


BIBLE IN A

YEAR



reading & devotional guide

A person is seated at a wooden table, reading an open Bible. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants. Their left hand is holding a grey ceramic cup. The Bible is open to a page with columns of text. To the right of the Bible, a black smartphone is lying on the table. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a calm atmosphere.

**reading
scripture
every day
for a year**

Reading Scripture every day for a year

Transform your relationship with the Bible by reading it through in a year. You'll read two or three chapters a day and sometimes skim through larger portions that contain genealogies and census information.

Is there a place to read this from my phone?

Of course! If you download the YouVersion app, we suggest subscribing to "BibleProject | The Bible." This not only takes you through the plan day by day, there are videos accompanying each book, giving context as to where this fits in the story of Jesus.

1	2	3	4
Genesis 1-3	Genesis 25-28	Genesis 46-47	Exodus 16-18
Genesis 4-7	Genesis 29-31	Genesis 48-50	Exodus 19-21
Genesis 8-11	Genesis 32-34	Exodus 1-3	Exodus 22-24
Genesis 12-15	Genesis 35-37	Exodus 4-6	Exodus 25-27
Genesis 16-18	Genesis 38-40	Exodus 7-9	Exodus 28-29
Genesis 19-21	Genesis 41-42	Exodus 10-12	Exodus 30-31
Genesis 22-24	Genesis 43-45	Exodus 13-15	Exodus 32-34

5	6	7	8
Exodus 35-40	Leviticus 19-20	Numbers 11-13	Numbers 31-32
Leviticus 1-4	Leviticus 21-23	Numbers 14-16	Numbers 33-34
Leviticus 5-7	Leviticus 24-25	Numbers 17-18	Numbers 35-36
Leviticus 8-10	Leviticus 26-27	Numbers 19-21	Deut. 1-3
Leviticus 11-13	Numbers 1-4	Numbers 22-24	Deut. 4-6
Leviticus 14-15	Numbers 5-7	Numbers 25-27	Deut. 7-9
Leviticus 16-18	Numbers 8-10	Numbers 28-30	Deut. 10-12

add one psalm per day

9	10	11	12
Deut.13-14	Deut. 32-34	Judges 4-5	1 Samuel 1-3
Deut.15-16	Joshua 1-4	Judges 6-8	1 Samuel 4-8
Deut. 17-20	Joshua 5-8	Judges 9-12	1 Samuel 9-12
Deut. 21-23	Joshua 9-12	Judges 13-15	1 Samuel 13-14
Deut. 24-27	Joshua 13-21	Judges 16-18	1 Samuel 15-17
Deut. 28-29	Joshua 22-24	Judges 19-21	1 Samuel 18-20
Deut. 30-31	Judges 1-3	Ruth 1-4	1 Samuel 21-24

13	14	15	16
1 Samuel 25-27	2 Samuel 19-21	1 Kings 17-19	2 Kings 18-19
1 Samuel 28-31	2 Samuel 22-24	1 Kings 20-22	2 Kings 20-22
2 Samuel 1-3	1 Kings 1-3	2 Kings 1-3	2 Kings 23-25
2 Samuel 4-8	1 Kings 4-7	2 Kings 4-7	Isaiah 1-4
2 Samuel 9-12	1 Kings 8-10	2 Kings 8-11	Isaiah 5-8
2 Samuel 13-15	1 Kings 11-13	2 Kings 12-14	Isaiah 9-12
2 Samuel 16-18	1 Kings 14-16	2 Kings 15-17	Isaiah 13-17

17	18	19	20
Isaiah 18-22	Isaiah 45-48	Hosea 1-5	Jonah 1-4
Isaiah 23-27	Isaiah 49-51	Hosea 6-10	Micah 1-4
Isaiah 28-30	Isaiah 52-54	Hosea 11-14	Micah 5-7
Isaiah 31-35	Isaiah 55-57	Joel 1-3	Nahum 1-3
Isaiah 36-38	Isaiah 58-60	Amos 1-5	Hab. 1-3
Isaiah 39-41	Isaiah 61-64	Amos 6-9	Zeph. 1-3
Isaiah 42-44	Isaiah 65-66	Obadiah 1	Job 1-3

add one psalm per day

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21	22	23	24
Job 4-7	Job 32-34	Proverbs 7-9	Proverbs 28-31
Job 8-11	Job 35-37	Proverbs 10-12	Ecc. 1-4
Job 12-15	Job 38-39	Proverbs 13-15	Ecc. 5-8
Job 16-19	Job 40-42	Proverbs 16-18	Ecc. 9-12
Job 20-23	Psalms 1-2	Proverbs 19-21	Song of S. 1-4
Job 24-28	Proverbs 1-3	Proverbs 22-24	Song of S. 5-8
Job 29-31	Proverbs 4-6	Proverbs 25-27	Jeremiah 1-3

25	26	27	28
Jeremiah 4-6	Jeremiah 30-32	Lam. 1-2	Ezekiel 16-18
Jeremiah 7-9	Jeremiah 33-36	Lam. 3	Ezekiel 19-21
Jeremiah 10-13	Jeremiah 37-39	Lam. 4-5	Ezekiel 22-24
Jeremiah 14-17	Jeremiah 40-44	Ezekiel 1-4	Ezekiel 25-27
Jeremiah 18-22	Jeremiah 45-48	Ezekiel 5-8	Ezekiel 28-30
Jeremiah 23-25	Jeremiah 49-50	Ezekiel 9-12	Ezekiel 31-33
Jeremiah 26-29	Jeremiah 51-52	Ezekiel 13-15	Ezekiel 34-36

29	30	31	32
Ezekiel 37-39	Neh. 4-6	Daniel 4-6	Malachi 1-2
Ezekiel 40-44	Neh. 7-9	Daniel 7-9	Malachi 3-4
Ezekiel 45-48	Neh. 10-11	Daniel 10-12	1 Chron. 1-10
Ezra 1-3	Neh. 12-13	Haggai 1-2	1 Chron. 11-14
Ezra 4-7	Esther 1-5	Zech. 1-4	1 Chron. 15-17
Ezra 8-10	Esther 6-10	Zech. 5-8	1 Chron. 18-21
Neh. 1-3	Daniel 1-3	Zech. 9-14	1 Chron. 22-24

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33	34	35	36
1 Chron. 25-29	2 Chron. 25-27	Matthew 7-8	Matthew 21-22
2 Chron. 1-4	2 Chron. 28-31	Matthew 9-10	Matthew 23-24
2 Chron. 5-8	2 Chron. 32-34	Matthew 11-12	Matthew 25-26
2 Chron. 9-12	2 Chron. 35-36	Matthew 13-14	Matthew 27-28
2 Chron. 13-17	Matthew 1-2	Matthew 15-16	Mark 1-2
2 Chron. 18-20	Matthew 3-4	Matthew 17-18	Mark 3-4
2 Chron. 21-24	Matthew 5-6	Matthew 19-20	Mark 5-6

37	38	39	40
Mark 7-8	John 5-6	Luke 1	Luke 14-16
Mark 9-10	John 7-8	Luke 2-3	Luke 17-18
Mark 11-12	John 9-10	Luke 4-5	Luke 19-20
Mark 13-14	John 11-12	Luke 6-7	Luke 21-22
Mark 15-16	John 13-15	Luke 8-9	Luke 23-24
John 1-2	John 16-18	Luke 10-11	Acts 1-2
John 3-4	John 19-21	Luke 12-13	Acts 3-4

41	42	43	44
Acts 5-6	Acts 19-20	Romans 5-6	1 Cor. 3-4
Acts 7-8	Acts 21-22	Romans 7-8	1 Cor. 5-6
Acts 9-10	Acts 23-24	Romans 9-10	1 Cor. 7-8
Acts 11-12	Acts 25-26	Romans 11-12	1 Cor. 9-10
Acts 13-14	Acts 27-28	Romans 13-14	1 Cor. 11-12
Acts 15-16	Romans 1-2	Romans 15-16	1 Cor. 13-14
Acts 17-18	Romans 3-4	1 Cor. 1-2	1 Cor. 15-16

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45	46	47	48
2 Cor. 1-2	Gal. 3-4	Col. 1-2	1 Tim. 3-4
2 Cor. 3-4	Gal. 5-6	Col. 3-4	1 Tim. 5-6
2 Cor. 5-6	Eph. 1-2	1 Thess. 1-2	2 Tim. 1-4
2 Cor. 7-8	Eph. 3-4	1 Thess. 3-4	Titus 1-3
2 Cor. 9-10	Eph. 5-6	1 Thess. 5	Philemon 1
2 Cor. 11-13	Philip. 1-2	2 Thess. 1-3	Hebrews 1-2
Gal. 1-2	Philip. 3-4	1 Tim. 1-2	Hebrews 3-4

