of old,
As in former years.

- 5 And I will come near you for judgment;
I will be a swift witness
Against sorcerers,
Against adulterers,
Against perjurers,
Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans,
And against those who turn away an alien—
Because they do not fear Me,”
Says the Lord of hosts.
- 6 “For I *am* the Lord, I do not change;
Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.
- 7 Yet from the days of your fathers
You have gone away from My ordinances
And have not kept *them*.
Return to Me, and I will return to you,”
Says the Lord of hosts.
“But you said,
‘In what way shall we return?’
- 8 “Will a man rob God?
Yet you have robbed Me!
But you say,
‘In what way have we robbed You?’
In tithes and offerings.
- 9 You are cursed with a curse,
For you have robbed Me,
Even this whole nation.
- 10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,”
Says the Lord of hosts,
“If I will not open for you the windows of heaven
And pour out for you *such* blessing
That *there will not be room enough to receive it*.
- 11 “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,
Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,”
Says the Lord of hosts;
- 12 And all nations will call you blessed,
For you will be a delightful land,”
Says the Lord of hosts.
- 13 “Your words have been harsh against Me,”
Says the Lord,
“Yet you say,
‘What have we spoken against You?’
- 14 You have said,
‘It is useless to serve God;

What profit *is it* that we have kept His ordinance,
And that we have walked as mourners
Before the Lord of hosts?

15 So now we call the proud blessed,
For those who do wickedness are raised up;
They even tempt God and go free.”

16 Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another,
And the Lord listened and heard *them*;
So a book of remembrance was written before Him
For those who fear the Lord
And who meditate on His name.

17 “They shall be Mine,” says the Lord of hosts,
“On the day that I make them My jewels.
And I will spare them
As a man spares his own son who serves him.”

18 Then you shall again discern
Between the righteous and the wicked,
Between one who serves God
And one who does not serve Him.

Confession: I will not be guilty of robbing the Lord in my tithes and offerings. I know God is faithful to His Word and He cannot lie. As I give, He will give back to me far more than I could imagine. I will be obedient in my giving and trust Him to supply my need. I will obey Him and do my part!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 10 – Jesus Died, the Angels Sat, I’m to Go!

“It’s not what you look at that matters; it’s what you see.”

Henry David Thoreau

Overview – The book of Matthew is believed to be authored by Matthew, the apostle and former tax collector. Other than his name and occupation, little is known about him. The entire Gospel stresses that Jesus is Immanuel – God-With-Us. Because God is with us, Matthew’s Gospel calls for complete obedience in our personal and corporate lives. Chapter 28 of Matthew is the concluding chapter of the book. It records the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and closes with the last words of Jesus spoken on the earth! One would certainly pay very close attention to the final words of an individual as he/she leaves this world and the words of Jesus *must* be so considered! We see into the heart of Jesus as He reveals what was important to communicate to His followers.

Memory verse: 19-20 – *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.*

Matthew 28

¹Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ²And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. ³His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*.

⁵But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”

⁸So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

⁹And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, **“Rejoice!”** So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, **“Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”**

¹¹Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. ¹²When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’ ¹⁴And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you

secure.” ¹⁵So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

¹⁶Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. ¹⁷When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Confession: I believe I walk in the authority of Jesus. Because Jesus had authority, I too have authority. I will honor and obey the command of Jesus to go and make disciples of all people. Making disciples was important to Jesus, so it is important to me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 11 – Moving Forward

“Courage does not always roar. Sometimes it is a quiet voice at the end of the day, saying, ‘I will try again tomorrow.’” Unknown

Overview: The Apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians during his first Roman imprisonment, about A.D. 61. Paul established the church at Philippi during his first missionary journey and maintained a close relationship with the church throughout his life. In his writing, Paul encouraged the church to live in a spirit of unity and steadfastness. Keep in mind, *Paul is in prison* while writing this letter and he charges the church to “rejoice in the Lord” (3:1). In Philippians 3, Paul goes on to express that knowing Christ is greater than any experience or achievement of his life. He speaks of pressing on to know Him more, moving forward in fulfilling the call of God on his life, and his citizenship in heaven. Oh, that we too would be able to declare these same things with such passion, disregarding our present circumstances, whatever they may be!

Memory verse: 10 – *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,*

Philippians 3

¹Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is* not tedious, but for you *it is* safe.

²Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! ³For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. ¹⁶Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

¹⁷Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. ¹⁸For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. ²⁰For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Confession: The most valuable thing to me in the world is my relationship with Jesus Christ. Because this is so important to me, I will rejoice, if for no other reason, than because I know Him personally! I will continue to pursue Him and I will keep my mind fixed on Him. I will continue to press forward to the things that are ahead for me in Him. I love Him!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 12 – Feed on His Faithfulness

“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.” Pericles

Overview: Psalm 37 is an alphabetic psalm (acrostic) where each pair of lines begins with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The psalm is written to men unlike most of the psalms which are written to God. In this particular psalm David contrasts the life-style of the unbeliever (the wicked) with those who are righteous in Christ and are forgiven. He reminds us that it may *seem like* the wicked always prosper and always progress, but in the end, it is the righteous who the Lord blesses and advances. The lost man is often deceived into believing he can be successful without a relationship with God. This, however, is a deadly falsehood for it is the upright who will prosper in the days of famine (v. 19).

Memory verse: 23 – *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way.*

Psalm 37

- 1 Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
- 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
- 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
- 4 Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
- 5 Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring *it* to pass.
- 6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.
- 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
- 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret—*it* only *causes* harm.
- 9 For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the LORD,
They shall inherit the earth.
- 10 For yet a little while and the wicked *shall be no more*;

Indeed, you will look carefully for his place,
But it *shall be no more*.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

12 The wicked plots against the just,
And gnashes at him with his teeth.

13 The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are of upright conduct.

15 Their sword shall enter their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man has
Is better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the LORD upholds the righteous.

18 The LORD knows the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish;
And the enemies of the LORD,
Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish.
Into smoke they shall vanish away.

21 The wicked borrows and does not repay,
But the righteous shows mercy and gives.

22 For *those* blessed by Him shall inherit the earth,
But *those* cursed by Him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD,
And He delights in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the LORD upholds *him with* His hand.

25 I have been young, and *now* am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.

26 *He is* ever merciful, and lends;
And his descendants *are* blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.

28 For the LORD loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,

But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell in it forever.
30 The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom,
And his tongue talks of justice.
31 The law of his God *is* in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.
32 The wicked watches the righteous,
And seeks to slay him.
33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.
34 Wait on the LORD,
And keep His way,
And He shall exalt you to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, you shall see *it*.
35 I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a native green tree.
36 Yet he passed away, and behold, he *was* no *more*;
Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.
37 Mark the blameless *man*, and observe the upright;
For the future of *that* man *is* peace.
38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together;
The future of the wicked shall be cut off.
39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* from the LORD;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
40 And the LORD shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them,
Because they trust in Him.

Confession: I will trust in the Lord and do good. I will delight myself in the Lord and He will give me the desires of my heart. I will commit my way to the Lord and I will trust Him. I will rest in the Lord and wait patiently on Him. I will not worry when I see others prosper. I will continue to walk with the Lord, knowing that He will lift me up. I will keep the Lord's ways and He will exalt me to inherit the land. He is my strength in the time of trouble.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 13 – Faith Still Moves God

“You would think that everyone would leap at the chance to get rid of sin. Not so. They want relief, not a cure.” Dr. Henry Brandt

Overview: Hebrews 11 is often referred to as “The Faith Chapter” or “The Hall of Faith” because it lists many different individuals who expressed and displayed faith in God during trying times in their lives. The author’s purpose in this section of his letter is to encourage his readers to emulate these heroes and heroines of faith, who on the basis of what they knew about God and His promises had the courage to move out into the unknown, with their hearts set upon, and their lives controlled by, a great unseen reality. This list of heroes is meant to provide the readers with strength and encouragement in their own difficult circumstances. According to this chapter, the key to unlocking the gate to effective Christian existence is to move in and be found in the motivating power of faith!

Memory verse: 6 – *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Hebrews 11

¹Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.


³By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

⁴By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

⁵By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, *“and was not found, because God had taken him”*; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

⁷By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

¹¹By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she  bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had

promised. ¹²Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born *as many* as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

¹³These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸of whom it was said, "*In Isaac your seed shall be called*," ¹⁹concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

²⁰By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

²¹By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

²²By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

²³By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

²⁴By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

²⁷By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. ²⁸By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

²⁹By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, *whereas* the Egyptians, attempting *to do so*, were drowned.

³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

³²And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute,

afflicted, tormented—³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Confession: I know that God can be trusted. I know that God can be believed. I put my faith in Him because He is trustworthy. Because I trust Him, my faith will be active in my obedience. I will obey God because I trust Him. I have faith that He is Who He says He is and He can do what He says He can do. I will please Him because I will walk by faith.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 14 – The Beginning

“Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.” Sally Koch

Overview: The word *Genesis* comes from the Greek *genesis*, meaning “birth, origin.” The Hebrews called the book by its first word, *ber’shith*, “in the beginning.” Genesis, of course, is about beginnings – specifically the beginning of the earth and the beginning of the people of God. In the first chapter of Genesis, Moses records the eight acts of creation including the heavens and the earth, vegetation, man, and more! This chapter is as profound as it is simple. It focuses on the way God ordered the earth. The purpose of chapter one is three fold. First, it teaches essential facts about how God ordered the world so that humans might understand their role in creation. Second, it leads us to praise God as the all-powerful Creator. And third, it proves God as superior over any force or created elements, regardless of their splendor.

