



Sunday:

Sunday School – 9:45 am

Worship – 10:45 am

Wednesday:

The Rock Wednesday – 6:45pm

Trips:

Refuel – MLK Weekend 2016

DNOW – (early Spring)

Summer Camp – June 2016

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, August 1st – “TO SAVE A LIFE” movie

At the Rock –you must have a consent form filled out to attend.
(movie is very emotional, real, touchy and convicting)

We will have some food, watch the movie and then have some time to talk through some things. It will be a fun night but it's set up to be more of an equipping and challenging time together.

Coming this Fall:

1. Paintball
2. Swimming Party at The Altman's
3. New Year Kick Off
4. Rock Meet & Greet
5. Guys Breakfast (once school starts)

Tonight we begin to walk through Acts on Wednesday Nights.

Our hope is to walk through Acts just like our devotions. It's a good way to cement what we're getting each day through the Word. The hope is it attaches to our hearts and is expressed through our lives.

We don't want to be hearers only but doers!

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 to walk with God in Word and Prayer seriously and become intentional in the time they devote to Him each day. We believe if this happens our walk with Him will strengthen.

Another great hope and prayer is that families will journey through this devotion guide together. Imagine if each family were having conversations based on what they were reading each day from God's Word? There is great possibility and great promise for the family that is centered around God and His Word.

There are no dates so simply put a mark on the devotion after you're done. Work at your own pace and when you're done with a book, about a month, pass your book onto a friend and get another one!

The Plan

The plan will be to take 5 days each week to work through the devotions. These will be set up to be done Thursday to Wednesday. Saturday will be used for reflection or catch up. Sunday will be a day of rest and worship.

This devo will be grounded in **the Word of God**. Scripture alone is our guide and help. The plan is to allow you the opportunity to open Scripture and see for yourself. We invite you to "taste and see that the Lord is good!" For this reason we will simply reference Scripture rather than typing it out for you. Our culture is lazy when it comes to picking up a book. It's fine to look on a kindle, or some smart device, but nothing beats feeling that leather on your fingers as you flip through Scripture. We must get past this laziness and convenience and we pray this devotion book helps in this regard.

The devotions in the book are coming from our personal time in the Word. We will study large chunks of passages, sometimes a smaller book of the Bible. It's amazing how God teaches us when we just open His Word and study it.

The Main Idea & Challenge

Each day the devotion will offer a main idea and challenge/application. These will help gather our hearts and minds around one solid truth from Scripture and then give us a point of action or application. There are always many points and sometimes many angles you could take a set of Scripture but there is also always one Main Idea, a bottom line statement. So we hope to pull this out each time.

SOME PERSONAL HELP:

3 things to exercise and work out as you read through Scripture

These are things you'll hear throughout the devotions and things that appear often within our student ministry.

You'll hear them, work through them and hopefully they eventually become a regular part of how you handle Scripture.

1. **Observe** – (What does it say?) What is there? What questions come up?
How does it repeat? What stands out?
Any shifts in the story or section of verses?
2. **Interpret** – (What does it mean?) What is the Bible saying about what stood out?
3. **Apply** – (What do I do?)
What is the intended response of the folks who would have read this first? What were they called or ask to do?
What do we take away from what we read?

5 questions to ask when reading Scripture?

Rather than reading try and be a student of the Word. These questions help us with this as well as get the point of Scripture and what God desires for us to hear and do. So again, work through the struggle and watch as God blesses this time.

1. What Does This Text Teach Me About God?
2. What Does This Text Teach Me About Man?
3. How Does This Text Point to Christ?
4. What do I need to know in light of this teaching?
5. What do I need to do in light of this teaching?

5 tips for a faithful, daily devotion

1. **Make it a priority** – stop making excuses and simply do what you know needs to be done in your walk with God. Enough is enough.
2. **Pray for guidance** – ask the Spirit to help you as you begin this time or if you've been doing this for years.
3. **Remove distractions** – you know how mad you get when someone interrupts your favorite song, show, book, game? Be that way with your time with the Lord.
4. **Plan for the Plan** - set aside a time and place but understand you don't have to be restricted with these. The important thing is doing it!
5. **Make it a Community Thing** – Get accountability! Bring your friends or family into it. If you go alone you'll not go far!

