

## Upcoming Events:

### **July 4<sup>th</sup> - Parade – Come walk with us.**

Meet at the fire truck, around Dairy Queen starting around 9 am this Saturday morning.

### **August 8<sup>th</sup> – “TO SAVE A LIFE” movie**

At the Rock – more details later

## 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)



Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the **law of the LORD!**

Blessed are those who keep **his testimonies**,  
who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong,  
but walk in **his ways!**

You have commanded **your precepts** to be kept diligently.

Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping **your statutes!**

Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all **your commandments.**

I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn **your righteous rules.**

I will keep **your statutes**; do not utterly forsake me!

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to **your word.**

With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from **your commandments!**

I have stored up **your word** in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me **your statutes!**

With my lips I declare all **the rules of your mouth.**

In the way of **your testimonies** I delight as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on **your precepts** and fix my eyes on **your ways.**

I will delight in **your statutes**; I will not forget **your word.**

(Psalm 119:1-16 ESV)

# 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 Monday through Friday. Saturday will be used for reflection or catch up. We will provide a blank page for you to possibly reflect on the week in general, what stood out, what needs reminding, what steps were taken. Sunday will be a day of rest and worship.

In some cases we will provide a theme for each week or maybe a single topic for each day. These themes and topics will come directly from Scripture. This devo will be ground 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 different angles. Some are from previous camps while some are from sermons. Some thoughts and themes will carry over for 2 weeks while some may only work through a single day or week. Some will be two pages others will be one. But through this variation we hope to cover a variety of topics and thoughts from Scripture ultimately leading you to growing & passionate walk with Christ.

## The Main Idea & Challenge

Each day the devotion will offer a main idea and challenge. These will help gather our hearts and minds around one solid truth from Scripture and then give us a point of action or application. We must not be hearers only but doers. So these will help us accomplish this as we look to God and His Word each day. I'd love to hear what main idea you come up with. So feel free to post, email or text your thoughts. Tag us @therock\_sm

## 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!

When it comes to doing a Devotion many people struggle.

Struggles can be

- time
- priority
- desire
- direction
- but also faith that the Bible is God's Word to us.

We struggle in trusting what it says so we simply don't give time to it, we don't desire it, we don't make it a priority.

So let's address the question.

### **Can the Bible be trusted? Is it really God's Word?**

Yes and Yes.

We have some great devotions through the year that will help with this but for now we need to know some critical things that give us some confidence that the book we're reading and giving ourselves to is legit.

How did we get it?

How can we trust it?

Below are two great resources that will help with this question.

We will also look to these questions later in a devotion.

The Bible is Inerrant. We must believe this is true.

### **What does Inerrant and Inerrancy mean?**

The doctrine of inerrancy, or the claim that the Scriptures are inerrant, means that the Bible is completely truthful in all things that the biblical authors assert—whether in geographic, chronological, or theological details. Advocates of inerrancy affirm a verbal plenary view of inspiration. That is, although the human authors of Scripture were thinking composers, God so superintended the writing process such that every word written was according to his will. The words were divinely guarded from all error. Wayne Grudem provides this helpful definition of inerrancy: "The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact." Similarly, Kenneth Kantzer writes, "Put quite simply, ...inerrancy holds that the Bible tells us truth and never says what is not so."

## How Did We Get our 66 Books in the Bible?

We don't want to say that men decided what books would be included but rather that by prayer, thought, and method God used men to realize what books God had decided would belong in the Bible.

**The early church insisted that recognized books of the canon be:**

1. Apostolic- written by or tied closely to an apostle  
(an authorized eyewitness of Jesus)
2. Catholic- widely, if not universally recognized by the churches.
3. Orthodox- not in contradiction to any recognized apostolic book or doctrine.-

**based on these 3 criteria it is impossible to add to the canon today.....**

**THE ROCK**  
**STUDENT MINISTRIES**  
**P S . 6 1 : 2**

\*Devotions also available online at [therocksm.org](http://therocksm.org)  
open the .pdf file in ibooks or kindle and work away, work away.

**Waiting is tough.** *Have you ever been ask to wait?*

*I think we all have.* Whether it's waiting on a test score, the outcome of a decision, on food, an update, a return text, we've waited

What's the toughest time you've had to wait?

I think for me it was when I received my first speeding ticket and when I got home I had to wait on my father who would not be happy. I waited for 2 months, or so it felt.

**In our culture waiting is not cool, we are too impatient and move too fast.**

Go back about 2000 years and the most pivotal time in our history had just occurred. The "Son of God" murdered, buried, risen. What's going on here! His followers confused, hurt and worried yet excited, nervous and yes...possibly impatient. Then we come to Acts 1.

Acts is the "what happens next" in the Gospel story.

