



Sunday:

Sunday School – 9:30 am

Worship – 10:45 am

Wednesday:

The Rock Wednesday – 6:45pm

BIG EVENTS:

{NEAR}

Hallelujah Night – October 31st (SATURDAY, 5-7p)

BONFIRE – November 14th

The Family Feast – November 18th

Classy Christmas – December 16th (dressy snazzy)

{FAR}

Refuel – MLK Weekend 2016

DNOW – March 11-13 (tentative)

Summer Camp – June 2016

Main Idea:

Sin leads to Suffering & Repentance leads to Deliverance

Displays the Need to be United in the True Vine

1. Sin has Consequences

2. God will always forgive His people

3. Jesus is the Final Judge

The Hope & Prayer

The hope of this devotion book is to provide the opportunity for students and adults to spend time with God in His Word and through prayer. There are many great devotion books available to us and we are thankful you have chosen to journey through God's Word with this particular one. We hope and pray that students and adults take this opportunity seriously and become intentional in the time they devote to Him each day. We believe if this happens our walk with Him will strengthen.

The Plan – ABIDE 2015/16

This year we are going through the most beautiful story in the world on Wednesday nights. The story of the Bible is one of romance, jealousy, envy, pride, grace, mercy, power, humility and so much more. There is no way we could ever hope to cover every detail but we do seek to cover the high points on Wednesday and fill in the in between during the week through our devotions.

It is so important that you get on dive into these devotions with us as we seek to know what the Bible is all about and see how it helps us to know our God and follow Him.

Each devotion has a date so if you happen to miss a day or two the best thing to do is jump in on that date. We've set up the devotion to where you can use Saturday and Sunday as catch up days.

Above all we want you in the Word of God. We realize this is the best one but still it's a devotion written to gather the people of God around the Word of God. We hope and pray you'll join us as we dive into the story of the Bible this year!





to obey or not to obey...

We enter Judges with expectations set high for Israel. God has allowed the Israelites to enter the promise land, and so far, he's given them victory in all their battles. Joshua has passed, and the people are left wondering who's going to lead them.

Judges begins with the tribe of Judah leading the Israelites into battle. Judah and his army are tasked with purifying the land, so they have to run the Canaanites out. However, they fail to completely run them out due to the advanced armory of the Canaanites, and this failure starts a series of battles that Israelite leaders would fail to complete. This failure explains why Israel would go on to commit countless acts of apostasy and face numerous troubles. In **1:27-36**, we see Israel doesn't keep their promise they made to God in Joshua. They promised to "make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land ... [and to] break down their altars," but instead, "they put the Canaanites to forced labor." God's people quickly became just like the Canaanites. Their disobedience was evident, and because of it, God allowed their enemies to be "thorns in their sides." Israel becomes negatively influenced by the Canaanite's worship, morals, and lifestyle.

Just as Israel has done, we often find ourselves disobeying God. We have desires that we think need to be filled, and we think we know what's best for ourselves. However, **Psalms 139:4**, tells us, "Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it all-together." Because of this, we can find rest in the fact that God knows all things. He knows what's best for us, he knows what we ought desire, and he knows how we ought to act.

While this is easier said than done, we as Christians are called to obedience, so why shouldn't we respond in submissiveness?



believe...

After walking through nearly half of Judges. We see the Lord call Gideon to lead the people. Soon after convincing Gideon it was Him, God instructs Gideon to gather an army to fight the Midianites, the people who have been ruling them for a while. Gideon doesn't completely believe it at first. He asks God for 3 signs before buying in to God's plan.

So Gideon prepares an army of 32,000 Israelites only to hear God tell him that that was too many. God doesn't want the Israelites to boast that they're the reason for victory. You can imagine how scared he is after that third sign, but after being told to send some soldiers home, Gideon must be freaking out. He obeys God and sends 22,000 people home. 10,000 soldiers remain.

Later, God comes to Gideon again and tells him there's still too many. They're fighting an army of over 100,000 soldiers, and Gideon is being told 10,000 soldiers is too much! God instructs Gideon to trim the army down by watching how they drink, and in the end, the army is trimmed to 300 people... Picture Gideon. A man who had to have concrete evidence in order to buy in to what God was orchestrating. He isn't all about leaning on faith, but he'd rather lean on strength.

After selecting the 300 men, we see that God knows Gideon isn't too confident in the plan, so He instructs Gideon to go down with his servant and listen to what the Midianites say. After hearing them interpret a dream. He worships God and is ready for battle. Gideon and the 300-man army stormed the camp Midian resided in, and the army ran the Midianites south and east of the Jordan.

This story is a prime example of how God can and will give us more than we can handle. Gideon was a man who needed 3 signs to even consider taking 32,000 Israelites to battle, much less 300. He obeyed God even when the circumstances didn't look good. Had Gideon tried to do this on his own, he would have failed miserably, but before battle, he worshipped and trusted in the Lord. This leads us to ask ourselves, do we trust that God has this kind of power? Do we believe God can work in the most difficult of times?

“When circumstances look bleakest and when human weakness is most apparent, God's power and providential care are most evident.”

Saturday – catch up or reflection

Saturdays are meant to use as catch up days or extended times of reflection where we revisit some truths of God's Word. Did you miss anything, hurry through or simply miss a day? Use today to ensure you didn't miss one thing or possibly just go deeper in His Word. We offer 5 days but of course the goal is that each day we are spending time with Him, in His Word.