Memory verse: 26 – *Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

Genesis 1

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁶Then God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” ⁷Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁹Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry *land* appear”; and it was so. ¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good.

¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, *and* the fruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. ¹²And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. ¹³So the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. ¹⁶Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. *He made* the stars also. ¹⁷God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good. ¹⁹So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.” ²¹So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good. ²²And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, *each* according to its kind”; and it was so. ²⁵And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

²⁹And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. ³⁰Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for food”; and it was so. ³¹Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Confession: I am created in the Image of the Father. I have been given dominion on the earth and I will walk in that dominion. I will take authority over my situations and I will speak the Word of God over my life. I am victorious in Jesus and I will not walk in defeat. I am more than a conqueror!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

WEEK 15 – Trust...the Key to God's Heart

“We do not remember days, we remember moments.”

Cesare Pavese

Overview: Romans chapters 6, 7, and 8 are some of the most powerful and important chapters in the entire Bible. If every believer could grasp the truths in these chapters, their life would never be the same! This week's reading focuses specifically on chapter 8, probably the most potent of the three chapters mentioned because it declares the believer as *free* in Jesus Christ. Paul begins a description of life in the Holy Spirit. He first proclaims that the Spirit assures death to sin and makes holiness possible. Then, he contrasts the law and grace and encourages his readers to refrain from living in the flesh, being controlled by a carnal mind. He finalizes the chapter by explaining the work and cooperation of the Holy Spirit in our prayer lives.

Memory verse: 28 – *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Romans 8

¹There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, ²who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. ¹⁰And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

¹²Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then

heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. ³⁴Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written:

*“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

³⁷Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Confession: I no longer live in condemnation because I am now in Christ Jesus. I will walk according to the Spirit and not according to what my flesh may desire. I have the mind of Christ, not a carnal (fleshly; worldly) mind. I will be led by the Spirit of God and I

will follow Him. I am adopted by God the Father - I believe the Holy Spirit will lead, guide, and help me in all that I do.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 16 – How to Prosper

**“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Overview: In Hebrew, the book of Psalms is called *Tehillim*, “Songs of Praise,” or in fuller form, *Sefer Tehillim*, “Book of Psalms.” In these models of prayer and praise, Israel shaped appropriate and effective ways of speaking to God. Through the psalms, Israel expressed painful experiences of loss and turmoil, and exciting experiences of rescue and blessing. Psalm 1 introduces the book of Psalms and encourages meditation in this book as “the Law of the Lord.” The psalm describes who will be blessed and explains that person’s character and fate. It then pronounces the fate of “the wicked,” and closes with a statement that reveals God’s role in determining man’s fate.

Memory verse: 3 – *He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.*

Psalm 1

- 1 Blessed *is* the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
- 2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
- 3 He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.
- 4 The ungodly *are* not so,
But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.
- 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Confession: I will not walk, stand, or sit in the ways of the sinful and ungodly. In doing this, I will be blessed (happy)! I will meditate on the Word of God all the time. I am planted in Him and I will bear fruit, and because I am planted in Him, everything I do will prosper.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 17 – When He Died, I Died

“Christianity can never come to us as a bargain; it can never be had at a wholesale price. We must be willing to pay the full price of surrender and trust.” William L. Krutza, *The Alliance Witness*

Overview: In his letter called Galatians, Paul writes to a cluster of churches in a region of Asia Minor called Galatia. Christians in that area were being held to the Law by legalists in the church called Judaizers. They suggested that, in addition to having a relationship with Jesus Christ based on faith in Him, the Law must be kept as well. They did not deny that faith in Jesus was necessary, but they insisted that it was inadequate. Chapter 2 of Galatians deals specifically with the bondage of the Law over the freedom of the Gospel. The reader can tell that Paul is passionate about the liberty found in Christ and he makes it his mission to make sure this truth is protected and not coupled with any other “gospel.”

Memory verse: 20 – *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

Galatians 2

¹Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with *me*. ²And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. ³Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

⁶But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed *to be something* added nothing to me. ⁷But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as *the gospel* for the circumcised was to Peter ⁸(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), ⁹and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that *we should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. ¹⁰*They desired* only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

¹¹Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ¹²for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the

Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. ¹³And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

¹⁴But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? ¹⁵We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, ¹⁶knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

¹⁷"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. ¹⁹For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Confession: I believe in the complete work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. I believe He died and rose again on the third day. I am thankful for His sacrifice - my sins are forgiven. I believe there is nothing else to be added to this Gospel. Jesus is the only way to heaven - there is no other.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 18 – The Light of the World

“Of all the systems of morality, ancient and modern, which have come under my observation, none appear so pure to me as that of Jesus.” Thomas Jefferson

Overview: The opening chapter of the book of John contains some important foundational truths that must be understood and realized by every believer. This chapter links Jesus as the Word made flesh. The writer introduces John the Baptist as the forerunner of Jesus, the one who declared, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord” and the one who baptized many who were waiting on the Messiah to come. John records John’s words that Jesus would forgive sin and would baptize with the Holy Spirit. The chapter concludes with Jesus calling His first disciples from among those who also followed John the Baptist.

Memory verse: 12 – *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*

John 1

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. ⁹That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’”

¹⁶And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

¹⁹Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No."

²²Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

²³He said: "I am

'The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Make straight the way of the LORD,'"

as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ²⁷It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

²⁸These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

²⁹The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' ³¹I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

³²And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

³⁵Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

³⁷The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?"

They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

³⁹He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴²And he brought him to Jesus.

Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).

⁴³The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

⁴⁶And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

⁴⁸Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

⁴⁹Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

⁵⁰Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Confession: Jesus is the Word of God and the Light of the world. He is life and because I am in Him, I can experience His life and light. Because I am born again He gives me the authority and the right to become His child. I love Him and celebrate the fact that I am His child!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 19 – Words to Live By

“Christ is the Bread for men’s souls. In Him the Church has enough to feed the whole world.” Ian Maclaren

Overview: Solomon, king of Israel, was the son of King David and Bathsheba. He reigned for forty years, taking the throne at about twenty years old. Solomon wrote more books of the Bible than any other Old Testament writer except Moses. He authored most of Proverbs which can easily be defined as “wisdom language.” The purpose of the book is to impart wisdom to the reader often by contrasting two very vivid ideas. For example, wisdom versus folly, good versus evil, life versus death, prosperity versus poverty, honor versus dishonor, truth versus falsehood, prudence versus rashness, and industry versus indolence. In Proverbs 18, the author speaks of the words we say, the power of those words, and how our words affect others. He also deals with laziness, a man’s gifts, and how to deal with one who is offended.

Memory verse: 21 – *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

Proverbs 18

- 1 A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire;
He rages against all wise judgment.
- 2 A fool has no delight in understanding,
But in expressing his own heart.
- 3 When the wicked comes, contempt comes also;
And with dishonor *comes* reproach.
- 4 The words of a man’s mouth *are* deep waters;
The wellspring of wisdom *is* a flowing brook.
- 5 *It is* not good to show partiality to the wicked,
Or to overthrow the righteous in judgment.
- 6 A fool’s lips enter into contention,
And his mouth calls for blows.
- 7 A fool’s mouth *is* his destruction,
And his lips *are* the snare of his soul.
- 8 The words of a talebearer *are* like tasty trifles,
And they go down into the inmost body.
- 9 He who is slothful in his work
Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.
- 10 The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower;
The righteous run to it and are safe.

- 11 The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city,
And like a high wall in his own esteem.
- 12 Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty,
And before honor *is* humility.
- 13 He who answers a matter before he hears *it*,
It *is* folly and shame to him.
- 14 The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness,
But who can bear a broken spirit?
- 15 The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge,
And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
- 16 A man's gift makes room for him,
And brings him before great men.
- 17 The first *one* to plead his cause *seems* right,
Until his neighbor comes and examines him.
- 18 Casting lots causes contentions to cease,
And keeps the mighty apart.
- 19 A brother offended *is harder to win* than a strong city,
And contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.
- 20 A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth;
From the produce of his lips he shall be filled.
- 21 Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.
- 22 *He who* finds a wife finds a good *thing*,
And obtains favor from the LORD.
- 23 The poor *man* uses entreaties,
But the rich answers roughly.
- 24 A man *who has* friends must himself be friendly,
But there is a friend *who* sticks closer than a brother.

Confession: I realize there is power in my words. I choose to speak *life* rather than death over myself, my family and my friends. My tongue will be a blessing. I yield it to the Lord. I will closely guard my words!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 20 – The Day That Changed Everything

“Have courage for the great sorrows in life, and patience for the small ones. And when you have laboriously accomplished your daily tasks, go to sleep in peace, God is awake.” Victor Hugo

Overview: The book of Acts does not specifically mention an author, but many indications point to Luke. It appears to be a continuation of the Gospel of Luke and records the acts of the early believers, the early church, and what Jesus continues to do and teach through the Holy Spirit. We see the great experience of the coming of the Holy Spirit, life under the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit, and the power of the Holy Spirit in the church. Acts 2 documents the initial coming of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus in John 14:16. What a life-changing event this was for the early believers! Christians today can have this same experience as we pray to receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit in our own lives (Matt. 7:11).