49	50	51	52
Hebrews 5-6	1 Peter 3-5	Rev. 4-6	Rev. 21-22
Hebrews 7-8	2 Peter 1-3	Rev. 7-9	
Hebrews 9-10	1 John 1-2	Rev. 10-11	
Hebrews 11-13	1 John 3-5	Rev. 12-13	
James 1-3	2, 3 John 1, 1	Rev. 14-16	
James 4-5	Jude 1	Rev. 17-18	
1 Peter 1-2	Rev. 1-3	Rev. 19-20	

add one psalm per day

devotional guides for 1 samuel – revelation



Memory Verse

2 Samuel 22:2 *"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer."*

1 Samuel 9 – 1 Samuel 31

David, as a young shepherd, accepts the challenge to fight the Philistines champion Goliath. Despite the doubt of the soldiers, the anger of his brother, and his age and size, he believed in the power of God to deliver him. King Saul accepted his offer and tried to outfit him in the king's armor, but it did not fit. David preferred to use the weapons he was accustomed to and what God had given him victory with before. Goliath, as well as being a giant, was also armed with great weapons and wearing seemingly impenetrable armor. David stepped up in faith, to honor God and defend Israel, and with just a stone and sling he was victorious.

When have you stayed strong on the path God set before you despite the doubt and mocking of those in your life? Have you ever doubted your own gifting and tried to put on the "armor" of another person (Rather than relying on what God has given you)? When faced with situations that seem giant, overwhelming, and impenetrable, how do you hold fast to your faith? Have there been times when you've fallen short in faith?

We see King Saul become a very wicked man. He pursues David relentlessly, trying to take his life. Despite his pursuit of David, we see David spare his life on multiple occasions. David also instructed those with him not to harm the King. He did not repay evil with evil. David showed great honor to the Lord, mercy to King Saul, and restraint in the face of severe oppression.

Who in your life can you show mercy to that does not deserve it? How can you honor God by honoring those who are in authority? When faced with the ability to seek revenge for wrong doing, even explicitly clear wrong doing against you, how can you pursue God's heart and show restraint?

2 Samuel 1 – 2 Samuel 24

David is made king after Saul's death. David made many mistakes as king, including adultery, murder, and showing favoritism. However, David recognized his mistakes, repented, and continues to pursue God. He did not let the power corrupt his heart as Saul did and he never stopped humbling himself before God. Because of this, David is considered by God as a righteous king who never strayed from God's commands. David is our example of an imperfect man who always tried to honor God and was blessed for it.

What mistakes have you made that made you feel far from God? How have you seen God meet you in your weakness? How have you seen God's faithfulness even through your failures?

2 Samuel 22:2-4 "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. My God my rock, in whom I take refuge. My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; my savior, You save my from violence. I call upon the name of the Lord, who is worthy to be praised."

How can you make David's words to the Lord your own? What phrase of those verses are the hardest for you to believe and why? Is God challenging you to expand your faith and your view of His power?

Take a moment to pray those words over your life.

1 Kings 1 – 1 Kings 17

David dies and Solomon is anointed king. Solomon offers praise and thanksgiving to God with great maturity in faith (even at around 20 years old) and his prayer is focused on honoring God and serving the people well. 1 Kings 3:9 "So give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people to discern between good and evil." God was pleased with his humble prayers and blessed him greatly beyond his petition for wisdom.

Are your prayers mostly focused on yourself or others? Are you praying for your own blessings or asking God to make you a blessing to others? How is God challenging you to increase your prayer life and pursue wisdom rather than prosperity?

Solomon is known by all nations as the most wise and great king throughout all the land. He faithfully serves God for many years and is very blessed. Unfortunately, Solomon is led astray by his love for women. God warned him about taking certain wives, but Solomon does not heed that warning. He is eventually led away from God by his many wives and the pagan gods they served.

What has God been warning you about and what has your response been to those warnings? Have you experienced the pitfalls of going against God's will? Thereafter, how have you experienced His grace as you came back to Him? How do you find trust in God's instructions and warnings?

1 Kings 15 – 2 Kings 19

The kings of Israel become increasingly evil, but Ahab is regarded as being the most evil of them all. God's raises up Elijah to face Ahab and Jezebel. They have all the power, authority, provisions, etc.

But Elijah makes their prophets look foolish and God show's His might through a three year drought and burning up Elijah water soaked sacrifice. No matter how evil the world becomes, or how powerful that evil seems, God always makes a way for His people and proves to be more powerful than the evils of the world.

Have you grown discouraged with the evils of the world? Do you ever doubt God's ability to break through the darkness? How has reading through the Old Testament stories of God's faithfulness and power encouraged you?

The Shunamite woman shows great faith and compassion towards Elisha. She see's God's miraculous hand as she conceives a son in her old age. Then, when that son dies, she seeks out Elisha and has faith that God will perform another miracle, and He raises her son from the dead. Then again, she obeys Elisha as he warned of the famine, and after seven years she returns and finds favor from the Philistine King who restores her land to her. God is faithful to her continually.

Sometimes, it feels like God's miracles fall short or His provisions should come easier. Have you ever felt discouraged that you had to return to God for more provisions? Have you experienced a miracle in your life that didn't end as you expected? How is God challenging you to continually seek and rely on Him?

Write your reflections from the month

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

2 Chronicles 7:14 "...and My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

2 Kings 20 – 1 Chronicles 11

At the end of 2nd Kings we see that God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to capture the people of Jerusalem and to steal the treasures of temple. Many times in Israel's history we see that sin has consequences and that disobeying God leads to destruction. While God would preserve the line of Judah while they were in captivity, again, He never promised to bless their wrong choices or to prosper them while they served other Gods. God will allow your sin to lead you into negative outcomes. (We know that Judah going into exile is a fulfillment of a prophecy)

When have you seen the consequences of your sin? Have you seen God allow the harsh realities of your choices? Even in your darkest moments, living through your consequences, how have you seen God be faithful?

1st and 2nd Chronicles go through much of the same information given in 1st and 2nd Kings. There is however a perspective change. Throughout the Kings, we see a focus on needs of the exiled. There is a greater focus on the battles, poor leadership, and the mistakes of the kings. In reading Chronicles we see that the perspective is full of hope. The negative aspects of Kings were not focused on. Rather, we see God's plans to rebuild. Chronicles speak more to restoration and renewal. Through reading these different accounts of the same period of time, and the same people, we see how perspective matters. The author's heart and intention is clearly different.

When remembering the past, our perspective is incredibly important. The author of Chronicles saw God's presences through the difficult years and saw hope for the promised future. How do you share your own stories? Do you see the presence of God even in your hardest times? Does your testimony convey God's faithfulness and sovereignty? Have you struggled with focusing on the negative aspects of your story? How can you change that?

1 Chronicles 12 – 2 Chronicles 5

In 1 Chronicles 29 we see the people of Israel bringing their gifts for the temple, following David's example. Expensive and precious gifts from each tribe. It said they made their offerings wholeheartedly and with rejoicing. Their generosity was given willingly and without expectation. This example of giving

to the Lord goes beyond the law's prescribed tithing. They gave in abundance, the best they had, all to bring glory to God. Their generous response was after King David asked "Who is willing to consecrate himself to the Lord?" This was an act of dedicating themselves to God. God does not ask for offerings because He needs them. He doesn't need our praise or our dedication. God's glory, power, and majesty is not affected by us; He will always remain the same. His desire is for our trust to be in Him. For personal sacrifice to lead to a greater intimacy in relationship with Him. Many times He asks us to sacrifice things that may become an idol or a stumbling block in our lives. Again, not because He needs it, but because it would hinder our relationship with Him. As we see throughout the Bible, sacrifice and offering lead to blessing and deeper relationship with God.

Are their things God has been asking you to sacrifice in your own life? Rather than arguing why you shouldn't have to sacrifice, have you asked God for insight into why He has chosen that particular sacrifice? Are your personal offerings done willingly, with praise, and whole heartedly? How might God be challenging your heart in sacrifice? How have you seen God bless your past sacrifices?

David's lead's Israel in praise and prayer to God saying: "Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and on the earth; Yours is the dominion, Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor *come* from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name." (1 Chronicles 29:10-13)

Pray that powerful prayer to the Lord. What stands out to you through David's prayer? What attributes of God listed in his prayer are you especially grateful for? Does any part of that prayer challenge you? Why? Ask God to increase your faith, give you a greater perspective and understanding, and increase your awe of Him.

