



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.

## 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 Point & Challenge

Each day the devotion will offer a point 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.

### 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!

# wednesday – october 1

## Do you know the story of the Bible?

The Bible is not a book that contains 66 individual books that don't relate **but rather** one narrative about the work of God through his Son Jesus and the gospel.

Do you know that story?  
Did you know this story is meant for you?  
Are you sharing this story?

Today reflect on the summary of the Bible...as you read, contemplate... think who God's story can become the dominating factor in our lives!

## **God's Word to You: A Summary of the Bible**

In the beginning, the all-powerful, personal God created the universe. This God created human beings in His image to live joyfully in His presence, in humble submission to His gracious authority. But all of us have rebelled against God and, in consequence, must suffer the punishment of our rebellion: physical death and the wrath of God.

**Thankfully**, God initiated a rescue plan, which began with His choosing the nation of Israel to display His glory in a fallen world. The Bible describes how God acted mightily on Israel's behalf, rescuing His people from slavery and then giving them His holy law. But God's people – like all of us – failed to rightly reflect the glory of God.

**Then**, in the fullness of time, in the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself came to renew the world and restore His people. Jesus perfectly obeyed the law given to Israel. Though innocent, He suffered the consequences of human rebellion by His death on a cross. But three days later, God raised Him from the dead.

Now the church of Jesus Christ has been commissioned by God to take the news of Christ's work to the world. Empowered by God's Spirit, the church calls all people everywhere to repent of sin and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. Repentance and faith restores our relationship with God and results in a life of ongoing transformation.

The Bible promises that Jesus Christ will return to this earth as the conquering King. Only those who live in repentant faith in Christ will escape God's judgment and live joyfully in God's presence for all eternity. God's message is the same to all of us: repent and believe, before it is too late. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.

Now consider this question:

Is it important for me to give the time and energy to sit down and read IT?

How often should I read it?

How should I approach it?

Should I obey it?

Should I share it?

Should I plead with others to do all of this as well?

Finish by reading through Psalm 119:1-16 and consider how crucial it is that we not only know the story of the Bible but that we give ourselves wholly and completely to it.

### The **Point** and **Challenge**:

God's Word to us is a grand story with one plot.....to communicate the gospel of God's great love through Jesus to all people.....so today, see this gospel story and share this gospel story.

Know this story helps us in our walk with Him and aids our view of sin and the process of us dealing with sin.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# thursday – october 2

## PUTTING SIN TO DEATH

As we walk through the course of each day we do so in a battle against sin and the evil one. We fight as those who care because our King is one who deserves our obedience and our holiness. Today may we gain strength from what God's Word says about putting sin to death and may we learn from the Puritan Christians as they speak from experience.

“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Colossians 3:5

“For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” Romans 8:13

### THE PURITANS ON PUTTING SIN TO DEATH

We're usually not too eager to deal with our sin, but doing so is an essential part of the Christian life. The Puritans offer six pieces of advice for how to meet our sin head-on.

Mortification. It isn't a word you hear much these days. But mortification of sin was what Paul was talking about when he said to the Colossians, “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you” ([Col. 3:5](#)). He urged the Romans to do the same: “If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” ([Rom. 8:13](#)).

Putting sin to death is an essential part of the Christian life. But how do we do it? One group we can turn to for guidance is the Puritans. The Puritanism was a 16th- and 17th-century movement that sought to purify worship and practice in the Church of England. As part of their emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing about lives of holiness, they wrote a lot about mortification; John Owen even wrote an entire book called [On the Mortification of Sin](#).

They offer sound advice for us today.

### 1. SEE SIN FOR WHAT IT IS

“If the thoughts of death, and the grave, and rottenness, are not pleasant to you, do not let the thoughts of sin be pleasant. Listen to every temptation to sin as you would listen to a temptation to self-murder, and as you would do if the devil brought you a knife and tempted you to cut your throat with it; so do when he offers you the bait of sin.” —Richard Baxter

## **2. DON'T WAIT FOR SINFUL DESIRES TO CHANGE ON THEIR OWN**

“We must not indulge our inclinations, as we do little children, till they grow weary of the thing they are unwilling to let go. We must not continue our sinful practices in hopes that the divine grace will one day overpower our spirits, and make us hate them for their own deformity.”

—Henry Scougal

## **3. EXAMINE YOURSELF REGULARLY**

“The longer you delay, the more your sin gets strength and rooting. If you cannot bend a twig, how will you be able to bend it when it is a tree? If you cannot pluck up a tender plant, are you likely to pluck up a sturdy oak?”

—Richard Baxter

## **4. DON'T TRY TO DO IT WITHOUT THE SPIRIT**

“It is the Spirit alone that can mortify sin; he is promised to do it, and all other means without him are empty and vain. How shall he, then, mortify sin that has not the Spirit? A man may easier see without eyes, speak without a tongue, than truly mortify one sin without the Spirit.”

—John Owen

## **5. DON'T TRY TO DO IT WITHOUT OTHER PEOPLE**

“Woe to him that is alone! David was alone when Satan drew him to defile his neighbor's wife. While the sheep flock together they are safe, as being under the shepherd's eye. But if one straggle from the rest, it is quickly a prey to the ravenous wolf. It is no hard matter to rob that house that stands far from neighbors. The cruel pirate Satan watches for those vessels that sail without a convoy.”

—George Swinnock

## **6. EXPECT TO FIGHT SIN YOUR WHOLE LIFE**

“Let no man think to kill sin with few, easy, or gentle strokes. He who has once smitten a serpent, if he does not follow on his blow until he be slain, may repent that ever he began the quarrel. And so will he who undertakes to deal with sin and pursues it not constantly to death. Sin will after a while revive, and the man must die. It is a great and fatal mistake if we suppose this work will admit of any remissness or intermission.”

—John Owen

### **The Point and Challenge:**

Sin is serious and is the most ridiculous behavior imaginable.....  
be killing sin before it kills you!

What is something that needs to “die” in your life?

How are you going to deal with that?

# friday – october 3

1 Peter 2:2

Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health....