Memory verse: 17 – *And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.*

Acts 2

¹When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. ⁷Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? ⁸And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” ¹²So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”

¹³Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my

words. ¹⁵For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. ¹⁶But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ *'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.*

¹⁸ *And on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
And they shall prophesy.*

¹⁹ *I will show wonders in heaven above
And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.*

²⁰ *The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.*

²¹ *And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.'*

²²"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning Him:

*'I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.*

²⁶ *Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.*

²⁷ *For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

²⁸ *You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'*

²⁹"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having

received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

‘The LORD said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

³⁵*Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”’*

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. ⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Confession: I will be filled with power to be a witness for Jesus Christ when I am filled with the Holy Spirit. I will declare the truths of God as Peter did and I will see the church grow and progress. His power will be in me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 21 – The Power of Sin

Gerald Sittser wrote that loss was *“like a closed road that forces us to turn around and find another way to our destination. Who knows what we will discover along the way.”*

Overview: The first verse of the book of Isaiah gives proof of the author of this book, Isaiah, the son of Amoz. Isaiah was a prophet who prophesied at the most crucial period in the history of Judah and Israel which made up the northern and the southern kingdoms. Israel had fallen to pagan worship. Judah plummeted into moral and spiritual decay. Isaiah writes to pronounce God's displeasure with the sin of Judah, Israel, and the other surrounding areas. Isaiah tries to turn the people from disobedience to obedience so that disaster may be avoided. He also describes a foundation of hope and promise to those who remain faithful to God and His commands. Chapter 59 illustrates how sin separates us from fellowship with God and how repentance from sin can bring us back into a full, healthy relationship with God. Isaiah also shows how God will defend and deliver His people from the enemy's attack.

Memory verse: 19 – *So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.*

Isaiah 59

- ¹ Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened,
That it cannot save;
Nor His ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.
- ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
And your sins have hidden *His* face from you,
So that He will not hear.
- ³ For your hands are defiled with blood,
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have spoken lies,
Your tongue has muttered perversity.
- ⁴ No one calls for justice,
Nor does *any* plead for truth.
They trust in empty words and speak lies;
They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.
- ⁵ They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web;

He who eats of their eggs dies,
And *from* that which is crushed a viper breaks out.

6 Their webs will not become garments,
Nor will they cover themselves with their works;
Their works *are* works of iniquity,
And the act of violence *is* in their hands.

7 Their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed innocent blood;
Their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity;
Wasting and destruction *are* in their paths.

8 The way of peace they have not known,
And *there is* no justice in their ways;
They have made themselves crooked paths;
Whoever takes that way shall not know peace.

9 Therefore justice is far from us,
Nor does righteousness overtake us;
We look for light, but there is darkness!
For brightness, *but* we walk in blackness!

10 We grope for the wall like the blind,
And we grope as if *we had* no eyes;
We stumble at noonday as at twilight;
We are as dead *men* in desolate places.

11 We all growl like bears,
And moan sadly like doves;
We look for justice, but *there is* none;
For salvation, *but* it is far from us.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You,
And our sins testify against us;
For our transgressions *are* with us,
And *as for* our iniquities, we know them:

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD,
And departing from our God,
Speaking oppression and revolt,
Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

14 Justice is turned back,
And righteousness stands afar off;
For truth is fallen in the street,
And equity cannot enter.

15 So truth fails,
And he *who* departs from evil makes himself a prey.
Then the LORD saw *it*, and it displeased Him
That *there was* no justice.

16 He saw that *there was* no man,
And wondered that *there was* no intercessor;
Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;

And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And a helmet of salvation on His head;
He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.

18 According to *their* deeds, accordingly He will repay,
Fury to His adversaries,
Recompense to His enemies;
The coastlands He will fully repay.

19 So shall they fear
The name of the LORD from the west,
And His glory from the rising of the sun;
When the enemy comes in like a flood,
The Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him.

20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion,
And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,"
Says the LORD.

21 "As for Me," says the LORD, "this *is* My covenant with them: My Spirit who *is* upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the LORD, "from this time and forevermore."

Confession: I will keep my heart clean before the Lord so that my fellowship with Him is not interrupted. His Spirit is upon me and His Words are in my mouth. I will walk in the covenant we share and I will trust the Lord to deal with my enemies.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 22 – Jesus Makes Them All Mad

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

Overview: If asked who the major theologians of the New Testament are, one would probably answer Jesus, John, and Paul. Few would think to mention Luke; and yet his two-volume work, Luke-Acts, amounts to approximately one fourth of the entire New Testament! Luke was a physician and an evangelist and his writings are considered historical in nature. Luke’s intention in his writing of the two books stems from his concern to show how Gentiles figure in God’s plan of salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures and as seen in the missionary outreach of the apostles. In the seventh chapter of Luke, we see Jesus healing a Centurion’s servant, raising the son of a widow from the dead, assuring John the Baptist that He is, in fact, the promised Messiah and finally, forgiving a sinful woman. This chapter is power-packed with the miraculous activity of Jesus and the confirmation of His ministry in progress.

Memory verse: 47 – *Therefore I say unto you, her sins which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.*

Luke 7

¹Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. ²And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. ³So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. ⁴And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ⁵“for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”

⁶Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. ⁷Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does *it*.”

⁹When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, “**I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!**” ¹⁰And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

¹¹Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. ¹²And when He came near the gate of

the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, *“Do not weep.”* ¹⁴Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, *“Young man, I say to you, arise.”* ¹⁵So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.

¹⁶Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen up among us”; and, “God has visited His people.” ¹⁷And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

¹⁸Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. ¹⁹And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

²⁰When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” ²¹And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²²Jesus answered and said to them, *“Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.”* ²³And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me.”

²⁴When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: *“What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. ²⁶But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written:*

*‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.’*

²⁸*For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”*

²⁹And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

³¹And the Lord said, *“To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:*

*‘We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;
We mourned to you,
And you did not weep.’*

³³For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵But wisdom is justified by all her children."

³⁶Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

⁴⁰And Jesus answered and said to him, "*Simon, I have something to say to you.*"

So he said, "Teacher, say it."

⁴¹"*There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.* ⁴²*And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?*"

⁴³Simon answered and said, "I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more."

And He said to him, "*You have rightly judged.*" ⁴⁴Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "*Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head.* ⁴⁵*You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.* ⁴⁶*You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.* ⁴⁷*Therefore I say to you, her sins, *which are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.*"

⁴⁸Then He said to her, "*Your sins are forgiven.*"

⁴⁹And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰Then He said to the woman, "*Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.*"

Confession: I know that Jesus can overcome anything, even death. I know there is no one or nothing greater than Him. My faith in Him will increase as I hear and meditate on His Word. Today, I will experience His life - I will have great faith.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 23 – I'm Thirsty

“It is a wealthy person, indeed, who calculates riches not in gold, but in friends.”

Jim Stovall

Overview: Psalm 42 and 43 were probably originally one psalm. This is evident by the repeated refrain (42:6, 11; 43:5; also 42:3b, 10b; and 42:9; 43:2), by the structure of the psalm which is incomplete without Psalm 43, and because of the fact that Psalm 43 has no title. In Psalm 42, the writer expresses his desire to enter into worship to God, but he is apparently inhibited in some manner. There seems to be a struggle within himself and he engages his soul in a dialogue. The writer seems alone and alienated from God. The writer eventually exercises his memory of the works of God and is able to encourage himself to, “hope in God” and to praise Him knowing that future events are based on the character of God Himself.

Memory verse: 8 – *The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me – a prayer to the God of my life.*

Psalm 42

- ¹ As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.
- ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?
- ³ My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
“Where *is* your God?”
- ⁴ When I remember these *things*,
I pour out my soul within me.
For I used to go with the multitude;
I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.
- ⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And *why* are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him
For the help of His countenance.
- ⁶ O my God, my soul is cast down within me;
Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan,
And from the heights of Hermon,

From the Hill Mizar.

- 7 Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls;
All Your waves and billows have gone over me.
- 8 The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime,
And in the night His song *shall be* with me—
A prayer to the God of my life.
- 9 I will say to God my Rock,
“Why have You forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”
- 10 As with a breaking of my bones,
My enemies reproach me,
While they say to me all day long,
“Where *is* your God?”
- 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.

Confession: Even when I am down in spirit, I will worship the Lord. I will remember all the times He has been faithful and I will know that He will continue to be faithful. I am hungry to worship Him. I am thirsty to know Him. I know those who hunger and thirst for Him shall be filled.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 24 – Place Me on the Altar

“Life is like riding a bicycle. You won’t fall off unless you stop peddling.”

Claude D. Pepper

Overview: Romans 12 is basically divided into three parts. Paul admonishes, begs, believers to address the issues of worship, not conforming to the world, and the renewing of the mind. Secondly, he speaks of the functions or gifts found within the body of Christ. Lastly, Paul concludes with the command to behave like a Christian is expected to behave. We are instructed to overcome evil with good and to live at peace with all men.