2 Chronicles 6 – 2 Chronicles 31

Many of the evil kings had a common mistake that lead to poor choices and self serving ways. We see their examples clearly. They regularly dismissed the prophets of God. Sending away those who were known to be wise and ignoring the messages from God they received. We see some of these kings choose advisers and counselors of their friends and choose to listen to their advice instead of those God had ordained with wisdom. These choices always lead to destruction and lead to serving other gods. There is an important truth to see through their examples. When serving yourself, you will seek friendship

and counsel that will not direct you towards God. But when serving God, you seek out wise counsel and friendship who will direct you to God. It is human nature to surround yourself with those who meet you where your heart is at.

Who have you surrounded yourself with and allowed to speak into your life? Is God challenging you to seek out discipleship, a mentor, an accountability partner, or to focus on more healthy friendships that bring life and encouragement to you? Do you welcome relationships that challenge you or bring correction when needed? Who are you in the lives of those you're in relationship with? Are you life giving friend? What steps can you take to better your relationships or seek better counsel?

Throughout 2 Chronicles we see that the righteous kings (Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah) put a strong emphasis on worship. Between them, they rebuilt the temple, tried to reconcile Israel and Judah, lead the people in worshipping the one true God, brought Judah back into their Passover celebrations, destroyed the idols and other gods temples. We later learn that they did not have a full copy of the law of Moses, but that they followed what they knew of King David and how he served God. Overall, these Kings were seen as righteous and their kingships focused on worshipping God in the proper ways.

Do you live a life of worship? What in your life might be sharing your attention that should be given solely to God? Do you worship God during holidays, during times of victory and defeat, or when those around you are serving someone or something other than God? What could you change in your life to increase your worship to God? Ask God to reveal new ways to live a life of worship.

2 Chronicles 32 – Ezra – Nehemiah 11

Ezra tells of the return of the exiles and the rebuilding of the temple. This is the story of God restoring His people and reestablishing them in the place He intended them to be. Nehemiah is about the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the spiritual renewal of God's people. No matter how far His people have fallen, God always restores. No matter their mistakes, He extends grace. While He allowed them to be captured and sent into exile, He never abandoned them or forgot about His promises to them. And though they had become small in number (We see through the census in Ezra), God's plans to make them into a great nation cannot be stopped by man. God's faithfulness remains; His promised stand true; and His covenant remains steadfast.

Have you ever had a time in your life where you felt exiled or separated from

God? Have you felt God's renewing power? Have you seen God restore your heart or your life? Thank God for all the ways He has saved you.

The rebuilding of Jerusalem and God's people occurs throughout both Ezra and Nehemiah. We see God working over time to restore His people. However, with God's work there is always opposition. (God's plans do not ensure ease or lack of obstacles) In Ezra the enemies of Judah and Benjamin come and try to deceive them and offer to help build temples. After the offer is declined, there are multiple occasions of different nations reaching out to those in authority and bringing accusations against them and the temple. Construction stops and starts a few times over as they deal with the opposition. Furthermore, in Nehemiah they work to restore the wall around Jerusalem as God instructed them. They receive ridicule and opposition from enemies on several accounts. But ultimately, the wall is complete, thanks to God's favor and protection. The truth is, "in this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33). It is promised to the followers of God that there will be opposition. There is an enemy and he will wage war on God's people. But, we can take heart, for "I have overcome the world." The battle may be ongoing, but the enemy has already been defeated.

Have you ever experience opposition when trying to do what God has called you to do? How did you respond to that opposition? How have you seen God defeat that opposite over time? Do you ever feel ridiculed for following God? How has God helped encourage you through those times of opposition? What promises of God can you cling to when opposition arises?

Write your reflections from the month

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?"

Nehemiah 12 – Esther – Job 13

During the book of Esther, Israel had been in exile and spread across the land. Esther is a story about one group of exiled Jews who were living in the cities of Medo-Persia, such as Susa.

They continued to live as outsiders, oppressed by the nations where they dwelled, and yet still seeing God's faithfulness in preserving them. Esther is also a book about honor and relationships. We see that Mordecai was raising his orphaned cousin Esther (Hadassah) with great honor. After Esther was taken into the palace, Mordecai visit's her every single day. He continues to show he is an honorable man as he saves the king, he honors the Lord by refusing to bow to Haman, his faithfulness in supporting and encouraging Esther as she prepares to put her life at risk for the Jews.

Mordecai was living as an exile in an oppressive kingdom and raising a child that wasn't his. He put his own life at risk in order to remain faithful to God. We can also see he is respected as a leader within his community as he leads the Jews in prayer and fasting for Esther. How do you remain faithful to God in the midst of trials and oppression? How do you show yourself as honorable during those times? Are you conducting your life in a way that you could be respected as a leader, given influence, and direct people towards God? What steps can you take to increase your faith during trials?

Esther was an orphan, living in exile, being raised by her cousin. She easily could have developed a calloused heart. She then becomes queen and could have easily been overcome with her wealth and power, abandoning her people. But we see she remains humble and faithful to the Lord. She is obedient, even to the point of risking her own life. She is a woman of honor, leading her people in prayer and fasting. She never acts with entitlement or bitterness, which could have come easily to a person who lived through Esther's life. Esther never sought to serve herself. She puts her people and her God above everything, including herself.

Job 14 – Job 37

Job has lost nearly every good thing in his life. His children, servants, crops, and livestock. We read through his innermost grief and laments. He feels large

feelings, expresses anger, questions God, and lets his emotions get the best of him. Yet, he remains righteous. He remains in God's will. That's not to say he never sinned, but he never turned from God or cursed God. (It's important to note that he also doesn't put all his focus on the devil, but he remains focused on God.) Even though his darkness and his overwhelming emotions, we also see him offer praise to God (Job 19:23-29)

How do you handle grief in your life? (Grief can be from large losses such as Job's, but also big changes like living through 2020, life transitions, even moving on from good things in life) During grief do you put your focus on the devil or negativity or do you maintain focus on God? What can you do to ensure better handling of grief in the future? Are there any practical steps to take to focus your mind more on God and the positive in life?

After all he lost, Job is berated by his wife and friends, who were meant to be his comforters. His wife tells him to curse God and die. His friends do everything from telling him that it's a punishment for his sins, that he is like the wicked and they even presumed to speak on behalf on God. They responded to him with pride, assumptions, and criticism. These people should have known him better than anyone. His wife and closest friends. Despite these close relationships, they seem very eager to declare him to be a wicked sinner. Job was already grieving, just to feel betrayed and unknown by those closest to him. In responding to Job's suffering, the hearts of those around him were revealed. They believed they were doing the right thing. This scenario is not foreign to the relationships we maintain today.

How do you comfort those who are suffering? Do you direct them to God in love? Do you project your own pain and grief onto them? Are you able to listen and comfort without casting shame? Ask God to reveal to you how you can better love those around you in their time of need.

Job 38 – Psalm 31

At the end of Job (Chapters 38-41) are some of the most powerful verses about who God is. These are words spoken from God's own mouth. His power and sovereignty in full display through his questioning of Job. God challenges Job with His questions about creation and nature. The picture painted of all God's majesty is unmatched throughout scripture and completely infallible as it's spoken from God's own mouth.

In reading through God's word to Job, did it inspire awe in your heart? Were there any portions of His speech that were new thoughts to you or shed light on His authority in a new way? What stood out to you the most about how God spoke to Job? How does reading through these chapters affect the way

you will speak to and of God moving forward? Take a moment to praise Him for all His majesty.

After God speaks to him, Job is led to repentance and humility. (Take note that Job was very strongly reprimanded and corrected by God. God in His loving kindness does discipline and correct us.) He acknowledges the greatness of God and his own limitations that do not compare. He speaks in reverence and humility. He speaks of the truths of God's power and authority. Job sees the ways he mishandled his grief and that God's goodness remains true in the midst of his sufferings. He confesses his pride and declares that he will change his ways. His repentance is true, humble, and reflective of his heart-changing. This is a true example of Godly repentance which is so much more than an apology.

When you repent to God for your sins, does your repentance look like Jobs? Does it come from a changed heart that is full of humility? Is it inclusive of specific confessions and declarations of how you will try and do things differently? Do you approach the throne of grace with a soft heart and open to God's correction?

Psalm 32 – Psalm 77

The Psalms are an incredible compilation of David's (and others) very heartfelt words. Some are words of sorrow, some of the anger, some of the praise. Psalm has the feeling of an unfiltered diary. There are raw and beautiful words written to God. These words are powerful weapons when memorized and/or used as prayers. Meditate on the verses below. Commit them to heart. Practice using them as part of your prayer's and see the power that comes from it.

(A Psalm to pray as part of your repentance)

Psalm 51:1-4

"Have mercy on me, O God according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge."