Leading a Bible Study

Many of you are in a place where this is a reality. There is always the possibility to lead one at school or simply share at an FCA or First Priority. Maybe you feel like you are not equipped or able to do this. This is a lie. If you can read Scripture you can lead a discussion regarding what you've read. The key is confidence and tools. ON the previous page are some basic questions to ask as you read Scripture. Here are some more to help you in this.

These are great for small group studies but also good as you approach a text to later teach or really just better understand personally.

Either way....this is really good and from Leadership Resources.

1 to 1 Bible Reading:



Eye:

- what do you see?
- what sticks out?
- what are things we have to talk about?

Question Mark:

- what is hard to understand?
- if you could ask the author a question?

Heart:

- what is the main idea?
- what is the heart of the passage?
- what is the one thing God is teaching us?

Arrow:

- what do we do from hearing this passage?
- how do apply the truths that this teaches us?
- how do I behave in light of the truth of this passage?

Got a Question you need help with?

Write it out and hand it Chris or a leader and we'll offer help each week.

Many times these issues are dealt with as we walk through Scripture but sometimes we just get curious or a little impatient.

We realize there are broad statements in Scripture that address these things but also wrestle with wanting a specific verse that speaks directly to this issue.

So if this is you and you have some questions just let us know.

You don't have to put your mind on it but that helps us know to pray and how to possibly pray with you. It also cuts down on just putting something down to put something down.

But of course, if putting your name down means you don't have a question, don't put your name down.

THE ROCK
STUDENT MINISTRIES
P S . 6 1 : 2

* Devotions also available online at therocksm.org
open the .pdf file in ibooks or kindle and work away, work away.

**Speaking truth...**

Stephen was bold. He was bold because the Spirit of God was leading him. He was bold because he realized earth was not home and that his life was not his alone. Stephen spoke up because he realized there was a bigger picture.

If you remember, Stephen was chosen to serve. While serving Stephen was seized and asked a simple question, "what was going on?" Is this true Stephen? Is God moving in His people in a supernatural way? Stephen, are these things so?

When Stephen opens his mouth Scripture comes out. It may not be word for word but all that Stephen says is directly from the Old Testament, the only Scripture they had at the time. The Old Testament held many truths for them to hold on to but most importantly it spoke of the goodness of God in preparing a way for people to once again be in perfect fellowship with God. It told of the Messiah that would come.

Stephen in his explanation simply shares with those listening how generation after generation refused the provisions of God and eventually how they too, "a stiff necked people". refused the Messiah and the very Spirit of God.

{STIFF NECKED} to be called this in Acts was definitely a throw back word from Deuteronomy and Exodus. A word not used much in their day but when Stephen threw it out they knew what he meant and took it to heart. This would drive them to the point of murder. If only they knew Stephen was speaking truth.

**What sticks out? What do we see?**

Stephen goes for it. He holds nothing back. His ability to recount the story of the Bible up to his point is incredible. How well do I know this story?

**What is hard to understand? What's a question you would ask the writer?**

Why would Stephen jump right in to calling them out. There's a purpose here for us to find. It'd definitely to see Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah but man, he went right for the jugular.



What is the Main Idea: Just as Jesus used Scripture to defend against the attacks of Satan in (Matthew 4) and Stephen used them in Acts we too must know Scripture to use Scripture in our daily walk and defense of truth.
Jesus is the Messiah. He is the provision of God

**The Challenge: (How do I respond to what I read? How do I apply?)**

Get in the Word. Not just the minimal amount, go deeper. Reach further!
Am I living in a way that shows Jesus is my greatest hope and God's greatest provision?

**do not hold this sin against them?**

This is incredible really. I can think of many times in my life where someone may have been a little mean to me, key word: little. Little as in, they took my seat. I can remember holding grudges and not being able to let go of that “thing.” I can remember being mad at someone who was mean to me in light of me being mean to them. Did you get that? I was mad but I was the instigator, the creator of the issue.

So many times we handle situations wrong. We blow up, get mad, storm off, hold grudges for nothing. Rather than allowing the Spirit of God to work through us we act like 5 year olds. We all do this. I’m sure Stephen did this at some point in his life. Stephen did NOT do this on this given day. He was changed. He was filled with something that was new, fresh, and so much stronger, wiser and more capable than he. Stephen was changed to the point his response to those who were in the midst of killing him was forgiveness. This is incredible and all because of God’s grace and mercy. It even appears that Stephen wasn’t even finished with what he had to say but because they were so enraged they cut him off.