## Are You Governed Increasingly by God's Word?

One question that is helpful to ask when thinking about our spiritual health that the question....,"Are You Governed Increasingly by God's Word?" How do you treat the Bible? The answer to this question will tell much about your spiritual health.

Read parts of Psalm 119 and notice what it teaches us about our relationship to the Bible.

### Notice a few other passages.....

1 Peter 2:2- "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation" .....to grow into the likeness of Jesus, the Word has to be present.

-God's Word is like **water** in Eph. 5:26...

"that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word"

-and **food** in Jer. 15:16.....

"Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts."

-Matt. 4:4 teaches man lives not only by bread but by God's Word.....

-without soul nourishment....we perish forever.

## So today.....aim to Make God's Word A Great Love of Your Life.

-some of us have no relationship with the Bible and our life is not altered by it.

-some of us have been around the Bible all our life and are almost numb to it.

The Bible characterizes a genuine believer as not merely an admirer of God's Truth, but one who loves it. Psalm 119 repeatedly speaks to this:

119:47-"and I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love."

119:48- "my hands also will I lift up to Your Commandments, which I love."

119:97- "Oh, how I love Your Law! It is my meditation all the day."

119:113- "I hate the double-minded, but I love your law."

119:127- "Therefore I love your commandments more than gold, yes than fine gold."

119:163- "I hate and abhor lying, but I love Your law."

Are you indifferent to the truth of Scripture? Or does God's Word have a growing influence on your life? Are you reading because you want to become more like Christ?

**So today.....aim to Let God's Word Govern Your Daily Way.**

Read Psalm 119:105 & Isaiah 8:20

-if lives are not guided by God's Word,  
it's because they are in spiritual darkness.

as we grow more into Jesus' image we must think more quickly to Isaiah 8:20. -all of life—events and choices great or small—should be governed by God's Word.

v.119:105-to live otherwise is to live in darkness.

-the Bible has to be the measure and evaluator for all things in the life believer's life.

-His Word is able to guide and equip us....2 Tim. 3:16-17.

**So today.....aim to Develop Your Dependence on God's Word.**

\* \* Deepen Your Desire for God's Word.

\* \* Make Time for God's Word.

\* \* Read the Bible Daily and Do Not Close it Until You Know at Least One Thing God Would Have You Do In Response to Your Read.

\* \* Train Yourself to Ask, "How Does the Bible Speak to This?"

\* \* List At Least 5 Areas You Have Not Considered From A Biblical Perspective. Then search the Scriptures each day in one of the areas.

example:

-church, discipleship, family, money, work/school

The **Point** and **Challenge**: God's Word is able to guide your life....God speaks through it.....daily run to the Word for all you need!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# saturday – october 4

## Reflection

Think 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 is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?
7. How consistent was I in my prayer life?
8. How did staying in God's Word affect my week?
9. How did NOT staying in God's Word affect my week?

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

# sunday – october 5

If you could sum up with one sentence what you took away from your time in Worship today what would it be?

Be challenged to not just attend Church but instead actually BE there each Sunday.

Soak up wisdom and instruction that will eventually lead to right living. How well are you doing with this?

If you're reading this Saturday to get ahead that's great! Head into tomorrow at Church with a different mindset.

Go seeking to grow rather than evaluate what you do and do not like.

# monday – october 6

## The Credibility of the Witness

## 3 Thoughts for Today

Jesus allows us and calls us to be on mission with Him. This is a glorious privilege but a weighty responsibility. Along with allowing man to be involved in the work of evangelism you unfortunately get some of the “ways of man” to go along.....So we want to think today about what the Bible says about the credibility of the witness.....this is the holiness and the purity of the witness as they go.....

We would all agree that nobody want to hear what you have to say if you are a hypocrite, jerk, phony. We have to make sure that we are living lives “above reproach” (Titus 1) so that people will want to listen to us, trust our message, know our heart.

*3 passages come to mind that give us 3 thoughts to keep us credible as we share the gospel.*

### **Read Acts 5:1-12, notice that Sin Has the Power to Hinder Evangelism.**

The context of this passage is that everyone is giving and loving and sharing.....healthy community is happening and evangelism is happening while people are being saved.

Then there is a break in Acts 5, that gives us some teaching about sin in the flock.....Ananias and Sapphria sell property and don't give what they committed...they hold back.....they are sinful.....and the result is that hypocrisy is seen and mission is deterred. Then God deals with the sin.....v.5-10.....notice v.12=after the church has been refined.....they continue to be used in reaching the lost.....imagine what this incident looked like to someone just on the fringes?

-TAKE SIN SERIOUSLY....REALIZING WHAT YOU'VE BEEN CALLED TO!

### **Read Matthew 5:13-16, notice Sin Hinders Usefulness of the Witness.**

The message Jesus is preaching in this passage is that his children, his missionaries are distinct, with distinct jobs and purposes.....and if these purposes are hindered then we are no longer useful in the mission of God. Sin erodes the life of the believer.....hindering our witness.....

-Matthew gives us two illustrations for this:

-salt losing its saltiness= pointless

-light that is covered= pointless

-and in v. 14, 16 Jesus informs his followers that “this is not who you are”  
-don't let sin hinder your usefulness.....you are “distinct”, “light”, “salt”, “holy”

## **Read 2 Tim. 2:3-4, The Pursuit of Holiness Must Dominate the Witness.**

In this passage Paul is urging Timothy in his faith and ministry

-ITS HARD WORK, BUT WE MUST STRUGGLE AND BE DISTINCT AND FAITHFUL!!!!

He gives Timothy 3 illustrations to help him see what hard work and striving for the gospel looks like.....we must remember that as we witness we do so as soldiers, farmers, and athletes.....working hard for the gospel and Jesus!

v. 3- SOLDIER= suffer like a good soldier/don't get entangled in sin!!!

v. 5- ATHLETE= compete according to the rules.....be different!

v. 6- FARMER= work hard, the call to evangelize and the call to be credible is work!