(A Psalm to use in prayer against the enemy)

Psalm 68:1-3

"May God arise, may His enemies be scattered, And may those who hate Him flee from His presence. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before a fire,
So the wicked will perish before God. But the righteous will be joyful; they will

rejoice before God; Yes, they will rejoice with gladness.”

(A Psalm to use in your prayers of thanksgiving and praise)

Psalm 66:1-4

“Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. Say to God, “How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will pretend to obey You. All the earth will worship You, And will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name.”

Write your reflections from the month:

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

Psalm 118:29 "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His mercy is everlasting."

Psalm 78 – Psalm 107

Psalm 92 reads "It is good to give thanks to the Lord And to sing praises to Your name, Most High; To declare Your goodness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night..." The author includes giving thanks and singing praise, as two separate actions. The difference is that we are to give Him thanks for all He does and then to also praise Him for who He is. Continuing, to declare His goodness in the morning and faithfulness at night.

This is an example of living a life of thanksgiving and praise; not only once a day, or just in church, but to create a life of worship and declaration.

Are you giving thanks to God and also offering Him praise? How often do you remember and declare His faithfulness and goodness? What can you do to start and end your day with praise? What is holding you back from letting thanksgiving be your life every day?

It can be difficult to see the cohesion within the Bible as you read through it. But there are many times we see stories, people, and scriptures from previous books referenced by authors in the later books. We see this in Psalm 105. In giving God praise for His faithfulness, the author of this Psalm recalls stories of God's works from the beginning. He mentions the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; how God was faithful in leading Israel to the promised land through famine and oppression.

God's providence being shown through Joseph's captivity, and Moses leading Israel from Egypt. He mentions specific miracles and works of God throughout those times and then finishes by saying "He brought forth His people in joy." It is so important to recognize verses like these as confirmation of the word of God being whole and true. Also, in times when it feels like God is distant and you are struggling to find positive things to give thanks for, spend time in remembrance of how God has been faithful throughout your own story.

Ask God to confirm the truth of His word in your heart and to remove any doubt you have in His scriptures. Take a moment to give thanks for His faithfulness over time, both throughout history and in your own story. Write down specific times you've seen God be faithful in your life. Ask God to give you more faith in your present and looking forward and to help you remember that He will never leave you nor forsake you.

Psalm 108 – Psalm 145

Psalm 111:10 says "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; All those who follow His commandments have a good understanding; His praise endures forever." (See also: Proverbs 1:7 & 9:10, Job 28:28, Isaiah 33:6) The fear of the Lord can be a confusing phrase. Should we actually be afraid of God? The truth is, He is a loving God who extends endless mercy. We need not fear Him as if He were coming against us with His power. However, we should fear our life away from God. Wisdom and understanding of who God is, what He loves and hates, a desire to follow Him and believe in His word, understanding what your life and eternity will be apart from God, that is the fear spoken of here. Reverence to God and His word, developing a healthy fear of God. We don't fear who He is, we fear hurting our Creator and the one who loves us most, and that leads us to heartfelt obedience out of love.

Do you feel like you have a fear of God and a fear of living your life without Him? Are you afraid to disappoint Him (Not because He'll punish you, but because He is perfect)? Has reading through His laws and seeing His standards given you a fresh understanding and desire to live up to a higher standard?

Psalm 133:1 Says "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to live together in unity!" Unity has been difficult throughout the past few years especially. There are misconceptions that unity and peace are the same as a lack of conflict. But that is not true. Peace and unity come from a combined belief in serving God in everything and being of one Spirit. We see even the early church and apostles had strong disagreements in Acts. When you are committed to serving God and honoring your brothers and sisters in Christ, you can be in unity and be at peace, even without total agreement on things. Believing that this type of peace is not possible within strong disagreements is what's leads to disunity. God never instructed us to believe all the same things about the world or religion. But that our love for God and one another would make unity possible throughout conflict. One thing that always remains true is that the body of Christ is more efficient and world-changing when it acts in unity. Revival will not take place in disunity.

Have you allowed disunity over disputes that you shouldn't have? Have you created your own line in the sand without consulting God and the Holy Spirit? What can you do to pursue peace through love, even with those you've had a conflict with? Is God putting someone on your heart to seek reconciliation with? Ask God to reveal where you have hardened your heart and show you how to pursue unity.

Psalm 145 – Proverbs 18

Many times in Proverbs we read that the plans of men always fall short of the

plans of God (Proverbs 16:1-3, 20:24, 19:21). Human minds will never fully comprehend the plans of the Lord. Human minds could never devise a better plan than the Lords. Would Joseph have planned for Himself to be sold into slavery? It wasn't until he saw it all unfold that he recognized God's perfect plan. Would the apostle have planned to have Jesus crucified on the cross? They saw the power and purpose of that plan after His resurrection and even more after Pentecost. No matter how smart or wise a person is, God's plans will be better. He alone knows the future, He alone knows all you're capable of, and He alone can create the perfect plan for a person's life.

Have you been trying to plan your life on your own? Are there areas in your life that God is asking you to submit to Him for His guidance? What are some times you've made your own choice, despite God's guidance, and what was the outcome? When have you submitted to His plan, even though you didn't understand why, and how did that turn out?

Throughout Proverbs, we see the warnings about speech, gossip, and the power of the tongue. Such as "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." (See also Proverbs 10 and James 3:5-12) In our present age, we are constantly taught that our every thought and opinion needs to be shared... and publicly. Listening is not a skill being pursued, only who can be the loudest. People have become extremely quick to speak and slow to listen; which is in direct contradiction to the Bible (See James 1:19). James even connects being quick to speak with being quick to anger. Because He understood the power of the tongue; the power of words. The only person whose words are infallible are Gods and His words give much instruction to us about controlling our tongue. The mouth moves faster than the brain and the brain is an imperfect human organ. Better to reflect and then speak; than to speak and regret.

Do you find that your mouth is more in control of you than the other way around? Have you been loose with your words and your thoughts? Have you seen the damage of angry words and also seen the life brought through loving words? Do you have anyone you need to apologize to for words that came out too fast? Ask God to help you respond, not react. Ask God to give you restraint that leads you to prayer.

Proverbs 19 – Ecclesiastes – Isaiah 4

Ecclesiastes (probably written by Solomon) is a complicated book. Here, the wisest man to ever live, blessed with worldly and Godly wisdom beyond any other, has recognized that even all his wisdom is futile. While this thought can be perplexing to us, especially as we've read to pursue wisdom, it is actually some of Solomon's most wise words. He found that at the end of it all, with all his possessions, accomplishments, power, etc. that he is still nothing but a man. That he still lacks everything in comparison to God. That mastering

Memory Verse

Isaiah 53:5 *"But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed."*

Isaiah 5 – Isaiah 35

Isaiah contains some of the most important prophecies of Jesus' birth, life and death. Including Isaiah 9:6-7 "For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." and Isaiah 11:1-5 speaking of His life and His empowerment through the Holy Spirit.

Do you ever feel challenged when reading through the Old Testament? How do these prophecies impact your faith in the Bible? Find in the New Testament the scriptures that confirm the fulfillment of these prophecies and commit them to memory and see your faith strengthened.

The Old Testament prophets are full of chapters with warnings, judgements and God's wrath towards His people. It can be difficult to read through. But among those chapters you will always find God's mercy and see His eternal hope for His people. His heart for us is never hidden throughout the prophets, even among the more difficult chapters. His heart will always be that His people would be in communion with Him and not pursue lives that bring them harm. Isaiah 25 is a song of praise. It shows that while God's wrath is strong, His mercies will always be greater, His promises are everlasting. Isaiah 25:8 "He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces."

Have you ever felt confused or discouraged reading through the Old Testament? Do verses, such as Isaiah 25:8, give you hope? Ask God to write His eternal promises on your heart and to help you cling to His faithfulness. When reading through portions of the Bible that can be difficult to understand, ask God for an open mind and heart. God will always reveal Himself through His word.

Isaiah 36–Isaiah 66

Isaiah shares beautiful insight into how valued we are as God's children. Isaiah 43:4 "You are precious in My eyes..." Isaiah 43:25 "I will not remember your sins..." Isaiah 44:24 "Your redeemer, who formed you in the womb..." Isaiah 64:8 "We are all the work of your hand..." Isaiah solidifies that we are created by God, loved by Him, forgiven by Him and redeemed by Him. Not just you,

or your church family, but all people. His feelings towards you are His feelings towards those you struggle to love.

Do these verses about God's heart towards you bring comfort? Do they challenge your view of humankind? Does the way you treat other and yourself reflect the love of God for all His children? Ask God to continue molding your heart to be like His.