What we’ll see after this is that Stephen’s stoning triggers persecution for the church. This would be a persecution, a circumstance, that God would use to push the church out of it’s comfort zone and into the surrounding areas. Kind of like what he said in Acts 1:8.

As Stephen was dying there in the street he had two prayers on his lips.

1. Receiving my spirit – he simply quotes what Jesus had said on the cross.
2. Do not hold this sin against them – again, something similar to what Jesus said.

**What sticks out? What do we see?**

Stephen and his ability to display Christ in the midst of being stoned to death. His ability to love in the midst of such hatred.

**What is hard to understand? What’s a question you would ask the writer?**

What was the feeling of the church during this? Were any of them around? Did this change how they walked the streets? How could these people who stoned Stephen have missed Christ?



What is the Main Idea: Stand firm even in the midst of the pain, persecution and hate. God’s plan is bigger than man’s punishment.

**The Challenge: (How do I respond to what I read? How do I apply?)**

Am I on board with this? We’ve ask this before. But are you ready to go to great lengths to stay true to God and His Word? Will you be faithful to the one who is always faithful to you?

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!



Stephen was buried, the church was scattered, and an old face resurfaces...

Such a cool little 8 verses. I say cool and I say little but I hope you know what I mean. It's little only in the number of verses and it's cool in the sense that we see some very neat things.

You know where we're at in the story. Acts 1 finds the disciples scared but challenged to go, after they've waited on the Helper. Acts finds the disciples turning into a body of believers filled with the Spirit, the Helper. Acts 3 find trouble and deliverance. On and on the story grows and continues to get deeper and deeper as it goes. Acts is such an interesting read to see how the church was birthed and began to grow. In looking at these things we not only grow in our knowledge of things but we are challenged as well. The same challenge and commission the church received we to have received. So we read with excitement and anticipation. Learning about the church but also learning a little bit about us.


Some neat things happen here and we'll point them out in the One to One.

What sticks out? What do we see?

Stephen is in Heaven. Devout men lamented over him. Saul was the leader of the persecution the church was experiencing. Remember this name! The church was scattered. Remember Acts 1:8? Where did Jesus tell them to go? Had they gone there yet? Hmmmm... Now, where did Phillip go? More on that in a minute. Why did God empower them to do signs? Look at verse 6 for this. The last observation is this..."there was much joy in the city. How often do we see persecution and joy mentioned together?

What is hard to understand? What's a question you would ask the writer?

Where has Phillip been? What was it like to experience the power of the Holy Spirit as he was healing and doing these "signs?"

 **What is the Main Idea:** God is a God who works in ways we can't always explain. Think about what's going here. Jesus had told the church to go out right? But they hadn't done that yet. It is only when pressure comes that they begin to ease out of Jerusalem and into their mission fields. Comfort of home can sometimes cause us to miss out on what we're called to go and do. Phillip was in this mix and we see after the death of Stephen and ravaging of Saul Phillip makes his way to Samaria. God works in ways we can't always explain or understand. Example, verse 6. Phillip and the rest of the church were able to perform signs in order to be able to be heard. For they had an incredible message to share.

The Challenge: (How do I respond to what I read? How do I apply?)

Be patient as God works out this amazing story in your life! Don't be afraid because the Creator is continuously working behind the scenes.

**wearing the mask**

Today we meet a pretender. You know what a pretender is right? You see them at school, at the beach, maybe in your mirror? A pretender acts like something they are not in order to get something they want. Sometimes it's as simple as a laugh but sometimes it's to gain money, reputation, friends, a job. We've all pretended at some point. Meet Simon, the pretender in this section. Simon was a magician. He was used to getting money for wowing people with his skills. Apparently he was pretty good (v.10). He even began to believe this himself (v.9). Simon was then confronted with real power. He saw an opportunity to gain more popularity and he was willing to do anything to get it.

It appears Simon believes in Christ but the fruit that followed showed different. The moving of the Holy Spirit was very powerful in the early church. The Gospel was moving outside of Jerusalem and we see that Peter and John (apostles) come out to counsel and assure the following is legit.

God seemed to use the apostles to give the Holy Spirit. This would ensure those who believed had right hearts and that there was no question as to if they believed. When Peter and John came on the scene and Simon offered money they knew his heart wasn't right. One huge statement and his true heart is revealed. **Read v. 19.**

**What sticks out? What do we see?**

Interesting and convicting things here. It's almost as if the American church is seen through Simon and his statement. A man, seeing power (toys), and wanting to get some. God taking serious the outpouring of His Spirit by only giving it through the Apostles

**What is hard to understand? What's a question you would ask the writer?**

At what point would this powerful moving begin to stop? At what point does the Spirit invade the life of the believer without the apostles being present?