\*So let's see the effects of sin and strive for holiness so that Matthew 5:16 is being accomplished daily in our lives

### **The Point and Challenge:**

the life you live matters as you take the gospel to the world!.....pursue holiness and be able to be heard by the world around you! This can only happen as we protect our testimony, our witness and we shine bright!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

### **Prayer for the Week:**

Las Mesitas (Antanasio, Beatrice, Fransisco)

This is a church and these are men we currently partner with in the mountains of Honduras. This is the church we collected for last year at DNOW. They now have a structure to meet in and to host mission teams through your faithfulness to give. Now consider praying that God continuing to build His church in the mountains of Honduras.

Pray for safety, wisdom, discipleship, evangelism, Christian fellowship and for God to be glorified through their lives

# tuesday – october 7

## Questions To Ask When Studying a Text from the Bible.

Today you are going to be challenged to do a little study of God's Word. Our time in the study of the Bible is the most valuable time we can spend each day. The tools for today can stay with you and impact you all the days of your life. There are 5 simple questions you need to remember and then ask of the passage you are studying. This can work anywhere and anytime!

So today read John 1 and ask these 5 questions below as you seek to know God more!

- What Does This Text Teach Me About God?
- What Does This Text Teach Me About Man?
- How Does This Text Point to Christ?
- What do I need to know in light of this teaching?
- What do I need to do in light of this teaching?

### **The Point and Challenge:**

God's Word can be studied, understood, and applied.....

this takes work and discipline.....

work today like never before in pursuing God through His Word.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# wednesday – october 8

Mark 10:17-31

Total Surrender

Think about your life?.....

Now really stop and think about every part of your life, including the small parts, the big parts, the parts you think are not visible, the parts you think don't matter. Look at your life.

Who does it belong to? It is easy to say "God" or "my life belongs to Jesus", but the sure all way to answer this question is to look at what you are surrendered to.

what do I spend my money on

what do I say

what do I eat and drink

what do I look at

what do I spend time doing

where do I go

what do I wear

my relationships?

We surrender to a lot of things in life when all along we need to surrender to just one thing with all we got. We just need to go after one thing with everything.

**And that is God.**

This passage in Scripture is all about total surrender to God. We can easily think about and pursue what we can get out of serving God. Jesus teaches in this passage that that way of thinking is shallow and pointless. In verse 29 Jesus teaches that we are to go after Him and give ourselves for Him and for the Gospel....to Him and to the Gospel. It was not for the purposes of what the disciples could get themselves from following Jesus. In our lives we must beware of surrender that is motivated by personal benefits that might result.

**This is hard.**

Man has become self-centered to the extent that we only go to God-for something-or we surrender to God-for something-and we never just go to Him for Him.....we never surrender simply to Him and for Him.

**We Really Just Need Him.**

Gaining heaven, being delivered from sin, and being made so that we can serve God are all things that should not be a consideration in real surrender. On the contrary, genuine and total surrender is a personal and a sovereign preference for Jesus Himself.

True surrender will go beyond what we know to be our natural devotion to something much more..... Go beyond to Him.

Go after God. He is all we need. He is all we want.....if we only knew.

Be afraid of stopping anywhere short of total surrender to Him. We really don't understand what this actually means for us, we've never experienced it.

The **Point** and **Challenge**: Today, commit to pursue God like never before, and surrender to HIM with everything you got. He deserves it. Plunge yourself into your purpose that's only found in Surrender.

# thursday – october 9

Mk. 10:17-34

Jesus & Possessions pa

**-Read Mark 10:17-34** and look at how Jesus teaches regarding Himself and the stuff we call possessions. We all have tons of stuff and tend to want more and more stuff as we live our lives. This isn't always bad but sometimes can be.....lets learn from Jesus today.

Notice the 3 main points that arise out of this passage as we walk through the details of each verse.....think about how you can apply this passage today!

## **Do not let the possessions of your life possess your life. (17-25)**

-v.17-20- this man's life shows us that you can "be good" and still be confused.

**v.21-** Jesus loves us too much to not call us out in our sin!!

the "one thing" that Jesus speaks about is the fact that we have replaced God in our lives...

-In Ex. 20:3 we are commanded not to have any Gods before Him.....

but we do!

-this is real for us because of the kind of materialistic lives that we live.

**v.22** is reflective of us too....our possessions are great, what we have replaced God with takes a great place, a solid place in our lives....(ex. money, stuff, relationships, wants)

-the replacement was so real for the guy....he couldn't get over it.

**v.23** Jesus is not teaching that possessions are bad but rather the wrong view and treatment of wealth and possessions is sinful and keeps people from God!

-material things breed self-sufficiency, self-focus, and independent thinking that ultimately results in people living lives away from God while professing Him.

-This is Practical Atheism.

-this worldview is not gospel-focused, but rather materialistic...

-what drives you? Your possessions or what you possess in Christ?

**v.24-25-**Jesus was teaching that when idolatrous replacement of God happens and stays in a person's life ....then you cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

**v.25-**in all human abilities....you cant do it (enter the Kingdom.

-we are weak, and our human strength will leave us lost!!!

- A person that has replaced God with riches and "v.23 kind of stuff" or "other replacements" (things that ultimately keep you from Christ.)

there is no salvation...

YOUR POSSESSIONS CAN KEEP YOU FROM GOD AND BREED A MENTALITY THAT YOU CAN DO IT OWN YOUR OWN APART FROM CHRIST

**Do not let the possessions of your life possess your life.**

### **We Must Rely fully on Christ. (26-31)**

-v.26 says that the disciples were exceedingly astonished, this happens because Jesus has just introduced a situation that is impossible!

-v.26-MAN= salvation is impossible....GOD= all things are possible

-v.27- God is Able .....rely on Christ!!!

-v.28-Peter begins to recall all his seemingly steep sacrifices, and when this happens he does not rely on the sufficiency of Christ, but rather on himself, his past, and his deeds!!

-v.29-30-Rely on Christ for the now, but also the future!!!

-in letting go there is actually great gain!! (in the Kingdom) there is gaining Christ!

-only Christ will do, trust Him and follow Him, = reliance on Him!

-v.31-even when it doesn't seem logical!!!!

**IN A DESPERATE SITUATION JESUS IS THE ONE WE RELY ON FOR SALVATION**  
**Rely fully on Christ.**

### **Jesus Christ is the Better an Able Possession. (32-34)**

-HOW CAN THIS BE? WHY CAN JESUS BE FULLY RELIED ON?