Memory verse: 2 – *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Romans 12

¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

³For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹*Let love be* without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰*Be* kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; ¹¹not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; ¹³distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another. Do

not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*” says the Lord. ²⁰Therefore

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Confession: I will present myself to the Lord as an act of worship. I will renew my mind daily by the Word of God. Nothing shall derail me from His purpose for my life. I will discover my spiritual gift and serve the Lord through my gift. I will seek to serve others and treat others according to the Word of God.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 25 – My Prayers Do Matter

**“Good timber does not grow with ease. The stronger the wind,
the stronger the trees.” Willard Marriott**

Overview: In James 5, the author gives warning to a group of people he calls *rich* and classes them with the non-Christians he sites in James 2:6. Basically, these individuals were enjoying a prosperous and comfortable lifestyle with no regard to the things of God. He warns that their day of judgment is coming when their dishonest gain will not protect them, but rather attack them. By verse seven, James turns his attention to the believer (brethren). He encourages patience and promotes godly Christian conduct toward others. He closes the chapter by giving instructions to those who may become sick. The initiative lies with the sick person in sending for the elders (officers of the church) to come and pray. The effective, fervent prayer of the righteous (a believer) will make much power available in the face of sickness!

Memory verse: 16 – *Confess your trespasses one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

James 5

¹Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you*! ²Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. ⁴Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

⁹Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. ¹¹Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

¹²But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and *your* “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.

¹³Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let

them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. ¹⁷Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

¹⁹Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

Confession: I will wait patiently for you, my Lord. I will persevere and You will be merciful and compassionate. Today, I will pray for my family and friends. If I am attacked with sickness in my body, I will take authority over the sickness, call for the elders of the church to pray for me, and believe God for my complete healing.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 26 – God, Please Take the Wheel

**“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you
take your eyes off the goal.” Henry Ford**

Overview: Proverbs 3 is often referred to as “a proverb to the young.” Certainly it is not exclusively for the young as the principles do apply to people of all ages. The young, however, would benefit greatly in taking these words to heart and allowing them to root deep in the spirit. Throughout the entire passage, we see a command followed by a motivation to obey the command and/or a promise if the command is honored. The writer teaches that wise living and obeying God avoids many consequences that will often shorten our lives. The reader is encouraged to seek, honor, trust, and fear (reverence) the Lord. All these behaviors will have positive and promising outcomes. The proverb concludes by advising the reader in godly conduct toward mankind.

Memory verse: 7-8 – *Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.*

Proverbs 3

- 1 My son, do not forget my law,
But let your heart keep my commands;
- 2 For length of days and long life
And peace they will add to you.
- 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you;
Bind them around your neck,
Write them on the tablet of your heart,
- 4 *And* so find favor and high esteem
In the sight of God and man.
- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
- 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.
- 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
- 8 It will be health to your flesh,
And strength to your bones.
- 9 Honor the LORD with your possessions,
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;
- 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty,
And your vats will overflow with new wine.
- 11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,

- Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects,
Just as a father the son *in whom* he delights.
- 13 Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom,
And the man *who* gains understanding;
14 For her proceeds *are* better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
- 15 She *is* more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
16 Length of days *is* in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
- 17 Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths *are* peace.
18 She *is* a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy *are all* who retain her.
- 19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding He established the heavens;
20 By His knowledge the depths were broken up,
And clouds drop down the dew.
- 21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
22 So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.
- 23 Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
- 25 Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
26 For the LORD will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.
- 27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
When it is in the power of your hand to do so.
28 Do not say to your neighbor,
“Go, and come back,
And tomorrow I will give *it*,”
When *you have* it with you.
- 29 Do not devise evil against your neighbor,
For he dwells by you for safety’s sake.
30 Do not strive with a man without cause,
If he has done you no harm.
- 31 Do not envy the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;
32 For the perverse *person is* an abomination to the LORD,

But His secret counsel *is* with the upright.

³³ The curse of the LORD *is* on the house of the wicked,
But He blesses the home of the just.

³⁴ Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.

³⁵ The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Confession: I will trust in the Lord and not in my own understanding. I know He will direct my steps. I will seek His wisdom above all others. Plus, I will be a giver today. I will honor Him with all my possessions. Everything I own is His! I will pay attention when He corrects me. I know He loves me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 27 – The Old Me Died

**“Forgiveness does not change the past,
but it does enlarge the future.” Paul Boese**

Overview: Paul charges the believer that we are dead to sin and alive to God! This declaration is found in Romans 6. According to this passage, the power of sin in a believer's life is broken! It is up to us as Christians to realize this truth and walk in it. *We do not have to sin.* The grip and control of sin has been destroyed in our lives. What a mighty work of God! We no longer have to fall prey to the call of the enemy. It is within our power to turn and walk away from temptation and walk in the newness of life. Sin and death do not have dominion over Jesus, thus they do not have dominion over us! A careful look at Romans 6 will solidify the fact that we are free from the power of sin.

Memory verse: 11- *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 6

¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ²Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ¹⁷But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves of righteousness for holiness.

²⁰For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death. ²²But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. ²³For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Confession: I know the power of sin has been broken over me. Therefore, I will choose to walk in the newness of life in Christ. I do not have to sin. I will choose to turn from sin and honor God with my life. I am no longer in bondage to sin. I am free!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 28 – Swimming in His Blessings

**“What we are is God’s gift to us.
What we become is our gift to God.” Louis Nizer**

Overview: The book of Deuteronomy given by Moses has been aptly described as the heartbeat of the Old Testament. Consider the influence of the book on Jesus, Paul, and the early New Testament church and one will realize that it is a profoundly significant book in the whole Christian canon of scripture. The book covers about a two-month period of time, just before Moses’ death and Joshua’s leading Israel into Canaan. As the Israelites prepared to enter the Promise Land, Moses called the people together to remind them of the Lord’s faithfulness and to persuade them to be faithful and obedient to God. In Deuteronomy 28, Moses compiled a listing of blessings and cursings during a covenant ceremony on the plains of Moab. The assurance of these curses would be applicable for believers today were it not removed by Jesus Who has “redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us” (Galatians 3:13).

Memory verse: 7 – *The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.*

Deuteronomy 28

¹“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ²And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

³“Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country.

⁴“Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

⁵“Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

⁶“Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

⁷“The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

⁸“The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

⁹“The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the

LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*. ¹⁴So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to* the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

¹⁵“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

¹⁶“Cursed *shall* you *be* in the city, and cursed *shall* you *be* in the country.

¹⁷“Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁸“Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

¹⁹“Cursed *shall* you *be* when you come in, and cursed *shall* you *be* when you go out.

²⁰“The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. ²¹The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. ²²The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³And your heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron. ²⁴The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

²⁵“The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten *them* away. ²⁷The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. ²⁹And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you*.

³⁰“You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. ³¹Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them*. ³²Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* no

strength in your hand. ³³A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. ³⁴So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. ³⁵The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

³⁶"The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone. ³⁷And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

³⁸"You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹You shall plant vineyards and tend *them*, but you shall neither drink *of* the wine nor gather the *grapes*; for the worms shall eat them. ⁴⁰You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity. ⁴²Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

⁴³"The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. ⁴⁴He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

⁴⁵"Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. ⁴⁶And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

⁴⁷"Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, ⁴⁸therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. ⁴⁹The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as *swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. ⁵¹And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

⁵²"They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. ⁵³You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. ⁵⁴The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, ⁵⁵so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. ⁵⁶The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and

her daughter, ⁵⁷her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

⁵⁸“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, ⁵⁹then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. ⁶⁰Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. ⁶²You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. ⁶³And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

⁶⁴“Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. ⁶⁵And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. ⁶⁶Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. ⁶⁷In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

⁶⁸“And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’ And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*.”

Confession: I will diligently obey the voice of the Lord. I believe His favor and blessings rest on me. I am blessed in the city and in the country. I will walk in His blessings. It is the desire of my heart to please Him in all that I do.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 29 – I am Wonderfully Made – WooHoo!

“Ultimately you are doing what you do for one of two reasons: to serve oneself or to serve God.” Unknown

Overview: Psalm 139 is perhaps the most intimate of psalms. It speaks clearly of God's interest in individuals. King David meditates on the omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence of God. He acknowledges that God is with him no matter where he may go. God is with him in darkness. God is with him in light. God is with him at sea. God was with him as He formed him in his mother's womb. God holds David in His right hand (the hand of authority). David acknowledges that God knows him, thinks of him, and has fashioned his days! We too can claim Psalm 139 as our own.

Memory verse: 17-18 – *How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You.*

Psalm 139

- 1 O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*.
- 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off.
- 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 For *there is* not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.
- 5 You have hedged me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.
- 6 *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot *attain* it.
- 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
- 8 If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are there*.
- 9 *If* I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
- 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.
- 11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,”
Even the night shall be light about me;
- 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,

But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light *are* both alike *to You*.

- 13 For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.
- 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And *that* my soul knows very well.
- 15 My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
- 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When *as yet there were* none of them.
- 17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
- 18 *If* I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand;
When I awake, I am still with You.
- 19 Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God!
Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men.
- 20 For they speak against You wickedly;
Your enemies take *Your name* in vain.
- 21 Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?
- 22 I hate them with perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.
- 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
- 24 And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Confession: I know that You are with me. There is no place I can go that You are not there. I am fearfully and wonderfully made and You have a plan and a purpose for my life. I will rest in your care!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 30 – A Seed Must Die to Live

“God is not a cosmic bellboy for whom we can press a button and get things done.” Harry Emerson Fosdick

Overview: John 12 takes place six days before Passover. Jesus is in Bethany at the home of Lazarus. Martha anoints Jesus with a very costly oil while Judas Iscariot questions the wisdom of her service. Jesus sees Martha's heart and commends her act of kindness and worship. Jesus is welcomed into the city by those who had heard of His great act of raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus' very words grace the remainder of the chapter as he teaches His disciples about His coming death on the Cross and His relationship with His Father.