Jesus has died, been buried, risen and has appeared to some. Luke, the writer of Acts, catches us up in the first 5 verses. So for the next month or so we'll follow the story of the early church. It's a great way to see how the church came to be with many cool things on the way.

Take a minute and **read Acts 1:1-5** – as you read do so with the mindset of a disciple or follower who has been on an emotional roller coaster. Consider their thinking as Luke recounts the days/months following the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the birth of the what we today call the church.

Jesus made it a point to "present himself alive" in verse 3 and also at the end of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke). Verse 4 gives us our title. Jesus ask them to stay and wait. Now there are some people who may tell you to "stay and wait" and it not be a good idea. But at this point and after all they've been through, the disciples would stay and wait. Something good was about to happen.

But as we'll see, good in God's eyes may not always be good in our eyes. So we trust His plan. The first step in trusting His plan is obeying. When He says stay and wait that's what we need to do.

## **The Main Idea:**

Slow your walk. The disciples were with Jesus, don't miss this. But the big point or main idea is that Jesus wasn't done. The cross wasn't the end, the empty tomb wasn't the end. There was more and the next step for His followers was to stay and wait. There was a promise yet to come (recorded in John 16-18).

M.I – Our walk with Christ requires patience and obedience.

## **The Challenge:**

Wait on the Lord, be of courage, and He will strengthen your heart. (Psalm 27:14)

**Waiting is tough.** *We established this yesterday. And really these verses could have been included in yesterdays devotion. But with us trying to keep this to one page that would have been tough!*

The disciples are together now...they are waiting as good as humans can possibly expect to wait. But like you, they quickly become impatient. They begin to ask questions that Jesus had already said would come to pass.

In **John 14:25** first but then again in **John 16:7** Jesus tells His followers that a "Helper" was coming. This Helper is the Holy Spirit. They had heard this before but much like us when we attempt to wrap our mind around the Holy Spirit they were undoubtedly a little confused.

You ever had someone lead you on? Most times when people do this to us it's a little mean of them. But Jesus had a reason for his leading. This has to be in God's timing. They had been told about this Helper but still were in a daze so to speak. But here we see Jesus speaking with His followers one last time....with a promise that it was only getting better. As we read on you may not agree. But keep the big picture in mind. God is not derailed or distracted by earthly issues. All He does is part of a bigger plan, a plan of redemption. What happens in Acts is a huge part of this! The Church is in the pregnancy stage and in a few short days the birth happens and the growth, pains and all, begin.

So they hear Jesus and then he leaves. Before He leaves, His last words, is the lead on. He had told them to wait and now He tells them why.....verse 8.

"You will receive power and you will be my witnesses at home, around home and eventually around the world." Good plan. But will they be patient, will they wait, what does this plan look like, will they obey, will Jesus do what He said He'll do?

## **The Main Idea:**

God has a plan, it's a big plan with a big picture. Don't get caught up in small issues that only distract from this big picture. Consider it joy when issues come (James 1). Rather than trust in other things see Jesus as the author and finisher of your faith (Hebrews). Your part in the plan? Wait, Obey, Be His witness as you go out each day. School, Dentist, Neighborhood or Honduras. But this all begins by you waiting and obeying.

## **The Challenge:**

Obey – sounds vague or simple. But obey His word. This simple section of Acts 1 or whatever you come across from God's Word the rest of the day. Obey it. Trust Him. Wait on Him and lean on Him in all things. There is a bigger plan than if Instagram happens to not load fast enough. Trust and Obey!

# **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 my week 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 are 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!

## *Living it is different than saying you'll live*

Ever heard the phrase that talk is cheap? It is really, especially considering how many people never do what they say they'll do. Too much fine print!

We are very guilty of this in our walk with God. We say big things, commit to big things but then find ourselves never following through with it especially if it involves faith. This coupled with uncertainty is never a good recipe for success in our minds.

The disciples were in this place. Jesus has just left them. The leader was gone and they were left with orders. How could they have responded? They could have gone their separate ways. They could have gone back to fishing for fish, collecting taxes or just enjoyed the latter stages of life. After all, their name was now marked and their leader was gone.

It's kind of like the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of school. The emotional week of summer camp is gone. The homework and projects and tests have begun. Yes God showed up in a mighty way just 5 weeks ago but today is rainy, it's Monday, and I'm in math class at 8:35 am. This cannot be what God meant or intended for my life right?

We'll consider the disciples and followers of Jesus. This was a Monday morning math class scenario. Yes there was a promise, yes they had actually seen and heard Jesus. But really? This way? Why couldn't He just had taken them all with Him and waved His magic wand (which we all at times thinks He has) and make it all better.

But God had a bigger picture. So we build off the theme of waiting and obeying. Look at verse 12 - They returned to Jerusalem and waited. How did they wait? Look at verse 14 and write down what they did? How did they spend their time?

I know...their math class and our math class look different right?