Isaiah 53 is perhaps the most important prophecy in all of the Old Testament. It is foundational to the gospel message and affirms God's plans to send Jesus as the pure sacrificial lamb to die for the sins of the world. Isaiah 53 verse 5 "He was pierced for our transgressions..." verse 6 "the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." It also speaks of Jesus' future place at the right hand of the Father, as our advocate and intercessor. Isaiah 53:12 "...makes intercession for the transgressors." It speaks of how He will be oppressed and crucified, how He'll bear all our sins, how He will die among criminals and how He would go through it all for us.

Read Isaiah 53 and then read the New Testament accounts of the Jesus' death (Matthew 27, Mark 15, and Luke 23). What aspects of Jesus' death are prophesied in Isaiah 53? Does reading through the fulfillment of this prophecy and God's plan strengthen your faith? Do you have any doubts about the truth of the gospel? Confess any doubts you have to God and ask Him for increased faith.

Jeremiah 1 – Jeremiah 25

The prophet Jeremiah began prophesying in Judah during the reign of King Josiah (who was a Godly king that took reign at only eight years old) and continued serving as a prophets through the reign of several kings after. Jeremiah doubted his own calling due to his young age and what he believed his talents and limits were. But God shuts down those doubts quickly and clearly. Jeremiah 1:17 "Do not say, 'I am a youth', because everywhere I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak." The calling on Jeremiah's life was there before he was even conceived (Jeremiah 1:5). God's plan's are not dependent on who you are, what your talent are, what home you were raised in or the age at which His calls you.

Are there things God is asking you to do that you fell unqualified for? Have you spoken your own doubts to God about His calling over your life? Ask God to fill you with courage. Decide on some doable steps you can take in obedience now. Trust that God's plans are better and He will equip you as needed.

The following verses give a beautiful picture of what a life rooted in God can and should look like. Jeremiah 17:7-8 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose trust is the Lord. For he will be like a tree planted by the

water that extends its roots by a stream, and does not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought, nor cease to yield fruit."

Reflect on this verse. What does it look like to fully trust God? Are you a planted by water, with strong roots, not fearing any elements that come along? Do you continue to bear fruit during dry seasons?

Jeremiah 26 – Lamentations 2

Jeremiah 29:11 is one of the most famous verses in the Bible. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." We can stand in faith knowing that God's plans are good, just as He is good.

Are you living your life as a person who serves the one truly good God who has good plans for you? Have you ever confused easy steps, or your own plans, with God's better plans? Do you have expectations of God's plans for you that are holding you back from obedience?

Lamentations is a poetic book that contains laments of Jerusalem's destruction and nothing else. It is widely believed that Lamination's was written by Jeremiah. We see in Jeremiah that he often cried out to God with heartfelt laments for Judah. Jeremiah's heart for the people is very clear. He is often referred to as "the weeping prophet". While many prophets we'll read through simply share God's messages, as they are called to, Jeremiah includes many of his own cries for the people. In Lamentations 2:19 we see this same heart: "Arise, cry out in the middle of the night...pour out your heart like water before the presences of the Lord...lift up your hands to Him for the lives of your children." In Jeremiah 33:3 we see God encourage the cries of the people and promises to meet them in their needs. While God knows the contents of your heart and mind, there is power in speaking with your voice. It is a step of obedience that bring humility.

Speak out loud to God the cries of your heart; whatever they may be. Take that step towards closer intimacy with Him. Ask God to answer your cries and bring healing to your heart. Humble yourself in obedience as you wait on God to meet you where you are.

Write your reflections from the month:

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September Devotional Guide

Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 *"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."*

Lamentations 3 – Ezekiel 20

Lamentations, while it is a book full of laments, it also contains a beautiful chapter about hope. Lamentations 3 is a chapter full of Jeremiah's hope in the Lord. Verses 22-24 says "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in Him.' " The idea that the Lord's mercies are new every morning is comforting to us. His forgiveness never runs out. Every day as we make mistakes, He offers forgiveness without restraint. His mercies are also very mysterious to us. We may never fully understand how He extends His mercy. Some trials we experience may be mercies He has blessed us with. Sometimes closed doors and missed opportunities are God's mercy saving us. His mercies are also new, always in our best interest, and always available to us. Like Jeremiah, we have hope in His faithfulness. While the world, people, and establishments are broken, disappointing, and fail. God remains faithful to the end. Hope placed in God will never be wasted.

How are you experiencing God's mercies? Ask God to reveal the mystery of some of His mercies in your life that you may not be aware of. Where have you been placing your hope? Ask God to reveal where you've truly been placing your hope. Are there any changes or steps you can take to restore and focus your hope in the Lord?

Ezekiel and Jeremiah were sent with the same message to the people of Israel. Jeremiah delivered that message to Jerusalem, while Ezekiel was sent to deliver the message to those in exile. Ezekiel is a very interesting prophet. His instructions from the Lord went far beyond what words to say. Many times, we see Ezekiel performing symbolic actions as a way of showing God's message to the people. Ezekiel drew an image of Jerusalem on brick and then displayed a siege of the city (Ezekiel 4:1-3), then he laid on his side for over a year (Chapter 4:4-8), he ate a strange mixture of foods baked with dung

(Chapter 4:9-17) he symbolically cut his hair and disposed of it in thirds (Chapter 5:1-4), he dug through the wall (Chapter 12:1-7), and more. It seems strange that as a prophet God would instruct him to communicate in this way. But God's plans are never foolish and never purposeless. Sometimes, a visual picture conveys a message more clearly. Sometimes, seeing the obedience and conviction of another person speaks volumes. Sometimes, not speaking at all is the biggest message that can be sent.

Are there any actions God is asking you to take that seem strange to you and you question the power of those actions? Are there moments when you are speaking, but feel God asking you to stay silent? Is your life a living example of the gospel message? What adjustments might God be pushing you to make so that you live as a better example?

Ezekiel 21 – Ezekiel 39

It can be difficult to read in the Old Testament and see the heart of God through all the discipline and wrath. But His love for His people is not hidden. His heart never abandoned them, but we see His heart grieved for them. Ezekiel 33 is an example of God's heart for His people. Verse 11 says "...as I live!" declares the Lord God, "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways!" The rest of the chapter outlines how it's a person's choices that matter in the end. Choose wickedness and receive death, choose righteousness and live. God's hope and plan was for all to choose righteousness. We see that heart echoed in 2 Peter 3:9 "...not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." God always gave His people a choice. His hope in that choice has always been that all would come to choose Him. He will honor the choice of those who do not choose Him, but His heart hurts for every life that chooses sin and death.

Do you ever grow weary in choosing God? Do you find that your heart has hardened to those who are choosing a path separate from God? Ask God to share with you His heart for all people; sharing His hope that all would choose Him. Ask for strength as you continue to choose God in this ever-challenging time.

Ezekiel was speaking to the outcasts and the exiles. Those who felt abandoned, forgotten, and oppressed. They must have felt like God left them in the desert, again. They must have felt discouraged, alone, and hopeless. While Ezekiel was sharing a message of repentance and of God's anger, he was also extending God's grace. He wasn't sent to them to condemn them, but to beg them to repent and return to God. Within the rebuke and the punishment is the desire for healing. But God's standards hadn't changed. His will for their lives hadn't changed. And just because He wanted their return and He hoped dearly that they would change, He was not making adjustments

to His law or accommodating their sinful behavior. Turning away from sin (repentance) was always required in forgiveness. The exiles felt far from God, but in truth, He was with them the whole time. It was their own hearts keeping them from being intimate with Him.

Do you ever feel like God is far from you or that you've been abandoned by God? What sins might you need to turn away from in order to feel close to God again? Ask God to meet you where you are and help you heal. Seek out the areas of your own heart that you are hiding from God and work towards greater intimacy with Him.

Ezekiel 40 – Daniel 12

The book of Daniel is home to some of the most well-known Bible stories. Daniel was part of Judah who had been exiled by the Babylonians. Daniel and his friends were of the Israelites selected to be brought into the city to be trained and then to serve. A primary theme we see throughout the book of Daniel is how Daniel (and a few of his friends) chose to remain faithful to God and their religious beliefs. First, Daniel leads them in choosing not to eat the food portions from the king's house that had been used in idol sacrifices (Daniel 1:8). They then refused to worship the golden image (Daniel 3). In Daniel 6 we see that Daniel refuses to stop praying and giving thanks to God. All of these choices were counter-cultural and also dangerous. But Daniel and the others remained steadfast in their service to God. It's also important to note that they maintained their faith with peace and humility. These men are our example of living in the world but not of the world. How to remain faithful and steadfast in our faith in God within a culture that actively despises our God.