Memory verse: 26 – *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

John 12

¹Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ²There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

⁴But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵“Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

⁷But Jesus said, “**Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.**”

⁹Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

¹²The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

“Hosanna!

‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’

The King of Israel!”

¹⁴Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵ *“Fear not, daughter of Zion;
Behold, your King is coming,
Sitting on a donkey’s colt.”*

¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him.

¹⁷Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ¹⁸For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. ¹⁹The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”

²⁰Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

²²Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

²³But Jesus answered them, saying, *“The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. ²⁴Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

²⁷*“Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify Your name.”*

Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.”

²⁹Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

³⁰Jesus answered and said, *“This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³²And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” ³³This He said, signifying by what death He would die.*

³⁴The people answered Him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, ‘*The Son of Man must be lifted up*’? Who is this Son of Man?”

³⁵Then Jesus said to them, *“A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”* These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

³⁷But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

*“Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”*

³⁹Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ *“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
Lest they should see with their eyes,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.”*

⁴¹These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

⁴²Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

⁴⁴Then Jesus cried out and said, *“He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. ⁴⁵And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. ⁴⁶I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. ⁴⁷And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. ⁴⁹For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”*

Confession: I will be willing to die to myself for Him. I will be willing to follow Him. I will be willing to serve Him. I will be His servant. I want to glorify Him with my life.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 31 – Relax! It's All Under His Feet

“I believe in the sun even if it is not shining. I believe in love even when I am alone. I believe in God even when He is silent.” Unknown

Overview: The book of Ephesians was written to the believers in the city of Ephesus, a principle port on the west coast of Asia Minor, near what is known today as present-day Izmir. Paul had developed a deep relationship with the Ephesians earlier in his ministry and now writes a farewell letter to them from a prison cell in Rome. The letter to the Ephesians discloses the plan of God, His “secret” intention for the church: (1) to form a body of people who would express God’s fullness on the earth, (2) to do this by bringing all people together, Jew and Gentile, in whom God resides, and (3) to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry so that the body of Christ may grow. In Ephesians 1, Paul reminds the Ephesians that they are a blessed people, chosen by God, adopted, and accepted in the Beloved. The Holy Spirit is evident in this passage - given as the Guarantee of our inheritance! Paul finalizes the chapter in a prayer for wisdom for the saints, that God may be revealed to us and that we may realize the greatness of His power, love, and provision.

Memory verse: 4-5 - *...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.*

Ephesians 1

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ¹¹In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being

predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹²that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

¹³In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

¹⁵Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

²²And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Confession: I have been chosen by God and He accepts me unto Himself. I have been adopted by the Father and I am part of a royal family. His great power works in me. I am secure in Him because the Holy Spirit acts as the Seal, the Guarantee, of my inheritance.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 32 – I Want a Merry Heart

“If you are not as close to God as you use to be, who moved?”

Unknown

Overview: Psalm 15 is a chapter marked full of antitheses (direct opposites) between the wise and the foolish. The subject of speech such as a soft answer, the lips of the wise, a word spoken in due season, and the answers from the heart of the righteous are mentioned throughout the passage. The writer also speaks of useful correction and the wisdom in receiving instructions. Other subjects of concentration are the stability of the righteous, the contented mind, the slothful man, the covetous, the impious, the diligent, and the man who fears the Lord. This chapter gives sound, godly guidelines and the results that come if the guidelines are followed. There are warnings as well and consequences listed for those who choose not to observe the counsel of the Lord.

Memory verse: 1 – *A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

Proverbs 15

- ¹ A soft answer turns away wrath,
But a harsh word stirs up anger.
- ² The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,
But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.
- ³ The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.
- ⁴ A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life,
But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
- ⁵ A fool despises his father's instruction,
But he who receives correction is prudent.
- ⁶ *In* the house of the righteous *there is* much treasure,
But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.
- ⁷ The lips of the wise disperse knowledge,
But the heart of the fool *does not do* so.
- ⁸ The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD,
But the prayer of the upright *is* His delight.
- ⁹ The way of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD,
But He loves him who follows righteousness.
- ¹⁰ Harsh discipline *is* for him who forsakes the way,
And he who hates correction will die.

- 11 Hell and Destruction *are* before the LORD;
So how much more the hearts of the sons of men.
- 12 A scoffer does not love one who corrects him,
Nor will he go to the wise.
- 13 A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance,
But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.
- 14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge,
But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.
- 15 All the days of the afflicted *are* evil,
But he who is of a merry heart *has* a continual feast.
- 16 Better *is* a little with the fear of the LORD,
Than great treasure with trouble.
- 17 Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is,
Than a fatted calf with hatred.
- 18 A wrathful man stirs up strife,
But *he who is* slow to anger allays contention.
- 19 The way of the lazy *man is* like a hedge of thorns,
But the way of the upright *is* a highway.
- 20 A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish man despises his mother.
- 21 Folly *is* joy *to him who is* destitute of discernment,
But a man of understanding walks uprightly.
- 22 Without counsel, plans go awry,
But in the multitude of counselors they are established.
- 23 A man has joy by the answer of his mouth,
And a word *spoken* in due season, how good *it is!*
- 24 The way of life *winds* upward for the wise,
That he may turn away from hell below.
- 25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud,
But He will establish the boundary of the widow.
- 26 The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD,
But *the words* of the pure *are* pleasant.
- 27 He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house,
But he who hates bribes will live.
- 28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer,
But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.
- 29 The LORD *is* far from the wicked,
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.
- 30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart,
And a good report makes the bones healthy.
- 31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life

Will abide among the wise.

³² He who disdains instruction despises his own soul,
But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

³³ The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom,
And before honor *is* humility.

Confession: I will speak with words of encouragement and life. My speech will glorify the Lord I will receive correction and instruction. I will follow the ways of the Lord with reverential fear.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 33 – For God...

“Sympathy is no substitute for action.”
David Livingstone, Missionary to Africa

Overview: The third chapter of the book of John records the remarkable story of a Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus who approached Jesus about being “born again.” Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews and an educated, religious man who was a member of the Sanhedrin. But he was unlearned in the truths concerning salvation. He came to Jesus during the night to inquire of the requirements for salvation or being “born again.” Jesus explained to Nicodemus that the new birth is a spiritual birth, not a second physical birth. The remainder of the chapter records some of the activity and proclamations of John the Baptist as he gives honor and validation to the Person of Jesus.

Memory verse: 3 – *Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

John 3

¹There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

³Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁴Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

⁵Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?”

¹⁰Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that

whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

¹⁸“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

²²After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. ²³Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. ²⁴For John had not yet been thrown into prison.

²⁵Then there arose a dispute between *some* of John’s disciples and the Jews about purification. ²⁶And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!”

²⁷John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent before Him.’ ²⁹He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. ³⁰He must increase, but I *must* decrease. ³¹He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³²And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. ³³He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. ³⁴For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. ³⁵The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Confession: I believe that God sent His only Son to die on the Cross that I may have eternal life through Him. I trust in His plan of salvation for me. I cannot do anything to earn salvation. Salvation is a gift. I confess Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 34 – The Witch Believes

**“We talk of the Second Coming;
half the world has never heard of the first.” Oswald J. Smith**

Overview: Stephen was a man “full of faith and power” who “did great wonders and signs among the people” (Acts 6:8). He died a martyr’s death as documented in Acts 7. Acts 8 tells us after of the stoning of Stephen, a great persecution arose against the church. Because of the persecution the church was experiencing, the believers began to scatter abroad, carrying with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though the early Christians were dispersed into other areas of the world because of persecution, it turned out to be positive because the Gospel went forth and the church grew all over the world. Acts 8 gives account of the evangelism that took place in various regions, the impartation of the Holy Spirit to believers, and the salvation of an Ethiopian eunuch because of the preaching of Philip.

Memory verse: 12 – *But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*

Acts 8

¹Now Saul was consenting to his death.

At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ²And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him.

³As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing *them* to prison.

⁴Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. ⁵Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁶And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. ⁷For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸And there was great joy in that city.

⁹But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, ¹⁰to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, “This man is the great

power of God.” ¹¹And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. ¹²But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. ¹³Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

¹⁴Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, “Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

²⁰But Peter said to him, “Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! ²¹You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²²Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”

²⁴Then Simon answered and said, “Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me.”

²⁵So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert. ²⁷So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.”

³⁰So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

*“He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.*

³³ *In His humiliation His justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is taken from the earth.”*

³⁴So the eunuch answered Philip and said, “I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came

to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, *here is* water. What hinders me from being baptized?”

³⁷Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.”

And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

³⁸So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. ³⁹Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

Confession: Even when I am persecuted, I will continue to speak the truth of the Gospel. I will look for opportunities to share my faith with others regardless of what those around me may say. I will trust God for the results.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 35 – David, the Giant, a Few Rocks

“The Christian is not obedient unless he is doing all in his power to send the Gospel to the heathen world.” A.B. Simpson

Overview: We can all recall various Old Testament stories we heard as children. We are familiar with Noah and the ark, Moses and the Red Sea, Jonah and the whale, and Daniel in the lions’ den. But perhaps it is the story found in 1 Samuel 17 that is the most intriguing and suspenseful of all the stories in the Old Testament – the standoff between David and Goliath. Goliath was a champion of the Philistines who opposed the nation of Israel. Israel’s entire army feared Goliath because of his size and the fact that he was a man of war. Israel refused to go against Goliath even though he taunted them and defiled the army of God. David, being only a lad, drew from the courage and confidence he had in God and challenged Goliath. David’s heart did not fail because he knew his God would deliver him. This story gives us great assurance that we too can stand victorious against the enemy and know that our God will deliver us!