1. you don't need possessions to rule and consume you.
2. you can trust and rely on Christ.

Here Is Why - **Read vv.32-34**

-better than all earthly possessions, and greater than all the stuff that we may have given up or will one day give up to follow Him.....Jesus makes it worth that little sacrifice.....because He is able to save and in His salvation He is able to have!! And again this happens in vv.33-34

-v.33-in the "going up to Jerusalem" we see mission-plan-purpose

-v.34-the gospel.....death but rising!!

**Jesus Christ is the Better an Able Possession.**

Jesus puts it all in perspective!

The **Point** and **Challenge**: Do not let the possessions of your life possess your life, but rather use them to glorify the God how has saved you. If you are struggling with the material battle in life, rely on Christ for all, see Him as the one pure treasure and leave the need for all the others. And cling to the Christ of the gospel because HE is able, not only to straighten your way dealing with possessions but all else that this life throws your way.

**Trust and Obey.**

# friday – october 10

Nehemiah 2:1-6

The Mountain Starts To Move....

Q. Have you ever hoped for good news and received bad news?  
What did you do?

Take a minute to read Nehemiah 2:1-6

- Unknown to him, Nehemiah was about to join the glorious ranks of the “champions of faith” like Abraham, Joseph, Joshua and David.
- ONE PERSON CAN make a BIG difference in this world, IF that person really knows God and really trusts in Him.
  - Martin Luther said, *“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace. It is so sure and certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times.”*
- Jesus said in **Mark 9:23**: *“All things are possible to him who believes”*  
*Q. What was one of the obstacles to answered prayer as it relates to faith?*

## **Broken Walls and Intense Despair:**

***Q. What had broken Nehemiah’s heart and caused him to mourn?***

- The walls around Jerusalem were in shambles and city gates were burning with fire.
- Fellow Jews were in great distress and reproach.
- Their morale was at an all time low.

The news that Nehemiah had hoped for about the condition of his people was not what he received.

- *Q. How do you usually respond when this happens?*

Ever heard this statement, *the greater the battle the greater the victory?*

That’s true to a point, but in all actuality our battle is already won, we’ve just got to go and fight it...I used to love the last week of school before Christmas break, Thanksgiving break, Summer, Spring break, I mean it was so easy going to school knowing that in a couple of days I was leaving that place they call a learning facility and was going to get some time off....why? I had something to look forward to...and as believers, despite hearing the bad news we should have confidence that the battle needs to be fought, but ultimately we are winners.

The **Point** and **Challenge**: Have confidence that God is working in the midst of your struggle. Trust Him, Walk in Him, Move towards Him

So what did God teach you about Himself through this?

# saturday – october 11

## Reflection

Think 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 is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?
7. How consistent was I in my prayer life?
8. How did staying in God's Word affect my week?
9. How did NOT staying in God's Word affect my week?

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

# sunday - october 12

Take some time today and read Psalm 119: 1-16.

Just read and reflect and if you choose to, right down thoughts below from what you take away.

What's the first thing that comes to mind after reading this?

What is a response? What is something we're led to do?

What is something we learn about God?

# monday – october 13

2 Corinthians 5:20

## Shine

**Shine Camp 2011** was a great year where we challenged students throughout the year to shine brightly in 3 areas

2 Corinthians 5:20,

making known the greatness of God  
where we live - **COMMUNITY**

**Truth be known** we will never do as much as we should in our community. But if we have been changed by the grace of God and pursue Him daily I believe we **will be** agents of change within our community. What does it mean to be “*agents of change?*” I think a good, and Biblical, way to say it is Ambassador. As followers of Christ we are armed with one incredible mission, purpose and message. 2 Corinthians shares what our purpose is: **Read 2 Corinthians 5: 20**

### **What does v. 20 say about our Purpose in Community?**

I'm not sure about you but I'm thankful that God chose to make this known. We don't have to walk around trying to discover what our purpose is or what message we're supposed to be carrying. He has laid it out for us to clearly know. And now, all we have to do is walk in that.

### **What is our Community?**

Our community is the place where we live - but it's also the world

*Acts. 1:8* shares with us where we are to be ambassadors (*Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost*). It shares with us where our **community** is located. Jerusalem is Home

Judea is a day's journey

Samaria is within the U.S

the Uttermost is International

Today we want to concentrate on Community and being faithful in making known the greatness of God wherever we live and wherever we go.

Where are some places that would be considered your community?

As we go, live in our community, we fulfill our purpose according to 2 Cor. 5:20 but we also go with **Micah 6:8** on our hearts.

What does Micah 6:8 instruct us to do?

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There is no greater way for us to fulfill this than through the local church – a place of common unity or community.

The early church is a great example of how we can shine in community:

**Read Acts 2 42:47** - list some things you notice the church doing:

What were the results of them being faithful and unified? see vs. 47.

## **The Point:**

What's the point to all of this? Why is it important?

Good question. As Christ ones, Christians, or followers of Christ there is more to life than just living. We have a purpose, a mission, a love to live out. It's something greater than ourselves and it's something we can't do through our own strength. We need the power of God and the people of God. Community is just that. So through this one word: Community, we see our purpose and the plan.

God desires for us to reach the world, that starts at home and His plan is for us to join like-minded people, called out ones, to fulfill His great plan.

**There is no plan B...** We are His ambassadors.

Shine Bright Through Community!

## **The Challenge:**

Be the Church. Take the Gospel to the World. Start at home and reach out. One huge way for this to happen is for our ministry/church to be unified. Work today to get to know someone you don't know very well, possibly someone on your team. Spend time with them because in doing this you strengthen the Church, our community

**Who is the person you will reach out to today?**

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# tuesday – october 14

John 17:20-26

making known the greatness of God  
**with those we live with- Relationships**

**Truth be known** we will never handle relationships as well as we should. God has designed us to be in relationships. Throughout the year we've talked about the most important relationships you will ever encounter and how God should be glorified in all these.