Do you find yourself struggling to follow God in our culture? Are there areas that you find yourself giving in to the world's beliefs or customs? How might God be asking you to stand out from the culture and what changes would you need to make? Are you maintaining your faith with peace and humility, in a way that would speak volumes to the world? Ask God to help you stand out from the culture and make your life a witness.

The famous stories within Daniel involve a fiery furnace and a den of lions. First, we read the Nebuchadnezzar had a golden idol created and made a decree that all should worship this idol or be thrown into a furnace. At the time required to bow down, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to worship the idol. In his rage, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the furnace to be increased to seven times the heat and for them to be thrown into it. It was so hot, that it killed the men who threw them into it. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego remained unharmed; they were protected by a fourth figure who appeared in the fire with them. Later, Daniel refuses to cease his prayers to

God, which was against a decree made by Darius. He was then thrown into a den full of lions. He survives a night spent with hungry lions and credits God and His angel for saving him. In these two instances, Nebuchadnezzar and Darius both see God's authority and power and recognize Him as God. These stories are challenging for many reasons. First, we don't see those scenarios as something we may face personally in our lives. Second, most people have not witnessed such incredible miracles firsthand. And lastly, we struggle to relate to that level of faith and commitment to God. But many things remain true: God is still at work and performing miracles daily. His angels do minister to and protect His people. Deathly persecution against Christians is very real today (though not in our own culture at this time). Finally, God can and will work things together for His good no matter the circumstance.

Do you find that these stories challenge your faith? What aspect of the stories do you find yourself relating to? Do you have any memories of past miracles or moments where God clearly intervened? Ask God for an increase of faith in His power and miracles. If you find yourself facing a furnace or a lion's den, ask God for faith to jump in.

Hosea – Joel – Amos – Obadiah – Jonah – Micah – Nahum – Habakkuk – Zephaniah 3

Hosea, one of the minor prophets and a short read, can be quite confusing. God instructs this prophet to marry a known prostitute. In obedience, Hosea marries her and then continues to seek her when she runs off with other men and even buys her back. It is the beautiful image of God with Israel; but also God with us. No matter where we run to, what bad choices we make, or what it costs, He always pursues us. He sent His only Son to pay the price for our salvation. God was using Hosea to show His own undying love for us. It is easy to think, "Why on earth would Hosea chase after her?" But then extend that thought to God. Why would He continue to pursue us? Why would He forgive us over and over? Why would He pay the price for our salvation? Are we worth it? Gomer was a terrible bride and so are we. Our saving grace is that God will always take us back and that every time we don't deserve it.

Are you living as a faithful bride of Christ? Do you wonder why God continues to pursue you, even in all your mess? Does the imagery of Hosea and Gomer give you a better understanding of your value in God? Ask God to reveal His love towards you and accept His unwavering forgiveness. Search your heart for the things that draw you away from Him and work on making the changes needed to be a more faithful servant.

The sentiment in Micah 6:8 is repeated several times in the minor prophets. The idea of seeking justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. God

regularly reminds His people that these are the foremost priority in serving Him as God. Take some time to do a verse study on that verse. Micah 6:8 "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Read the verse in several translations, look up keywords in your concordance, look for the similarly worded verses in the other prophets, and dissect the verse and commit it to heart.

Ask God to reveal His meaning behind those words and how it applies to you in your life. Examine what it would mean in your own life to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. What might need to change for those words to apply to you? Have you been misinterpreting what that means?

Write your reflections from the month:

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

Luke 10:27 *"And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."*

Introduction to the New Testament

We are now entering the time of Jesus' life on earth. Beginning in the New Testament we will read the four gospel accounts of His life, death, and resurrection. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are four of the disciples who knew Jesus intimately. They all offer different perspectives of Jesus' life. It's important to remember that the Bible is the whole and true Word of God and that God allowed each writer to use their own voice. That is why we see different focuses, different verbiage, different writing styles, and different takes on the life of Jesus. All the gospel accounts are true; all are important. When reading through the gospels, take note of the different perspectives. Compare and contrast the four accounts. This will give you the most comprehensive understanding of Jesus' life on earth.

Haggai 1 – Matthew 8

Jesus was fully God and fully man. He lived as a human, like us all, but without ever committing a sin. He was tried and tested, beaten and humiliated, falsely accused, and then killed. But He remained sinless. One main example is Jesus being tempted by the devil in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13) after fasting for forty days and forty nights. Things to note about the devil's temptation: He fully understood who Jesus is; He knew scripture; He knew Jesus' relationship to the Father; Most importantly, the devil is subject to Jesus' authority. The devil often uses the Bible, uses partial truths, or tempts with what he knows would be desirable to us. But as Jesus did, we must refute the devil with scripture and truth.

Do you feel equipped to use truth and the Bible to stand up against the enemy? What could you do to be better prepared for his temptations? We will all fall to temptation at times, how do you respond when you do?

In Matthew 4:18-22, Jesus calls the first disciples. First, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. Then, James and his brother John. In both instances, the men immediately dropped what they were doing and followed Jesus. Leaving behind their livelihoods and their families. These first disciples were not highly educated, rich, or seemingly special in any way. But Jesus saw their hearts. They had hearts to serve and a willingness to give up their own priorities, dreams, and lives. Jesus never cared about someone's status or appearance.

He only looked at the heart.

Have you submitted yourself to following God in a humble and selfless way? What is holding you back from giving all that you have? Do you feel constrained in your desire to serve and be a fisher of men? Ask God to help your heart be humble and open to His calling and direction.

Matthew 9 – Matthew 23

Jesus did much of His teaching through parables. Stories with moral teaching that was relatable to the crowds He was speaking to. One of those parables is the story of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:10-14 and Luke 15:4-7). In this parable, the shepherd loses just one sheep out of one hundred sheep, but because of His great love for that sheep, He leaves the ninety-nine and goes looking for the lost sheep. This represents God and His unfailing love toward us. He will always search for you, fight for you, and will never give up on you. Something else that should be noted, we are called to love as He first loved us. We should strive to love as the Good Shepherd loves us.

Was there ever a time in your life when you could feel God fighting for you? What impact does it have on you to know that the Good Shepherd will never give up on you? Do you feel challenged in your love for others by how God loves you? Ask God to help you love as the Good Shepherd loves.

Another parable of Jesus was told after Peter asked about forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35). Peter wanted to know if he should forgive his brother's sins even seven times. Jesus told him, not just seven times, but seventy times seven (That number was not intended as an actual limit to forgiveness but to show that our forgiveness should be limitless). Jesus then told the parable of the unforgiving servant. In this parable, a master forgives a great debt to his servant. But having received that mercy, the servant goes to collect a small debt and does not offer any forgiveness or mercy. Because the servant had a hard heart and refused to show forgiveness, the master took him back to jail. The most challenging words come out of verse 35: "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." Forgiveness is one of the hardest things to give; especially when there has been real hurt. However, the forgiveness we have received through Jesus is far greater than any forgiveness that we could offer anyone else. Matthew 6:15 "But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

What unforgiveness are you holding onto in your heart? Have you allowed your heart to harden toward specific people? Is God challenging you to offer forgiveness when you didn't before? Ask God to soften your heart, reveal any hidden or known unforgiveness, and help you take the steps needed to offer that forgiveness in your heart.

Matthew 24 – Mark 9

After Jesus' resurrection and before He ascended into Heaven, He spoke to the disciples what is called the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20). These were His final instructions to the disciples and therefore His instructions to us. We are meant to go into the world and make disciples; baptizing them and teaching them. He also promised that we would never be alone and that He would always be with us. These instructions are clear and specific, but are they being followed? Are they being treated as instructions for all Christ-followers or only for those who work in ministry? The great commission was not spoken just to the twelve disciples, but to many followers and disciples of Jesus. Jesus did not limit the instructions to a specific few. He gave these instructions to all who knew and believed in Him.

Do you believe that you're fulfilling the great commission? Why or why not? Are there specific tasks giving that you find difficult to accomplish? What is standing in your way? Ask God to release the great commission in your heart and empower you to fulfill it.

Written in three of the four gospels is the story of Jesus calming the storm (Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25). When crossing the water in a boat a large storm started. The disciples were terrified and didn't know what to do. Jesus, however, was calm and asleep. They woke Him to ask for help and He spoke to the wind and the waves to be still. The storm calmed and the disciples were amazed. But in the end, Jesus asks the disciples, where is their faith. Many things stand out in this story. The disciples seemed to lack faith and still not understand who Jesus is. Jesus' authority and power extend to the earth and the elements. There's also the fact that Jesus was asleep. During a strong storm, He remained unbothered. Jesus does not see our storms as we do. He doesn't fear the wind and the waves. The things in our lives that feel like crazy storms don't even wake Him from sleep. It wasn't that He didn't care for His disciples; He simply already knew their futures and that they were safe (despite their feelings).