Memory verse: 45 – *Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defiled.”*

1 Samuel 17

¹Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at Sochoh, which *belongs* to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. ²And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. ³The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.

⁴And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span. ⁵*He had* a bronze helmet on his head, and he *was* armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶And *he had* bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. ⁷Now the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver’s beam, and his iron spearhead *weighed* six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. ⁸Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, “Why have you come out to line up for battle? *Am* I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. ⁹If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall

be our servants and serve us.” ¹⁰And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.” ¹¹When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

¹²Now David *was* the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name *was* Jesse, and who had eight sons. And the man was old, advanced *in years*, in the days of Saul. ¹³The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle *were* Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ¹⁴David *was* the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. ¹⁵But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.

¹⁶And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

¹⁷Then Jesse said to his son David, “Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried *grain* and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. ¹⁸And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of *their* thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them.” ¹⁹Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel *were* in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

²⁰So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took *the things* and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. ²¹For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. ²²And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. ²³Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard *them*. ²⁴And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. ²⁵So the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be *that* the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father’s house exemption *from taxes* in Israel.”

²⁶Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

²⁷And the people answered him in this manner, saying, “So shall it be done for the man who kills him.”

²⁸Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”

²⁹And David said, “What have I done now? *Is there* not a cause?” ³⁰Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones *did*.

³¹Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported *them* to Saul; and he sent for him. ³²Then David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”

³³And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you *are* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

³⁴But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, ³⁵I went out after it and struck it, and delivered *the lamb* from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught *it* by its beard, and struck and killed it. ³⁶Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." ³⁷Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

³⁸So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. ³⁹David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them*. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested *them*." So David took them off.

⁴⁰Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. ⁴¹So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield *went* before him. ⁴²And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was *only* a youth, ruddy and good-looking. ⁴³So the Philistine said to David, "*Am* I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

⁴⁵Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and He will give you into our hands."

⁴⁸So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung *it* and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. ⁵⁰So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But *there was* no sword in the hand of David. ⁵¹Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. ⁵²Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. ⁵⁴And David

took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

⁵⁵When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, “Abner, whose son *is* this youth?”

And Abner said, “As your soul lives, O king, I do not know.”

⁵⁶So the king said, “Inquire whose son this young man *is*.”

⁵⁷Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. ⁵⁸And Saul said to him, “Whose son *are* you, young man?”

So David answered, “*I am* the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

Confession: My heart will not fail (v. 32) when I stand before the enemy. The Lord has delivered me at other times and He will deliver me now. I will not fear, no matter the size, strength, or stature of my enemy. I will not allow the enemy to defile me or my God.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 36 – Now I Know

**“It is impossible to rightly govern a nation
without God and the Bible.” President George Washington**

Overview: The greatest desire of the heart of God is to have a personal relationship with mankind. He sent His only begotten Son (John 3:16) to die on the Cross, paving the way for such a relationship to be possible. The Lord has chosen you and He wants you to choose Him with all your heart. In Genesis 22, the Lord God tests Abraham to see if he is wholly and truly devoted to Him. God wants to *locate* Abraham – to determine if he is fully committed to Him or not. God asks Abraham to give his son, Isaac, as an offering to Him. Abraham prepares for the journey to the mountains of Moriah to prove his full dedication to the Lord. Abraham trusted His God and he knew God would provide the sacrifice (v. 8).

Memory verse: 12 – *And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”*

Genesis 22

¹Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!”

And he said, “Here I am.”

²Then He said, “Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

³So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.”

⁶So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid *it* on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!”

And he said, “Here I am, my son.”

Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

⁹Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

¹²And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me."

¹³Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him was* a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴And Abraham called the name of the place, [£](#)The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said *to* this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

¹⁵Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*—¹⁷blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." ¹⁹So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

²⁰Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: ²¹Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, ²²Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel." ²³And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. ²⁴His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maachah.

Confession: I will not withhold anything from the Lord. I will surrender all that I am and all that I have that I may show my full devotion to Him and my complete trust in Him. Today will be a great day!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 37 – Delivered From the Power of Darkness

“Be sure to put your feet in the right place, then stand firm.”

President Abraham Lincoln

Overview: While ministering in Ephesus, Paul’s apostolic leadership had influence on another nearby city called Colosse. Colosse was about 100 miles east of Ephesus. The church of Colosse was an outgrowth of Paul’s three-year ministry in Ephesus. The Colossians were being threatened with false teaching that claimed Jesus was not fully God and fully man. Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians to (1) expose the lies, (2) encourage the Colossians to stand in truth, (3) to express his personal interest in them, and (4) to endorse unity. Specifically in chapter 1, Paul reminds the believers at Colosse of their knowledge of truth, to walk worthy of their calling, and to be strengthened according to God’s power. Paul did not want the Colossians to fall prey to erroneous teaching so he recounts what Jesus did through His death and resurrection.

Memory verse: 13-14 – *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

Colossians 1

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; ⁵because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, ⁶which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; ⁷as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, ⁸who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; ¹²giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers

of the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

¹⁹For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

²¹And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²²in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—²³if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, ²⁶the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. ²⁹To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

Confession: I will remain in the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I will not be persuaded by false teachings or false doctrines. I have been forgiven, delivered, and redeemed by Jesus and Him alone.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 38 – He Gave it All

**“We can stand affliction better than we can prosperity,
for in prosperity we forget God.” D.L. Moody**

Overview: Matthew 27 records the heart wrenching journey of Jesus Christ to the Cross. From His appearance before Pilate, to the trade off with Barabbas, to the crown of thorns, to the brutal beating and mocking He endured, Jesus is finally nailed to a wooden cross to die for the sins of the world. Every believer should move slowly through each verse and absorb the intensity of what Jesus did for mankind. This chapter should cause you to be grateful for the unending love He displayed by giving His life for you. He took every step for you. He did it because He loves you. Only pure love could have compelled Him to embrace such treatment and suffer the Cross.

Memory verse: 31 – *And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.*

Matthew 27

¹When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. ²And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

³Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

And they said, “What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*”

⁵Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

⁶But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.” ⁷And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. ⁸Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

⁹Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “*And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, ¹⁰and gave them for the potter’s field, as the LORD directed me.*”

¹¹Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus said to him, "*It is as you say.*" ¹²And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.

¹³Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" ¹⁴But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

¹⁵Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. ¹⁶And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

²⁰But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

²²Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

²³Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

²⁴When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it.*"

²⁵And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

²⁶Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. ²⁸And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. ²⁹When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. ³¹And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

³²Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. ³³And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, ³⁴they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.

³⁵Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

*"They divided My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots."*

³⁶Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. ³⁷And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:

THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁸Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

³⁹And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

⁴¹Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, ⁴²"He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. ⁴³He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

⁴⁴Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

⁴⁵Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

⁴⁷Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" ⁴⁸Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.

⁴⁹The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."

⁵⁰And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

⁵¹Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵²and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

⁵⁴So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

⁵⁵And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, ⁵⁶among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

⁵⁷Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, ⁶³saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' ⁶⁴Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal

Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make *it* as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

Confession: I am grateful for the sacrifice Jesus made for me on the Cross. I understand that He loved me enough to die for me and I will not take His death for granted. I am thankful He was obedient to the plan of salvation for me. I would be lost without Him.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 39 – God’s Weak Spot

“Belief in Jesus Christ is total identity in Him. There is no such thing as partial belief or partial salvation. A person who does not totally commit himself to Christ disbelieves in Him, no matter how many positive things he may have to say about Him.” John Macarthur

Overview: The prophet Nathan confronted King David when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. Nathan rebuked David in 2 Samuel 12 and pronounced the judgment of God on his life. King David would live, but the child conceived in his sin with Bathsheba would die. David pours out his heart in Psalm 51 in deep repentance to God for the sin he’d committed. He acknowledges his transgressions and asks the Lord to cleanse him. He desires a clean heart be formed in him and a steadfast spirit within. He longs for the joy of his salvation. David realizes and confesses what God really wants from him – a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.

Memory verse: 10 – *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

Psalm 51

- 1 Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin *is* always before me.
- 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done *this* evil in Your sight—
That You may be found just when You speak,
And blameless when You judge.
- 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.
- 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

- 9 Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities.
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.
- 13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You.
- 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
The God of my salvation,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.
- 15 O Lord, open my lips,
And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.
- 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*;
You do not delight in burnt offering.
- 17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.
- 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion;
Build the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness,
With burnt offering and whole burnt offering;
Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

Confession: I will confess my sins and You will be faithful to forgive me. I will praise You and sing of Your righteousness as you restore to me the joy of my salvation!

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 40 – Ask, Seek, Knock

“A keen sense of humor helps us to overlook the unbecoming, understand the unconventional, tolerate the unpleasant, overcome the unexpected, and outlast the unbearable.” Reverend Billy Graham

Overview: After overhearing Jesus praying, the disciples ask Him to teach them how to pray. Luke 11 records Jesus’ response to them. He says, “When you pray, say…” and He gives them not a prayer to be repeated, but rather a guide to be used as they pray. In verses 5 – 10, Jesus teaches persistence in prayer. We are not persistent because we are trying to convince God to answer us, but that we pray wholeheartedly and earnestly. The persistence is for our benefit, not for God’s. The rest of the chapter is divided into other teachings – a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (v.14-23) and the casting out of an unclean spirit (v.24-26). The chapter finishes with Jesus challenging the Pharisees and the Pharisees violently interrogating Him.