It starts with our relationship with the Father:

**Read John 17:20-26**

Jesus is praying to the Father...(the high priestly prayer)...and He prays for us...that we may know the Father, through Jesus. His desire was that we would be one with each and Him: to have a relationship with the Father. Notice the **community** *(that we would be one with each other)* and the **relationship** *(that we would be one with the Father.)*

**What is one purpose for us being united together in the Father?**

hint: look at v. 23

The relationship with the Father is the most important relationship we will ever know:  
***the relationship with the Father influences every other relationship***

**Our relationship with our family**

this is a tough one....i realize that. There are times when we are so in love with our parents and, excuse me, our siblings, but then there are times when we really wished we were 1,000 miles from them.

**Our relationship with our friends**

can you say drama? you are in the age of drama and believe me, it does end...sort of. Truth is as long as there is sin in this world there will be drama within friendships. But we can put a major dent in this huge problem. Yep, it's found in Scripture. We'll get to that in a moment.

**Our relationship with our future significant others (dating)**

some of you are knee deep into dating and some of you only witness this through the eyes of Zach and Cody. Either way it is something you need to prepare for and settle within your hearts.

Despite the relationship, we are called to honor and glorify God through all of them. You see, He can be glorified in them or He can be ignored through them....you make that choice but His word is very clear:

**Read Romans 12: 9-21 and list some things you may need to keep in mind as you view relationships:**

It's important to see the connection between Community, Relationships and Truth. Hebrews 10:24 helps us see a portion of this connection.

Read Hebrews 10:24 and write down the purpose of relationships

Now notice Hebrews 10:25 – it mentions the place where this purpose is best lived out – where is that?

**The Point:** Relationships are crucial. One key relationship will determine where you spend eternity. And this key relationship will also determine how you treat every other relationship you'll ever enter into.

That relationship is the one you have or can have with the Father, God.

But God has wired us for relationships....it is not good for man to be alone.

Whether it's dating, friendships or family, you need relationships and you need relationship that encourage, equip and sharpen you.

Do you have those relationships in your life?

**The Challenge:** Proverbs 27:17 says "As iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another." You need people in your life that will "sharpen" you. Find that person today. Someone who will lift you up, encourage you, and equip you. But more than that, are you that person for someone else? It's time to step up and live for something great & God honoring.

Who is that person that sharpens you?

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# wednesday – october 15

John 17:17-19

making known the greatness of God  
**with what we live- TRUTH**

**Truth be known** we will never know everything there is to know about God (remember Isaiah 55:8)...until we are with Him, face to face. BUT, that doesn't mean we throw in the towel and just go through life spiritually ignorant.

Sanctification is a big word for some. Sanctification is the process of us being made more like Jesus. It is the next step after Salvation and a step that is not completed until we're in Heaven (Glorification).

We joke around about people being spiritual babes but it's a sad truth. Many people alive today fit into this category. They've accepted Christ as Lord but have never went past that step. Because of this we see them fall to sin or living ordinary lives with no power. (1 Cor. 3:1-3)

We must give ourselves to doctrine, to theology, to truth.

If we are to experience Community  
If we are to be in a healthy relationship with God and others  
We must know Truth – Theology

**Theology is simply mans attempt to know and understand God.**

We've read John 17 as Jesus prayed for us to come into a relationship with the Father...but the verse just before this we see Him praying that we would be "sanctified in truth."

**Read John 17:17-19    What is truth?**

As we are going through this sanctification process we are able to grow in our faith and our relationship with the Father and as we do this...

**We Shine.**

**Look at John 8:31-32**

What happens when we abide in and know Truth?

Through Truth we know more about who God is, and as we learn more about Him He changes us, He strengthens us and because of this the effect is our relationships are stronger...our relationship with the Father also strengthens Community. They ALL WORK TOGETHER.

You can't miss one and be all that He has designed you/us to be.

Shine *Truth is Discipleship*  
*Pauls words to Timothy: 1 & 2 Timothy*

Take a few minutes and read these verses from Paul's letter to Timothy.

**Write down your thoughts on How we should treat Truth:**

- 1 Timothy 4: 12-13
- 2 Timothy 2:15
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 2 Timothy 4:1-4

**The Point:** Truth is the Word of God. The Word of God is Truth.

You cannot live life without it. The #1 thing people forsake most in their walk with God is time in His Word. There are many excuses but none are valid really. I'm guilty and you're guilty. We can make time can't we?

But the point is this: We need Truth in our lives and God has been so good to give us just that: His Word. How is your love for His Word? How much time to you devote to His Word? If we value our relationship with Him – If we truly seek to make a difference within our community and be a vital part of His church – how are we ever expecting to do that without being fully devoted to His Word. See Deut 8:3

**The Challenge:** The challenge is simple. Strengthen your time in the Word of God. Give yourself to Truth. To help with this beginning next week we are challenging you to read through the Gospel of John. We'll create a facebook page where we can talk it out and be held accountable. it will challenge you, equip you, and hold you accountable.

Truth will strengthen you....allow that to happen in your life.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**  
**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# thursday – october 16

1 Peter 2:15

Naysayers

For the next week or so we'll spend our time by looking at one verse a day. These verse are powerful, simple, yet profound.

Today we address a question:

**how do I handle people that talk bad about me?**

This is tough....we always seem to have people talking about us. It may be lies, stretching the truth, and it just creates issues all over the place.

It could be someone you know, someone you thought you were friends with or maybe even someone that lives under the same roof.

But the truth is it's tough to deal with isn't it?

It'd be nice to know how to handle it wouldn't it?

It'd be awesome to gain some wisdom in how to act when people talk bad about me.

Good news....there's a verse for that

Read 1 Peter 2:15.....but before you do.....understand the context.

**CONTEXT:** Peter is writing to a people who are being persecuted....things are not going well for these people and now he's in the process of reminding them to obey authority. Take a look at vv. 11-12. What Peter is asking them to do is pretty close to what we would say to someone who is complaining because people are talking bad about them...speaking lies.

**His Advice? Now read 1 Peter 2:15.**

Did you catch it?

**What was the advice, encouragement and wisdom Peter gave?**

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## **The Point**

People will talk about you. They will make up stuff to hurt you. This is not new. You are not the first person to deal with it. Take heed to the wisdom of Scripture and simply "do good." Don't react the way you want to, according to the old you. Respond in a way that shows Christ.