Yes but what are we doing as we live our life? What do we devote our time too. How is our attitude in math class or that in between time in life, the dry time, the time of uncertainty? Don't miss this. They obeyed and they waited. As they waited they were all together, united, praying. (By math class we mean the not so emotionally high moments.)

They did take care of some business in verses 16-26 to replace the empty hole that Judas had left after betraying Jesus. But this too was a part of a bigger plan.

### **The Main Idea:**

The Main Idea of these verse is not that they picked a new leader to replace Judas but they remained faithful when things were a little uncertain. They had a hope and a promise but still they had some uncertainty.

### **The Challenge:**

In all seasons remain faithful to God and His Word. What does this look like for you?

## ***We trust in a God who never lies (Titus 1:2)***

Jesus had promised the Holy Spirit. The last thing He told the disciples was to go and wait, be patient. God, in the Old Testament, said He would pour His Spirit out on people. Still I'm guessing the disciples were still doubting a bit. What a roller coaster these guys had been through. Of course Jesus had told them what all would happen but still, the emotions of waiting are hard!

But we find confirmation that our God does not lie. The promise of the Spirit comes to life in Acts 2. It's here we find the disciples and many others waiting. Waiting for God to accomplish what He said He would accomplish.

Read **Acts 2:1-3**. The Helper was here. His role or purpose is laid out in John 14, 15 and 16. We see Him moving in and through people from this point in Acts throughout the rest of the New Testament. This was the beginning. A supernatural (something man cannot accomplish) event to announce the arrival of the lesser known member of the Trinity, The Holy Spirit.

If we're all honest we're probably a little weak in what we know about the Spirit. Honestly it is a little hard to wrap our mind around. He's in us, pushing us, helping us, leading us, teaching us, equipping us, convicting us. The Spirit is in the child of God.

And here we find Him resting on these followers and accomplishing through them something that they could not accomplish in their own abilities and strengths.

Others noticed too! **Look at verses 5-8**. The followers of Christ were speaking in languages they didn't know. This was so "unlikely" that some thought that they were drunk. Others were simply amazed. **Look at verse 12**

Tomorrow we'll get into what happens next...but let's not move forward too fast and forget that God, Jesus, they actually accomplished what they said they would. This is a huge point here. Yes the Spirit was come and He would accomplish great things for the glory of God, through people, common people. But we can't be so ready for the action that we forget that God actually showed up, just like He said

### **The Main Idea:**

When God promises something He will see it through to completion. When you read His Word and see something God said He would do or accomplish be sure to know He will accomplish this thing. Never doubt, though hard, but always trust Him

### **The Challenge:**

Trust God, Trust His Word. Anticipate it all the while walking in the Word.

## *The first evidence of the Spirit is a changed life.*

When the Holy Spirit came it turned a man who had weeks earlier denied Christ three times. Jesus told Him he would, Peter said “never!” but He did. Now He is different. Now His life is ruled by something greater than he could muster up.

So Peter stands before all these accusers to give a reason for this change and to tell of the goodness of God and ultimately the Gospel. The result is crazy!

Peter preaches his first sermon. He preaches from Joel 2:28-32 and Psalm 16:8-11 and Psalm 110:1. Who knew the Gospel was in the Old Testament?

## Two huge things to see from these verses:

- 1. The effects of a Spirit filled, led life.** This was big stretch for Peter. But now He has boldness, strength. He is living through a power he can't provide. The credit does not go to Peter for finally turning it around. The credit goes to God who through the Spirit is now using a man who is obedient to this leading. God gets this glory!
- 2. The Old Testament points us to the Gospel.** The OT is filled with the inability of man and the need for something greater. It's filled with the promise of something greater, something better. There are prophecies of the Messiah coming and even the Spirit coming to fill the hearts and lives of man. This is what the majority of the Jewish nation missed when Jesus came. As Jesus began declaring the Messiah was Him this eventually led to His death. Of course the OT even spoke of this and the ultimate victory over death.

But look at verses 37-39 again. The first Gospel presentation is heard and God calls many to Himself (verse 41).

What do we get from all of this. Yes, there is a lot here. The power of the Spirit, the effects of Him moving in us. The burden of sin and need for the Gospel of Jesus, the grace of God extended to man, the brokenness of sinner in need for something greater. But I love seeing the changed life in action. Peter stand boldly, in the midst of opposition and proclaims the words of God. The majority of what he said to this crowd, at least 3,000 people, was Scripture, not something he thought of earlier.

## **The Main Idea:**

The Gospel is worth sharing. The Spirit is perfectly capable of filling, moving, and speaking through us. Obedience and action are now required.

## **The Challenge:**

Are you relying on the power of the Spirit or what you bring to the table?  
Maybe today you simply go and speak the Gospel in love. Let the Spirit do the rest!