Memory verse: 9-10 – *So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

Luke 11

¹Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

²So He said to them, “When you pray, say:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.

³ Give us day by day our daily bread.

⁴ And forgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.”

⁵And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶for a friend of mine has come to me on

his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? ⁸I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

⁹"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

¹⁴And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. ¹⁵But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

¹⁶Others, testing *Him*, sought from Him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house *divided* against a house falls. ¹⁸If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. ¹⁹And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. ²²But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. ²³He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

²⁴"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵And when he comes, he finds *it* swept and put in order. ²⁶Then he goes and takes with *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

²⁷And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed *is* the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts which nursed You!"

²⁸But He said, "More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

²⁹And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ³⁰For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. ³¹The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here. ³²The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.

³³“No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts *it* in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. ³⁴The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your* eye is bad, your body also *is* full of darkness. ³⁵Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. ³⁶If then your whole body *is* full of light, having no part dark, *the* whole *body* will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.”

³⁷And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. ³⁸When the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.

³⁹Then the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.

⁴²“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ⁴³Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over *them* are not aware *of them*.”

⁴⁵Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, “Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also.”

⁴⁶And He said, “Woe to you also, lawyers! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and persecute,’ ⁵⁰that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, ⁵¹from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

⁵²“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

⁵³And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail *Him* vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, ⁵⁴lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.

Confession: I will come to the Lord with an attitude of worship. I will continue to ask, seek, and knock. I know the Lord desires to answer my prayers. It is never inconvenient for the Lord to hear and answer when I pray.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 41 – Have You Received the Holy Spirit Since You Believed?

“Enter into the promises of God. It is your inheritance. You will do more in one year if you are really filled with the Holy Spirit than you could do in fifty years apart from Him.” Smith Wigglesworth

Overview: As he enters Ephesus, Paul finds a group of about twelve disciples who had limited knowledge of the Holy Spirit. They were unaware of what had happened on the day of Pentecost some twenty years prior. Paul takes matters into his own hands and begins to investigate the faith of these men. He determines that they are no further along in their faith than where John the Baptist had left his followers. Acts 19 records the encounter between Paul and these disciples. Paul was determined to lead them in a greater understanding of the purpose of the Holy Spirit. The remainder of the chapter gives account of an exorcism of evil spirits and describes a riot in Ephesus over the goddess Diana verses the message of “the Way” as spoken by Paul and those who ministered with him.

Memory verse: 6 – *And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.*

Acts 19

¹And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ²he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”

³And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?”

So they said, “Into John’s baptism.”

⁴Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”

⁵When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. ⁷Now the men were about twelve in all.

⁸And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. ⁹But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of

Tyrannus. ¹⁰And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

¹¹Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹²so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. ¹³Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." ¹⁴Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

¹⁵And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

¹⁶Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. ¹⁸And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. ¹⁹Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. ²⁰So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

²¹When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²²So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.

²³And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. ²⁴For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. ²⁵He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. ²⁶Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. ²⁷So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and *her* magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship."

²⁸Now when they heard *this*, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians!" ²⁹So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions. ³⁰And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. ³¹Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater. ³²Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together. ³³And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander motioned with his hand, and wanted to make his defense to the people. ³⁴But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians!"

³⁵And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the

great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Zeus? ³⁶Therefore, since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. ³⁷For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. ³⁸Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a case against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹But if you have any other inquiry to make, it shall be determined in the lawful assembly. ⁴⁰For we are in danger of being called in question for today's uproar, there being no reason which we may give to account for this disorderly gathering." ⁴¹And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

Confession: I will be a witness for Jesus. The Holy Spirit will fill me and give me power to be a witness. I will speak of the things God, pointing others to the Cross. All other gods are false gods. Jesus Christ is the one true God.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 42 – Those Clothes No Longer Fit

“If you are in anything and never wanted to quit it, you’re not in much.”

Pastor T.D. Jakes

Overview: Chapter 3 of Colossians begins what is normally called the “ethical section” of the epistle. Paul tells his readers “you are” and thus “you ought to.” For example, he says the believer is “dead to sin,” “light in the Lord,” and “a new creature” and so forth. Then he says, “Now become what you are.” That is, live as you are dead to sin, the light in the Lord, and a new creature in Christ. Paul instructs us to set our minds on things above and to walk as the elect of God. His message to believers is that we *are* different and changed so we should *live* like we are different and changed. Our behavior, our speech, our responses should be different than that of a person who does not know Christ. He gives guidelines for our behavior in various relationships in our lives such as with our family, on the job, in the church, and in society in general.

Memory verse: 1 – *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.*

Colossians 3

¹If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

⁵Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

⁸But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all.

¹²Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. ¹⁴But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called

in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

¹⁸Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

²²Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

Confession: I will meditate on the things of God at all times. I will set my mind on what is true, pure, and godly. I will conduct myself in a manner that is pleasing to God. I am new in Christ, therefore, I will no longer live like I lived before I met Jesus.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 43 – He is My Supply

“How can you pull down the strongholds of Satan if you don’t even have enough strength to turn off your TV?” Reverend Leonard Ravenhill

Overview: Christians are commanded to rejoice in all situations because the true source of joy is found in the Lord. We are not expected to rejoice *about* our problem or situation, but to rejoice *while in* the situation. Paul seems to remind us to stay in unity with each in trying times. We are not to worry about our situation, but to we are to pray and God will protect our minds with peace. We are to remain in a state of trust in the Lord, knowing that He will provide and He will grace us to come through whatever circumstances we are facing.

Memory verse: 6 – *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*

Philippians 4

¹Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

²I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³~~E~~And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

⁵Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand.

⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹²I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

¹⁴Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. ¹⁵Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. ¹⁶For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. ¹⁸Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. ²⁰Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. ²²All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

²³The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Confession: I will not worry or be anxious over my circumstances. I will pray and thank God that He will see me through. He is aware of my situation and He will provide my need according to His riches in glory. I will remain faithful as I wait upon the Lord.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

() Monday () Tuesday () Wednesday () Thursday () Friday () Saturday () Sunday

WEEK 44 – Unbelievable Jesus!

“A lie gets half way around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on!” Winston Churchill

Overview: The Gospel of Mark is a fast-paced book written to reveal the life of Jesus to believers during a time of great persecution against the church. The city of Rome had been burned and the emperor Nero blamed the Christians for the disaster. Needless to say, the church lived under the constant threat of death. It was during this time that the book of Mark was written so that believers could draw strength from the life and example of Jesus as He ministered under risk and danger. Chapter 5 of Mark shows Jesus moving from one place to another under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, always with a mission in mind. He encounters a demon-possessed man and later, two individuals in desperate need of a miraculous touch from Him.

Memory verse: 15 – *Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.*

Mark 5

¹Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. ²And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, ³who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, ⁴because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. ⁵And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

⁶When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. ⁷And he cried out with a loud voice and said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.”

⁸For He said to him, “Come out of the man, unclean spirit!” ⁹Then He asked him, “What *is* your name?”

And he answered, saying, “My name *is* Legion; for we are many.” ¹⁰Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.

¹¹Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. ¹²So all the demons begged Him, saying, “Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.” ¹³And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.

¹⁴So those who fed the swine fled, and they told *it* in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one *who had been* demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ¹⁶And those who saw it told them how it happened to him *who had been* demon-possessed, and about the swine. ¹⁷Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.

¹⁸And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. ¹⁹However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” ²⁰And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

²¹Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. ²²And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet ²³and begged Him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.” ²⁴So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

²⁵Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, ²⁶and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. ²⁸For she said, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.”

²⁹Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of the affliction. ³⁰And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”

³¹But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”

³²And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. ³³But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. ³⁴And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

³⁵While He was still speaking, *some* came from the ruler of the synagogue’s house who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?”

³⁶As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not be afraid; only believe.” ³⁷And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. ³⁹When He came in, He said to them, “Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.”

⁴⁰And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying. ⁴¹Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Talitha, cumi,” which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” ⁴²Immediately the girl arose and walked, for

she was twelve years *of age*. And they were overcome with great amazement. ⁴³But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that *something* should be given her to eat.

Confession: I will be led by the Holy Spirit as Jesus was. I will move in rhythm with Jesus and with the workings of the Lord in my life. I am endued with power from the Holy Spirit to minister and I will minister! I will not be afraid of any ministry situation because I know Jesus is with me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 45 – Two-Edged Sword

“Jesus was either a Liar, a Lunatic, or Lord.”

C.S. Lewis

Overview: The majority of early Christians were Jewish. During the time of the writing of the book of Hebrews (before A.D. 70), they were experiencing great persecution. Not only that, they were anticipating the return of Christ and it seemed His return was being delayed. Both of these two factors caused these early believers to question if becoming Christians was the right thing to do. Hebrews was written to these wondering Jews to remind them to continue to stand in their new faith in Jesus Christ. In chapter four, the author (unknown, but suggested to have been Paul, Apollos, or perhaps Barnabas) speaks of a rest that is found in God and he encourages them that they may enter into this rest now! He goes on in the chapter to speak of the power of God’s Word. Lastly, he speaks of the believer’s posture in prayer.