Are there storms in your life that have you crying out to Jesus for help? Are you lacking faith that He will get you through the storm? Ask God to give you an increase of faith and to speak over your life "peace be still".

Mark 10 – Luke 11

Jesus gave what is considered to be the greatest two commandments to us all (Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27). To love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself. But what does that mean? How do you love God with all your strength? When He says to love your neighbor who does He mean? From His other parables, we know that "neighbor" means everyone, enemies included. Jesus mentioning the

heart, soul, mind, and strength would lead to the conclusion that there should be nothing held back in our love for God. Every aspect of our being should be for Jesus and all that we do should be out of love for God and His people. These commandments are considered the greatest and to have overwritten the laws of the Old Testament. However, these two commandments prove to be the most difficult of all (It is easy for us not to murder our neighbor, but to actually love them is much more difficult).

What do you find the most challenging from those two commandments? Do you find it easier to love people or to love God? Do you feel like you have completely given yourself to God: mind, soul, heart, and strength? What might be holding you back from fully surrendering to God completely? Are you struggling to love your neighbor? Have you disqualified certain people from being considered a neighbor? Ask God to reveal ways in which you can love Him and His people better.

Mentioned in two of the gospels are the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 6:20-23). Read through each line and reflect on what it means.

"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in Heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets." Luke 6:20-23

Compare the Luke account of the beatitudes to the account in Matthew 5. How do they match up and how do they differ? Do you see the same heart and same vision but written through different voices?

What do you feel God teaching you from the beatitudes? Do you find them confusing or encouraging? Ask God to reveal His truths to you through those scriptures.

Write your reflections from the month:

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

Roman's 8:38-39 *"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Luke 12 – John 2

In Luke 12:22-34, Jesus tells the disciples "Do not be anxious about your life". He goes on to say that God takes care of even the sparrows and the lilies, but His care for you is even greater. If you cannot do something as simple as adding one hour to your life, why spend your time worrying about what you will eat or drink? Jesus wasn't telling them that anxiety is a sin, or that they should never feel anxious. He was teaching them to focus on the kingdom of Heaven rather than the things of this world. Of course, the Bible teaches us to be good stewards of our lives and Jesus was not saying to stop being responsible. Simply, do not hyper-focus on gain in this world. Don't spend endless time worrying about the future. Seek God, seek His kingdom and you will have all that you need. It was about priorities their priorities.

Do you find yourself overwhelmed with anxious thoughts? Are you trying to control things that are beyond your abilities? What might God be asking you to lay down in faith? Ask God to help you take every thought captive and to increase your focus on His kingdom.

Jesus tells a story of a widow who persistently goes to a judge for help (Luke 18:1-8). Over and over she bothers this judge. Eventually, out of contempt for her and a desire to not deal with her anymore, he gives her what she is asking for. He does so without any fear of God or care for her. He was irritated and hoped he wouldn't have to see her anymore. Unlike the judge in this story, God cares for His people. When you pray day and night, over and over, asking for the same things, He never tires of you. Your prayers do not bother Him. Verse 8 says "He will give justice to them speedily". (Remember that speedily to God may not look like our understanding a time, but nonetheless, His timing is perfect.) God is the only perfect judge. He responds to all who seek Him in faith. You cannot exhaust Him or wear Him down. His will and His timing are wholly good and perfect.

Do you ever feel like the widow and as if you are bothering God with your persistent requests? Do you doubt His goodness in responding to your prayers? Make a new commitment to pray without ceasing and bring all your requests to Him.

John 3 – John 18

Jesus has an interaction with a woman from Samaria at the well. This woman was a Samaritan, who the Jews would typically avoid and see as unclean, and she was also of questionable morals. That information would have kept most people from interacting with her. But Jesus didn't even hesitate. He taught her about the living water available to her through God and He also made sure she knew that He was aware of who she was. It's important that He knew her and her sins because He was offering her salvation despite her sinful life. He was showing His love is unconditional. After their interaction, the woman went into Samaria and shared her testimony. Because of her many believed. Even though she was a woman (The word of a woman did not carry much weight culturally at the time) and of questionable morality, the truth in her testimony spoke to them. The people then sought out Jesus and believed in Him.

Is there anything in your life that you think disqualifies you from God's love? Do you have a testimony of what God has saved you from? Are you sharing that testimony and pointing people towards God? Ask God for the courage to share your testimony, even the really ugly parts. Look for opportunities to share the truth of what God has saved you from.

In John 13 Jesus humbles Himself and washes the disciple's feet; even the feet of Judas whom He knew would betray Him. The job of washing feet was something a servant would do. Peter, of course, asks Jesus why He would wash their feet. Jesus then explains that no one is greater than another and that all should be humble and serve. Saved or unsaved, checkered past or squeaky clean, master or servant, all are the same in God's eyes. "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God". None is greater than the other and all are called to be servants. As He served, we should serve.

Do you have an idea in your own thoughts about who is better than others? Do you place yourself in a higher place? Do you struggle to humble yourself and serve other people? Would you be willing to serve your enemy? Ask God to give you a humble spirit and a servant's heart. Look for opportunities to serve others; your church, family, community, or others.

John 19 – Acts 15

Before His ascension to Heaven, Jesus promised that He would send a helper; that helper is the Holy Spirit. We see that happen in Acts. Famously, at the day of Pentecost found in Acts 2. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as a helper and His promise of this helper was meant to bring comfort. It should be remembered that the purpose of the Holy Spirit was not only to give comfort to believers but primarily to empower them. Acts 1:8 says "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." The Holy Spirit was sent to empower believers to do God's work. The Holy Spirit

was never intended to be a secret that believers kept to themselves or just comfort when they're struggling. The first thing seen in Acts 2 after the Holy Spirit falls on the disciples is Peter giving a sermon that leads to thousands being saved. He was empowered as a witness.

Have you forgotten the primary role of the Holy Spirit? Have you become complacent in the call to be a witness? Ask God to empower you as a witness.

The story of Saul's conversion in Acts 9 is one of the greatest redemption stories there is. Saul was a persecutor of Christians. He zealously sought believers, men, and women, and sought their capture and even their death (He was present at the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7). Saul meets God in the form of blinding light on the road to Damascus and he becomes a new man; he becomes who we know as the apostle Paul (The writer of Romans, and the letters to the churches). Paul is one of the greatest influences on the church as we know it and his writings are foundational. Two things that are important to recognize in Paul's story. First, he was a horrible person who hated God and his followers. But God changed his heart and forgave his wrongdoings (Yes, even forgiven for having Stephen killed). No one is too far gone or too bad to be saved. Second, God used Paul's history to make him a great witness and teacher. Paul was well educated in the scriptures, the law, the traditions, and more. He was intelligent and a persuasive writer. He was also a zealot; someone who would give his all for his beliefs. God changed Paul's heart, but then used all the gifts and knowledge he already had as a man to be a leader in the church. God can use anyone and soften even the hardest hearts. As believers who desire all to know God we must resist the heart that even the disciple Ananias had. When God sent him to see Paul, Ananias questioned God because he knew who Paul was and knew that he was an evil man. Ananias initially resisted God's instructions because of his own doubts about Paul's conversion. Let us not limit God's ability to reach people and change lives.

Are there people in your life that you have decided are too far gone and that they can't be changed? Have you ceased in prayer for anyone because of your doubts? Is there anyone God is asking you to be a witness to, but you believe they are incapable of change? Ask God to soften your own heart and strengthen your faith in His power. Pray dangerous prayers that might just lead to someone's life-changing.

Acts 16 – Romans

In Acts 16 Paul and Silas are imprisoned because they had been performing miracles and sharing the gospel. While in prison, they sang hymns and prayed to God; all the while the other prisoners were listening to them. God caused a great earthquake and the doors to the prison opened. After, the jailer was in distress believing he'd lost all the prisoners and went to kill himself. Paul

stopped him and assured him that they were all still there. The jailer then accepted Christ as His savior and received salvation. Paul and Silas chose to praise God in the midst of the valley and because of it, people were saved. Never forget that people are watching you at your best and at your worst; your response to trials is one of the greatest testimonies you have. Paul also chose to minister to the jailer, the very person in charge of keeping him in prison, rather than to run away or mistreat him. Paul decided in his heart that the salvation, of even those who persecuted him, was more important than his own bad circumstances.

Do you think anyone would see God through how you handle the valleys in life? Would you prioritize sharing the gospel over your own comfort and circumstance? Search your own heart and evaluate your priorities in this life. Consider what you might do to adjust them to be more God-focused.