## **The Challenge**

Live it out. Seek out what is "good" and do that. Tune it tomorrow!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# friday – october 17

Micah 6:8

Doing Good

Yesterday we looked at how we can put to silence the naysayers...those people who put us down, make up stuff to ultimately hurt us.

In one sense we can say...."let em talk!"

But on the other side we should desire to maintain our testimony and ensure we are living in a way that looks like Christ.

Peter's encouragement was to simply "do good."

But Good to me may not be Good to you.

There must be a standard somewhere right???

**Yep – Turn to Micah 6:8 and read it.**

Couple of things: "HE" = God & "You" = Us

So get this...God is talking to us about what is good.

We know this, should know this, now know this.

So what is good....how are we to live in the midst of the naysayers?

1. **Do Justice** – seek out the wrongs and work through God's strength to make them right.

Do you see wrongs in your daily life?

What are some? What is holding you back from stepping in to help?

2. **Love Kindness** – Rejoice in that which is from God. Stop celebrating sin and wage war on it instead. If we celebrate let's make sure it's something truly worth celebrating.

3. **Walk Humbly with your God** – Be in an active relationship with your God. To do this we must be humble. Know who He is and understand we belong to Him.

## **The Point**

Doing "good" is imitating Christ. How did Christ live? How did He respond? It's the old question of W.W.J.D? It's asking this, discovering this, and doing this.

## **The Challenge**

again, live it out. Seek truth and obey truth.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# saturday – october 18

## Reflection

Think 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 is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?
7. How consistent was I in my prayer life?
8. How did staying in God's Word affect my week?
9. How did NOT staying in God's Word affect my week?

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

# monday – october 20

Proverbs 13:20-21

Friendships

This week we'll be looking a bit at our friendship, relationships and really some major influences in our life.

By now school is in full swing. We're surrounded by people we typically do not see say in the summer. But here we are, all under one roof. I have a choice: be influenced or be an influencer.

This may surprise you but friends typically are the biggest influencer in the life of a teenager. **In 1960** it went like this: Parent, Teacher, Spiritual Leader. **In 2014** it's more like this; Friends, Culture, Family.

The danger is that our friends...16 yr olds now have more influence in our life than our Creator. That's a scary place to be.

We need to be serious about recognizing who is influencing us. Our heart answer may be a bit different than the reality that is taking place in our life each day.

Why do we do the things we do?

Do we ever say no to God because we're saying yes to someone else?

Does pressure from friends sometimes lead us to disobey God?

Wait a minute, I know what you're thinking. You may be thinking, that I'm thinking, that you think about killing someone cause your friends asked.

That's not what I'm thinking. But have you ever NOT said anything to a friend who was doing something that was contrary to God and His Word?

Me too, we've allowed the pressure of disrupting that friendship keep us from pleasing God in each moment.

We always tend to think big but we must think of every moment in the life of each friendship to come to grips with the weight our friendship have in our life.

This is a huge issue.

Read **Proverbs 13:20-21**

Notice the two options we have when we consider walking with someone.

What are these two options?

Become \_\_\_\_\_ or Suffer \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about this: Walking with someone represents you entering into a relationship with someone. You're giving yourself to someone else.

This is both friendship and dating. We are opening ourselves up to someone influencing us and the question is this: What type of person is influencing you?

Notice that question was not: Are you being influenced? Because you are. But what type of person is doing the influencing?

- A person filled with the Spirit?
- A person pursuing the world?
- A person following Christ?
- A person desiring what the world has to offer?
- A person leading you to be more like Christ?
- A person seeking to make you their follower?
- A person that is holding you accountable to pursuing Christ?
- A person allowing you to live free and simply enjoy the moment?

We have two choices – Walk with the Godly and sharpen each other **OR**  
Walk with those who are not seeking God and ultimately suffer harm

## **The Point**

We all have stories of fallen friendships or relationships. These were not built or maintained on Christ. This is why they fell. We know this now. But we didn't learn because maybe we still continue to develop relationships with people who will influence us in a way that leads FROM Christ rather TO Him.

The point is simply....guard these relationships. Be an influence and choose your influences carefully.

## **The Challenge**

Look at your friendships....are they healthy and God honoring?

What changes need to be made? What challenges does this bring?

As we continue through the week with specific examples may we be bold enough to act on that which God calls us to each day.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

## **The Prayer for the Week**

Pray for your friendships....call your friends by name...list them out. Pray that they too will seek God and become the influencer that you need in your life.

# tuesday – october 21

I Corinthians 10:31

Dating

Ok...some of you may not be in this season of life now but guaranteed one day you will be....one day....20 years from now.

All kidding aside this isn't a devotion to push you into dating **or** convince you to date right now **and** it isn't a devotion that will scream dating is wrong. We'll let you and God decide the timing on that one. But really we want to ensure our thinking concerning dating is healthy and **WHEN** we do date, we'll be filled with wisdom from God, from His Word.

When thinking about dating we really don't drift too far away from yesterday's devotion and our thinking regarding friends. The list we finished with is one to also consider before you actually "date" someone or even "like" someone.

Choose wisely who you give yourself too in the life.  
Remember your main purpose in life. Do you remember it?

**Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.**

What is our main purpose in life? \_\_\_\_\_

Does this leave anything out?  
Is there any portion of our life left out, no matter how personal?

Dating is tricky not because it is wrong but because it is so important to get right. Meaning we must thinking with our mind as much as we think with our heart.

We must be careful to honor God in all things, even as we pursue a dating relationship.

The Bible does not mention dating so as we search Scripture for dating help we start with relationships in general, again point to the list from yesterday.

If we desire more than this we move on to seeing what Scripture has to say about marriage, after all we date to marry, right?

To understand this we can look at Ephesians 5:22-33 specifically.

Read it and write the statement that stands out the most to you as you think about marriage and dating:

\_\_\_\_\_

From Ephesians 5 we learn that we are to love each other as Christ has loved the Church. What was the goal of Christ in loving the Church?