What is the Main Idea: We come to God empty and wanting Him. Tricks, power and His blessings can't be bought or misused for personal gain.

**The Challenge: (How do I respond to what I read? How do I apply?)**

Don't see God as a toy or something that will make us more powerful or special. He is God, we are not, and so we live our life with a desperate need for Him.

You take some time and answer the questions above....what do you see?



Rise and God

At one point in my life I really thought Philip wrote Philippians. He did not. We really don't hear much about Philip but here it seems the entire chapter is him. Of course this is a side note and not to be confused with any main point. But God uses Philip to continue the spreading of the Gospel and to give us a great example.

Philip is led to go south, towards Ethiopia. The crazy thing is he goes. Consider that for a minute. All the danger of a trip by yourself, all the danger of persecution and the likes of Saul hunting you down, all the benefits of staying close to home and with people you know and Philip leaves and follows God.

At some point on his journey he meets an Ethiopian official. Verse 27 explains this guy a bit and also explains that he was seeking God. He was reading Isaiah.

What happens next is a great example of how the Spirit leads us and equips us to be faithful to God's leading.

The Spirit tells Philip to go to the guys chariot, so he does. Philip "ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah" and asked, Do you understand what you are reading? What a simple question to ask someone. Do you understand? What happens next is pretty incredible and simple. Verse 35 - Philip opened his mouth and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

The end of this story takes a pretty Star Trek type turn. But we must realize God is not limited by anything (Elijah, Red Sea, and on.) So let's keep it real, God can do whatever He chooses and be perfectly fine and need no explaining. Our minds just tend to lean toward, show me vs. trust God. Thankfully He explains all we need to know! What we need to know is that Philip continued preaching the Gospel in the towns to where he was taken.



What sticks out? What do we see?

Philip willingly follows. Philip opened his mouth to share the good news. Baptism was immediate. How the Holy Spirit works.



What is hard to understand? What's a question you would ask the writer?

Philip being transported out of there. What was the Eunuch thinking? What was that like for Philip? Was the voice of the Spirit audible? How did he hear it? What was that like? Was he scared?



What is the Main Idea: We must always be willing to follow. Despite the odds or way things seem, trust God. We must open our mouth to tell truth.



The Challenge: (How do I respond to what I read? How do I apply?)

Will I go? Is there a place I won't go? Am I opening my mouth to share the Gospel? How many Eunuchs (people) am I passing each day? Am I sharing with people that there is hope? Am I willing to be used by the Spirit? Why not?

To Save A Life Movie Event

August 1 – 5:30 to 9:00 pm
(a small dinner will be served)

On **Saturday August 1st** we will be showing a movie at The Rock. The movie is a sensitive movie but one that speaks loudly to a huge need in our culture. I would recommend sending your student to see the movie and be involved in the discussion that will follow. We do need to communicate that there are some scenes portrayed that are a little crude. These scenes lead to an event (suicide) that ultimately changes the heart of one student who then begins to live unapologetically for Christ. It's a convicting, honest movie that we hope will help turn the hearts of our students to also live a life that is unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Below is a letter of recommendation from a parent. Laura has a strong desire to show this movie and offer a time of discussion to our students. She has been huge in coordinating this event and is willing to discuss the movie in detail with anyone who has further questions.

Dear Youth Parents,

I would like to encourage you to allow your youth (grades 6-12) to participate in the movie and following discussion on August 1st. I would like to warn you that some very heavy but very pertinent topics would be addressed. All the major issues faced by teens today are addressed including: suicide, bullying, cutting, drinking, drugs, parental pressure, premarital sex, fear of failure, dating, parents' divorce, hypocrisy, teen pregnancy, loneliness, self-worth, peer pressure, school violence, pressure to succeed, abortion, college stress, and rejection. The movie takes a Biblical stance and encourages teens to make a positive difference in their schools. I am excited about the opportunity that my girls, Mallorie (going into 7th grade) and Brianna (going into 9th grade), will have to view this movie with their youth group and discuss the issues in a setting where adults care for them and can give them godly guidance. Even more than that, I am looking forward to the impact that all of our youth can have in our schools and the positive difference they can make!

Sincerely,
Laura Colquitt