Memory verse: 12 – *For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Hebrews 4

¹Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. ²For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*. ³For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

*“So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest,’”*

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: *“And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”*; ⁵and again in this *place*: *“They shall not enter My rest.”*

⁶Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷again He designates a certain day, saying in David, *“Today,”* after such a long time, as it has been said:

*“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts.”*

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

¹¹Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹²For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

¹⁴Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Confession: I am thankful for the rest that I have in Jesus. I will choose to remain in His rest everyday. I can trust in His Word and I can go to Him in prayer. Because of this, I am confident in Him and I am able to rest in Him.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 46 – Give Me Some Fruit

“All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Overview: In Galatians 5, Paul continues to deal with the incorrect teaching of the Judaizers among the believers of Galatia. The Judaizers were a group of religious leaders in the church who were teaching that the Law must be kept in addition to having a faith relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul, therefore, attends to the teaching of liberty found in Christ. He warns, however, not to use that new found liberty as an occasion to sin. He goes on to instruct believers to walk in the Spirit and to flee from the works of the flesh.

Memory verse: 13 – *For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love, serve one another.*

Galatians 5

¹Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ²Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. ³And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. ⁴You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to* be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

⁷You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion does not *come* from Him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

¹¹And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. ¹²I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

¹³For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

¹⁶I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Confession: I know Jesus has set me free therefore, I am no longer in bondage. I am free to be led by the Spirit and to operate under the influence of the Holy Spirit and not under the influence of my flesh. I choose to respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit daily and to deny the voice of my flesh.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 47 – He is the Way

“Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them.” Unknown

Overview: The entire chapter of John 14 is comprised of the words of Jesus and what powerful words they are! Not only is He authoritative in His speech, but He is comforting, gentle, persuasive, reassuring, and commanding all at the same time. Every believer should read this passage over and over again because its content brings such peace! Not only does He speak of His preparation and provision for us, but He also gives us the Promise of the Holy Spirit. This chapter awards us the assurance that Jesus has made every provision necessary for the believer to live a life constantly accompanied by the Holy Spirit of God.

Memory verse: 26 – *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

John 14

¹“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

⁷“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

¹²“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³And

whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

¹⁵"If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

¹⁹"A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. ²⁰At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

²³Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

²⁵"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

²⁹"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. ³⁰I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. ³¹But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Confession: I am grateful for the gift of the Holy Spirit in my life. I do not have to live my life alone because I have the Holy Spirit residing on the inside of my heart. I will do greater works because I walk in the power and under the leadership of the Spirit of God. I will be taught by and accompanied by the Holy Spirit every day.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 48 – The Master Designer

“”No one talks so constantly about God as those who insist there is no God.”
Heywood Broun

Overview: Genesis 2 records that the creation week was finished and because all creation was complete, God “*rested on the seventh day from all His work.*” The chapter goes on to describe the continued workings of God on His creation called *man*. He is found placing man in the Garden of Eden and giving him specific guidelines concerning the garden. This chapter also records the making of the woman who would be the helpmate of man.

Memory verse: 7 – *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Genesis 2

¹Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ²And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

⁴This *is* the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground; ⁶but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

⁷And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

⁸The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. ¹²And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. ¹³The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel; it *is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

¹⁵Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

¹⁸And the LORD God said, "*It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*" ¹⁹Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. ²⁰So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²²Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

²³And Adam said:

"This *is* now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man."

²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Confession: I have been given life by the breath of God. His very breath resides in me therefore, I have His life on the inside of me. I will live the life He intended for me to live. I will not live below what He has planned for me. I will rise to live as He has purposed for me to live.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 49 – The Power to Tell

“We waste most of our time trying to get God to do something He has already done – or praying for God to do something He has told us to do.”

Jacquelyn K. Heasley

Overview: The first verse of Acts 1 lets us know that work of Jesus did not end with the conclusion of the Gospels or with His ascension to heaven. Jesus’ operations continued as recorded throughout the book of Acts and still continue today through modern day Christians. The reason the works of Jesus did and can continue is largely due to the coming of the Holy Spirit and the empowering of believers to be witnesses for the Lord Jesus (v. 8). The chief reason for the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit was to give power to and authorize believers to continue the ministry and work initialized by Jesus Himself (v. 1). We see this great coming of the Holy Spirit in this chapter and continue to read of His effects on the world in the rest of the book of Acts.

Memory verse: 8 – *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

Acts 1

¹The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ²until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “*which,*” *He said, “you have heard from Me;* ⁵*for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”* ⁶Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷And He said to them, “*It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.* ⁸*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

⁹Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. ¹³And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas *the son* of James. ¹⁴These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

¹⁵And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, ¹⁶"Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; ¹⁷for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."

¹⁸(Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. ¹⁹And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)

²⁰"For it is written in the Book of Psalms:

*'Let his dwelling place be desolate,
And let no one live in it';*

and,

'Let another take his office.'

²¹"Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

²³And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen ²⁵to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." ²⁶And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Confession: The Holy Spirit empowers me to be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. With confidence and assertion, I will tell others about Jesus. I have no reason to be afraid or intimidated. I will speak with boldness and assurance as I persuade others to embrace Jesus as Lord and Savior. I will never have to worry about sharing my faith in my own power. The power of the Holy Spirit is always with me.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 50 – I Have a Gift

**“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”
Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

Overview: I Corinthians 12 is an exciting passage of scripture in that it details the nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life and some of the body functions (gifts) of the Body of Christ. The chapter tells us that every Christian has at least one ministry gift that is given to them by God Himself. We are to work together, each person in his/her gift, just like all parts of the human body work together, to be a healthy body. According to this chapter, the Body of Christ is made up all of kinds of people with various gifts and operations and no gift is greater than another. We are not to be jealous of each other's gift, but to work as one whole body in the ministry of Jesus.

Memory verse: 12 – *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.*

1 Corinthians 12

¹Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: ²You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*: ⁸for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

¹²For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. ¹³For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. ¹⁴For in fact the body is not one member but many.

¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁷If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? ¹⁸But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. ¹⁹And if they *were* all one member, where *would* the body *be*?

²⁰But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. ²¹And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²²No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. ²³And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty, ²⁴but our presentable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, ²⁵that there should be no schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. ²⁶And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. ²⁸And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. ²⁹*Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Are* all workers of miracles? ³⁰Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

Confession: I have been given a spiritual gift by God, just as all believers have. I will seek to discover my gift and operate in it as led by the Holy Spirit. As I minister in my gift, I expect to see the manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 51 – Unwrap Him

“Our love for God is tested by the question of whether we seek Him or His gifts.”
Ralph W. Sockman

Overview: Jesus did many miracles while on the earth, but His supremacy is probably most evident in the miracle documented in John 11. Jesus executes His authority over death as He raises Lazarus from the grave. We also see His great compassion for Lazarus and his family. It seems to those involved in the story that Jesus lacks concern for Lazarus because He tarries in His arrival when told of Lazarus' situation. We quickly see, however, that Jesus always has a reason for the things He does and the timing in which He responds. There may be a greater underlying message in this chapter than Jesus' miracle over death and that is that Jesus *wants to be believed!* (v. 42)

Memory verse: 25-26 – *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

John 11

¹Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. ²It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. ³Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.”

⁴When Jesus heard *that*, He said, “**This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**”

⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. ⁷Then after this He said to the disciples, “**Let us go to Judea again.**”

⁸The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?”

⁹Jesus answered, “**Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.**” ¹¹These things He said, and after that He said to them, “**Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.**”

¹²Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” ¹³However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

¹⁴Then Jesus said to them plainly, “**Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.**”

¹⁶Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

¹⁷So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. ¹⁹And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

²⁰Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

²⁴Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

²⁸And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." ²⁹As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly and came to Him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. ³¹Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."

³²Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

³³Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴And He said, "Where have you laid him?"

They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

³⁷And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone."

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days."

⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴²And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me." ⁴³Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" ⁴⁴And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

⁴⁵Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. ⁴⁶But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. ⁴⁷Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. ⁴⁸If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

⁴⁹And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” ⁵¹Now this he did not say on his own *authority*; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, ⁵²and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

⁵³Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. ⁵⁴Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.

⁵⁵And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?” ⁵⁷Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report *it*, that they might seize Him.

Confession: I believe Jesus has power over all things. I believe His power will be evident in my life over any circumstance or problem I may encounter. I know there is nothing too difficult for Him. I believe He is interested in anything I may go through and He wants to be my solution. I will believe He wants to be involved in every area of my life and I will trust Him with the outcome in every situation.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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WEEK 52 – It's Going to Blow Your Mind!

**“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me.”
Jesus**

Overview: The book of Revelation, by its own title, is a book that *reveals*. Many consider this book to be a book of mystery, but that is far from the truth. John penned this writing while in exile on the island of Patmos. He received visions from the Lord and was instructed to write down everything he saw. Revelation 21 opens with a dramatic vision given to John of a new heaven and a new earth. John describes the future dwelling place of the saints in terms of a holy city. This chapter is packed full of promise and hope for the believer. We see the victory of “*He who sat on the throne*” (v. 5), the glory and honor of God in the heavens, and a vast description of the great city.

Memory verse: 4 – *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.*

Revelation 21

¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

⁶And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

⁹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and

showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. ¹⁷Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸The construction of its wall *was of* jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates *were* twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass.

²²But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. ²⁴And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ²⁵Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Confession: The Lord God is great and mighty! He is my Rock and my salvation. In Him I will lack nothing. He is complete. He is eternal. He is faithful. He is trustworthy. I will live for Him. I will trust Him. I will exalt Him all the days of my life. He is worthy of praise and I give Him my life.

THOUGHTS...INSIGHT...What is the Lord saying to me?

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