To restore the relationship of God & Man  
To reunite people back to the Father, God.  
He loved & lived in a way that led people to God

From this we can gather our goal in dating, or any relationship, is to love and live in a way that lead people to God. For us, this happens through Jesus Christ.

So as I date, or think about dating, or prepare for dating, I must:

- look at my relationship to God through Christ
- seek to allow the Gospel to be the foundation of my relationship
- exalt and pursue Christ in each relationship
- find a like minded person pursuing these same things.

If we follow these things we don't wonder about timing issues or begin to question dating or even doubt anything...we simply enjoy that which occurs.

## The Point

Dating is not wrong as long as Christ is being exalted. When the dating relationship becomes ultimate, dating is wrong. This is the same case with deer hunting or (Fill in the blank). These things are not wrong unless that become ultimate to you. Timing is not the key, Dating is not the question....following Christ is the ultimate concern.

Now if I am following Christ at 10 can I then start dating at 10?

**My question would be this:** Do we truly understand what it means to follow at 10 or does this come with maturity?

## The Challenge

Pray for wisdom, seek truth, take inventory of your walk and fellowship of Christ. Are you a person who is ready to date? Are you in a place with Christ that you feel adding another persons interest is wise?

Will this person compete for the passion, desire, and attention that belong to God? Or will this person aid in this pursuit? Was that last answer a lie to eventually get what you want?

The challenge is tough, it's a challenge. We want a perfect answer and instead we get a perfect Word. The challenge is clear but the path is still somewhat confusing. The simple challenge: Follow Christ and enjoy Him and then enjoy the blessings that come with being His.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# wednesday – october 22

Ephesians 6:1-4

The Home

This could hurt a little bit and could liberate some of you and could even frustrate some of the parents who may read this devotion

We've been looking at relationships and today we get closer to home. Actually we get all the way in the home. This is perhaps the hardest relationship to maintain of any relationship in the world. The teenager and the parents of the teenager who not too long ago, were teenagers.

Hard doesn't even come close to touching this relationship.

The truth is this: if Satan can control the home he can control the church. And the sad truth is he is winning right now.

Good news is this: he will not win.

But what wisdom is there for you as students leaving in a home with parents. There's a lot but we'll reflect on Ephesians 6 quickly.

Before we do consider these things about your parents:

- they were once your age (strange right?) can you imagine your parent as a 16 yr old dealing with zits and dating? Scary and gross
- they have parents who they struggled with and they promised that when they became parents they would do things different. I wonder how many of them actually are doing things different? Good question for dinner.
- they went through exactly what you are going through. They know from experience much of what they are now helping you through. Believe it or not they know what they're talking about....both from experience and that which they've learned from Scripture. Lean on them as they lean on Christ.
- the saying "this is going to hurt me a lot more than it will hurt you" was not originated with your parents, or their parents....it's been passed down and for some reason each generation declares they won't say that because it just ain't true! But then each generation has that thought go through their head and eventually it is spoken.

Your parents realize being a teenager is hard and their will be battles. But they want you to know that parenting is also hard....be patient with them and love them as you lean on them. Yes, you lean on them more than you know.

## **So what now?**

Read Scripture and obey Scripture.

We obey our parents because they pay the bills, put food in our belly, buy us things and even let us have fun now and then....but that is not ultimately why we are to obey them.

We Obey Because Scripture Says:

**Read Ephesians 6:1.**

Why do we obey our parents? What does it say?

We obey because ultimately as we obey our parents we are pleasing Christ. Our parents are living out their God given task and we too as their children have a role to play.....we are to obey.

is it easy? NO

It's easy when they say "alright kids....we're going to 6 flags!"

that's when you say "yes sir, can I help load the car?"

But when they say "alright kids....time to clean the house"

that's when you vanish....

But the truth is we are to obey them.

What about if my parents are not believers? We obey them

What if they ask me to steal a car? Don't steal a car.

What is the most important thing in our lives?

The Glory of God right? Is stealing a car going to bring glory to His Name?

Then don't steal the car.

## **The Point**

Honor your parents by obeying. There is nothing above this command other than the command to honor God in all things. Life does get tricky as our parents respond in ways that lead us, their children to wrath. (eph. 6:4)

But strive for greatness in honoring your parents as you glorify God

## **The Challenge**

Surprise them this week. Act right, do right, love right, help them, agree with them, volunteer to do things, make this a habit. Leave your little sister alone for a while. Better yet....love that brat sibling as Christ loved us.

Great - he brought up Christ. These are not chains, this is freedom and love!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# thursday – october 23

I John 2:15-17

The World

So we have our friends, we have the dating relationship and we have the home.... particularly our parents, what's left? The World.

One thing we all battle is this constant struggle with being in the world without being friends with the world. We live here, but this isn't home. We are to share Christ but we are not to find ourselves joining in with what's going on.

The struggle is real but instruction in how to live is just as real. The question is not "is there an answer," **the question is** "will you pursue this truth?"

Take a look at **I John 2:15-17**.

Before we move on let's clarify some things.

- World is referring to that which is opposite of God.
- the World is not our home...it is our mission field
- the World is temporary (*1 Peter 2:11-12*)
- the World is controlled by the evil one (*1 John 5:19*)

Without throwing any of our own interpretation in the mix let's be real and simply repeat back or answer these questions based on what we just read:

1. Should we love the world?
2. If we love the world, who's love is NOT in us?
3. What does the world and it's things truly offer us? (v.16)
4. If I pursue, befriend, follow the world, what is my fate? (v.17)
5. If I pursue the Lord what will happen? (v.17)

We just took God at His Word. The message was simple, straight forward. About now we begin making excuses....I know I do. I attempt to play down the seriousness of the issue.

But the reality is this: **The world is opposite of God**. There is a constant struggle and a constant pull of the follower to change it's allegiance from God to man, the world, here as home thinking.

We could put a lot of stock into the fact that we want to build up a reputation here, by "loving the world." We could live by the worlds standards and gain money, success and popularity but remember....the world is passing away, along with all of these paper crowns.

The end is this:

We could be a friend of God or a friend of the world.

There are truly only two options.