What does it mean to Reflect?

By reflection we mean thinking a little more on what we've seen or read throughout the week. A good way to do this is by asking some questions:

1. What sticks out from your time in the Word?
2. What are some things I need to continue to dwell on?
3. What did I learn about God this week?
4. What did I learn about myself this week?
5. What is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?

If you desire to read something new we'd encourage you to read through Psalm 119

Sunday is a day of rest so enjoy the day of worship!



Daily we fail yet daily He forgives and shows grace...

Samson comes to meet a woman in the Valley of Sorek, Delilah. Delilah was a Philistine and shortly after their adulterous relationship began, the lords of the Philistines went to her and convinced her to find out where Samson's strength lies by seducing him. Delilah did as the Philistines asked. Each time Samson would tell her something, Delilah would restrain Samson with it after he fell asleep, and then he'd wake up by busting out of the restraints. Delilah tried doing this with 7 fresh bowstrings, new ropes, and weaving his hair into 7 locks, but none of them worked!

By this time we're all wondering why Samson is sticking around if she's tried to hurt him 3 consecutive times! However, the fourth time Samson gives in. Delilah pulls the "if you love me" card, and Samson falls for it. He tells Delilah if they cut his hair then he'll become weak, and that night, she cut it all off. The next morning, Samson lost all of his strength, and as **Judges 16:20** says, "the Lord left him."

The story of Samson and Delilah is similar to the entire book of Judges. Samson continues to fall back in to Delilah's trap after God continues to strengthen him just as Israel continued to worship other gods after God continued to deliver them. We shouldn't just look at Israel or Samson with judgmental eyes though because we are just as bad as both of them. Daily, we sin against God and forget how He ultimately delivered us through Christ from Hell. But how do we show gratitude for what God has done?

We need to dig into the Word daily and as **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** says...
"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."



despite...

We pick up right where the last devotion leaves off. Delilah cut off all Samson's hair, Samson has lost all his strength, the Philistines have captured him, and his eyes have been gouged out. So we're left with a blind, weak judge who is supposed to continue saving Israel from rule of the Philistines. How's he going to do that?

We go on to see that Samson, once an arrogant man, has been humbled by the Philistines, and because of that, his faith has grown exponentially. After being captured by the Philistines, he is forced to entertain them as they worship their god, but before he entertains, he prays for God to "remember [him] and strengthen [him] only this once." Samson asks for God to strengthen him so that he may bring down the house and not only kill the sinful Philistines but also knowing that he would die with them. This house was huge. It was so big that 3,000 people were standing on the roof. No telling how many were inside! How do we expect a weak, frail, blind man to take it down?

We see the impossible happen just one verse down.

"And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. And Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines.' Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life."

[Judges 16:29-30]

The end of verse 30 tells us that the amount of people he killed at his death were more than he'd killed in his entire life. The importance of this statement is huge! Samson is at his lowest point in his life, but even at this moment, we see that God is powerfully working through his weakness. And through one man's life, we are shown that God uses people in all stages of life. Whether you are at the peak or in the valley, God can and will use you how he sees fit. Take comfort in knowing that God can use you no matter what you're facing and know that he is powerful and able to get us through any storm how he sees fit.



Get serious.....

After journeying through Judges, we've seen some pretty crazy things from Israel. They continue to break their promise with God, but we see that God is patient with them in the midst of all their disobedience. Each time Israel turns to another God, they become enslaved, they cry out in repentance, and God raises up a judge to deliver them from their oppressors.

Judges 21:25 says, "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

Israel chose to continue in their sin. The end of verse 21 says that they "did what was right in [their] own eyes." Even though God continued to rescue them, they acted as if they were their own authority and did what they felt was right.

Throughout the book of Judges, we are constantly reminded of how we don't deserve God's love or grace. We are the nation of Israel. We look to different gods than the one true God. It may not be in the form of Baal (Judges 6) or other religious gods, but daily, we worry more about what the latest hit song is, or when the next Halo game is coming out, or how our fantasy football team is doing instead of how we should be serving the Lord.

We are a people who, just like Israel, call on God when we're in need of something, but once we get it, we usually go right back to where we were in the first place.

But, that can change... We need not look to the material things of this world, but solely rely on Jesus because as Romans tells us, "for those who love God all things work together for good." (Romans 8:28)

We must strive to **ABIDE** in Christ daily. (John 15:1-7)

Ask yourself. What do I idolize? What is hurting my relationship with Christ?



THE **ROCK**
STUDENT MINISTRIES
PS. 61:2

BONFIRE IS COMING

November 14th - Sign up sheet coming soon

We hope you'll join us for an opportunity to hang out and gather around a huge fire! We'll have 'smores and other goodies as well as a hayride, some chill time and of course a fire. More details to come

Hallelujah Night

October 31st, 5-7p

This is an awesome opportunity to serve the community and be on mission. Each SS class will have a booth so see your SS teacher for details and please sign up. It's not very fun to pick up everyone's slack....so help out and do your part.

- - - REFUEL – MLK WEEKEND (22 Student Spots left)- - -

SIGN UP at the wall in the back.

*Keep in mind that you are not officially signed up until you've paid a deposit. **The first 45 deposits will get the 45 spots.***