Romans 12 is Paul's list of what the marks of a true Christian are. Things like hating evil, showing honor to others above yourself, being patient in tribulation, and blessing those who persecute you. Read Romans 12:1-21 in a few different versions of the Bible. Consider all the marks of a true Christ-follower that Paul shares and evaluate yourself.

What stands out to you on Paul's list? What characteristics are difficult for you? Search your heart. Ask God to reveal the areas you need growth.

Write your reflections from the month:

What challenged you?

What encouraged you?

What can you apply to your daily life?

Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 15:58 *"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."*

Romans 13 – 1 Corinthians – 2 Corinthians 4

Jesus set the example of resisting temptation. He lived a sin-free life. While we strive to be like Jesus in all that we do, we also know that as humans we will all sin and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 2:23). Praise God who offers us grace no matter how often we stumble. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul writes that all temptation is common to man. But that God will never allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to resist. He will always provide you with a way of escape. With that way of escape, you must take it, or fall into sin. The following verse says to "Flee from idolatry". Idolatry is just one example of sinful temptation. But the instructions were to flee. That is a very strong and active word. He'll provide you the path to run away, but you have to run. Flee from temptation. God knows you won't always make the right choices but He'll continue to offer you a way out. Learning to resist temptation is a learning curve and it's not a linear progression. But we must always pursue righteousness; seek what is holy; remake ourselves in Christ's image. The more you resist temptation the easier it will be. You will never achieve a sin-free life, only Jesus could, but you will avoid hurt and troubles and strengthen your relationship with God as you grow.

Do you recognize your own sinful nature? What is a temptation that seems to cause you to stumble regularly? What can you do to try and flee that temptation when it arises? What small steps can you take towards overcoming habitual sins? Remember, repent and be forgiven, and try to do better the next time. Receive God's grace and extend that grace to yourself and others.

1 Corinthians 13 is known as the love chapter. Regularly read at weddings and written on decorative signs. The abundant use of these verses has almost taken away from the very challenging truth and strong language that Paul used. Start right at the beginning, love is patient and kind. Right from the start, we all fall short. None of us are patient and kind with even the people we claim to love the most. This chapter is incredibly challenging and not at all the flowery, lovey-dovey, easy-going writing on the wall. Every single person should read it and recognize that they struggle to love as we ought to. Can you honestly say that if your enemy experienced hardship that you wouldn't feel some spark of glee in your heart? Can you say that no matter what a person did to you, no matter how awful, that you would forgive them? This

In reading through the verses did you feel the Lord convict you? Was there one or two aspects of love that really stood out to you? What aspects of love made you feel the most challenged? In remembering that while we cannot love perfectly, God does love us with that perfect love. Spend some time appreciating God's, perfect love.

2 Corinthians 5 – Galatians – Ephesians – Philippians 4

Paul was no stranger to hardship and spiritual attack. He was beaten, stoned, imprisoned, bit by a poisonous snake, and more. One of the hardships he encountered was a thorn in his side in the form of harassment from the devil. This attack made him feel weak and powerless. He felt less able to do what God had called him to do. He pleaded with God to take away this thorn, but God responded in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." God was telling Paul that He would use his weaknesses as a tool to witness. He was also reminding him that it wasn't of his own power that he was able to do what he did; that he needed to rely on God for strength. Paul recognized the lesson he was learning and went on to say he would be content in weakness and hardship. "For when I am weak, then I am strong." It can be hard to see God in our weaknesses and hardships. It's easy to beg God to remove these "thorns" and make life easier. We naturally, as humans, want to feel strong and capable. But God is the one who is able. God is the one who is strong. In our weakness is when we see God move. He will move mountains when we feel like we can't even lift our arms in praise.

When you feel a thorn in your side or a spiritual attack, do you find yourself praising or complaining? Do you see God's power in you're own weaknesses? Have you been spending too much time asking Him to take away hardships rather than asking Him what He is doing through them? Ask God to help you change your perspective. Ask Him to help you to boast in your weakness. Then, ask Him to move mountains through it.

In Ephesians 6 we are told to put on the full armor of God. But what does that mean and why were we instructed to do so? Paul says to put this armor specifically to fight against the devil and defend against his schemes. Read through Ephesians 6:14-18:

"Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit..."

Pray through those verses and ask God to reveal new things to you through

them. Meditate on each line and each piece of armor. What is God revealing to you? Are there pieces of your armor that you feel confident in? Are there pieces that you feel you struggle to with? Thank God for your strengths in your armor and ask Him to help you better equip yourself in the areas of your armor that are weak.

Colossians – 1 & 2 Thessalonians – 1 & 2 Timothy – Titus – Philemon – Hebrews 6

In Paul's letters to the churches, there are many similarities. He always extends his love and thanksgiving. These letters are also typically filled with correction; some more than others, as well as guidelines for living Godly lives. One main theme that is seen in many of the letters is an encouragement to stay strong, don't lose heart, and keep running the race (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). In Galatians 6 he says "Do not grow weary in doing good". In Philemon 2 we're told to do all things (serving God) without grumbling or complaining. In 1 Thessalonians 5 he says to pray without ceasing and rejoice always. We are to be watchful (1 Corinthians 16:13), be cheerful givers (2 Corinthians 9:6-8), do nothing out of selfish ambition (Philemon 2:3-8), and to not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord (2 Timothy 1:8). How we live is important. Paul's instructions on living Godly lives are important. His corrections are important. But above all, we must stay strong in our pursuit of God. It will all mean nothing if we lose heart and give up on our service to God. It's a long race and it was never said that it would be easy. But we made stay strong, stay focused, and we must continue to run the race no matter that obstacles or weariness.

It is not easy to live a Godly life in our current culture. The world does not love God and their standards and values are different. Have you struggled to maintain your pursuit of a Godly life? Do you find yourself falling into the world's standards and not pursuing Gods? Are there areas you struggling to be strong in? We aren't promised ease, but we are promised help. Ask God to help guide you on your race and to strengthen you as you run.

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God gave us not a spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control." There is a lot of fear being spread in our world right now. There are very real dangers, threats, and problems. The fear is real. Feeling fear is not wrong. But letting it overcome our hearts and minds is. Taking actions motivated by fear can lead us down the wrong paths. See what Paul says, God did not give us a spirit of fear. Not only is it not fear, but it's not a mild spirit either. We have been given a spirit of power. Interesting that he says we are given power, along with love and self-control. Why did Paul group those three things together? There is power in love. There is power in being self-controlled. Fear often leads us to be selfish and it also leads to an impulsive

nature. Therefore, the power of love, the power of self-control, is the antithesis of fear.

Have you allowed fear to take the reins in your life? Do you find you have been making impulsive decisions because your mind is overwhelmed with fears? Have you been lacking in selfless love and self-control? It's ok to acknowledge your fears before the Lord. Share your fears with God when they arise and ask Him to take control over them. What fears do you need to give over to God right now? Are there any habits or behaviors that you've let fear influence that you can change?

Hebrews 7 – James – 1&2 Peter – 1,2&3 John – Jude – Revelation

Hebrews 11 is known as the faith chapter. Verse 1 says that "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." The chapter continues on to speak of many people throughout the scriptures who showed immeasurable faith (This is also a great example of the wholeness of the scriptures as the writer of Hebrew's validates many stories from the Old Testament). People like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Along with faith-filled women such as Sarah, Rahab, and the Shunammite women. These are people who showed the faith that is described in verse one. They believed in things they couldn't see. They followed God though the end was unclear. Though His promises were beyond their understanding. Though His methods were either unknown or beyond human abilities. Their faith helps to shape our own. The stories of God's faithfulness throughout the scriptures build our faith. Seeing God do the impossible, over and over, helps us to maintain our faith as we also seek the impossible.

Which person mentioned in Hebrews 11 stands out to you and why? What is it about their story that speaks to your heart? Do you feel encouraged to see all their stories listed together as examples of great faith? Are there any areas of your life that you can feel your faith lacking? After reading through that list, is there anything that God cannot do? Faith is both a gift and a choice. Ask God for an increase in faith.

Write your reflections from the month:

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Congratulations!

Whether you read your Bible daily or had to play catch up at times. Whether you finished the whole Bible or were only able to finish some. You spent this year trying to read and learn and seek God's truth in His word. You should feel proud and encouraged! We hope you take all that you've read throughout this past year and hold it close. Let it impact your life and love. We hope that you've enjoyed this journey with us and that it has inspired you to want to read the Bible even more. Hold onto these two truths that have been made evident through this year of reading. First, that "All scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17)". Second, that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)".

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