We said this this past year but this letter known as I John was written to a people who needed encouragement as they were trying to following Christ in a world that was filled with evil people living opposite of God.

This is us...we too are in this situation.

Sure...the evil now is dressed up, excused away, but again, the struggle is real.

Excuse me for a second but if you put sugar on poop, it's still poop.

Don't be fooled by sugar coated things.

A.W. Tozer said this:

We who were created for higher worlds view what this world has as ultimate.

So true. We, the follower of Christ, the elect, have been given something that is greater than anything we could ever hope for or muster up on our own and we view this as secondary so many times. We exchange God for poop (with sugar on top).

The same occurred in Romans 1:20-21

People exchanged the truth about God for a lie....and God gave them up to these lusts, desires, and wishes.

Be careful what you hope for.....be mindful of what you hope for.....and ultimately I pray your hope is Christ.

## **The Point**

The world is not home, Christ has provided something better, so walk in Him.

## **The Challenge**

Notice how you are living, what you are following, what you are giving yourself to each day. Is it worth it? Is it something that will only advance the Kingdom of God and the Gospel? If not, we really need to evaluate and possibly eliminate.

This is tough, this is life, but God is greater!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# friday – october 24

Philippians 1:3-11

The Church

At the end of the day there is a relationship we must have if our ultimate and greatest desire is to glorify God with our lives. This relationship is one with the Church. This seems odd here but in reality it's not too far of a stretch when we consider the purpose of relationships:

The purpose of any relationship again is to lead us closer to Christ.

**Friendships** are there to provide a platform to be encouraged, extend grace

**Dating** is there to eventually lead us to marriage and display Christ.

The Church then isn't too far of a stretch....it too is there to encourage, extend grace, to provide a place for us to display Christ in our life, through service, worship, discipleship. So really Church is a huge relationship for us to consider.

Paul was connected to many churches; the church at Philippi was one of them. In the first few verses you see the love he has for them.

These verses seem a bit odd to support what we're looking at today and look more like a devotion that is leading us to properly loving someone.

But hold that thought and read **Phil. 1:3-11**

Paul was speaking to a people...but the people he was speaking to was the church....a group of people sharing the same beliefs and direction as they sought how to most glorify God with their lives.

Paul's prayer for them is beautiful and one that I hold true for many I know, including you. What Paul was hoping for and praying for was that they would trust God to complete a work that He began and would complete in Christ as they followed Him.

We do this through the church. It is the place where we gather only to scatter. We live our own individual lives but we never do so completely on our own.

We need a network, accountability, and opportunity to work out this great hope. Church is this place.

Church is THE place God intends to make known His Great Name!

A Church is a place where people partner together in the Gospel and then work together to take this great news to the nations.

**Check out v. 5** – Paul is thankful for their partnership in the Gospel  
This “partnership” is the picture of the Church.  
We need this relationship, this partnership in our lives.

Paul has a prayer and hope for this folks communicated in vv. 9-11  
These things are carried out in the church

1. abound more and more (with knowledge and discernment or judgement)
2. pure lives that shine bright – v. 10
3. filled with the fruit of righteousness (Godly works) – v. 11
4. lives lived for God’s glory – v. 11

These 4 things describe someone who is pursuing Christ hard!  
4 things that are strengthened by the church.

## **The Point**

Church is important. It’s a key relationship for you to have and if you’re seeing it as a chore you’re missing out. If you’re not plugged in, serving, enjoying, attending you’re missing out. Be a part of God’s plan A to expand His kingdom. FYI, there is not plan B

## **The Challenge**

Get involved; in service, in Sunday School, on Wednesdays, on mission, on campus. Take the name of Jesus with you and use the vehicle of the church to do so! Stop waiting and get involved. What’s the next step for you in your involvement in the local church.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**  
**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# saturday – october 25

## Reflection

Think 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 is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?
7. How consistent was I in my prayer life?
8. How did staying in God's Word affect my week?
9. How did NOT staying in God's Word affect my week?

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

# **sunday – october 26**

It's that time again, time for you to reflect on this devotion book.

## **We need your Feedback:**

**We need to hear from you!**

**Are the devotions helpful?**

**Any changes you would like to see made?**

**As we decide if we are going to continue this in January it is very helpful to hear from you.**

**When you get a chance send a message to me and let me know how things are going with you and your time in the Word.**

**We'll ask periodically throughout this book.**

## **How do contact?**

email – [chris@roopvilleroad.org](mailto:chris@roopvilleroad.org)

facebook – [facebook.com/therocksm](https://www.facebook.com/therocksm) (send a message)

phone – text me at 770.328.4192

# monday – october 27

Romans 8: 1-11

FREE

The hope is to wade through Romans 8 this week. This is perhaps one of the most encouraging chapters in all of Scripture. It's within these verses we find so many crucial truths to our faiths and promises by which we so cling to as we walk through life.

We'll simply walk through it together and make some observations and also encourage you to do some work yourself. Work out these tools you've been given to read the Word and be strengthened by what It says!

## Read Romans 8:1-11

Have you ever been condemned by someone?

You seen movies, heard stories or a song that dealt with this. But have you ever personally been condemned? Most of us would relate to the condemnation of getting out of a brother or sisters room. "Never come back" they say. You are not welcome here.

Can you imagine hearing those words from God? A heartbreaking, scary, unsettling and horrible place to be, right?

Thankfully this is not what Romans 8:1-11 communicates. It actually is only using this word to inform us to what WON'T be going on in the life of the follower; **THERE IS NOW NO CONDEMNATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST JESUS.**

What is the opposite of condemnation?                      FREEDOM – v.2

Check out v. 3 – We say often that the Gospel or good news is that God has done for you what you were unable to do for yourself. V. 3 says God has done what the law could not.

It's not talking about speeding or murder by saying "law."

What this means here is this was the requirement.

We were required to act a certain way....to keep the law.

When we couldn't....ever.....we were in trouble.

But God is Able!

God COULD do what the law couldn't do – PERFECT US! FREE US!

"How?" you ask. Read v. 3-4

But this only happens for those who.....v. 4b-5

So now we stand....FREE, REUNITED WITH GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

There is no condemnation for those who walk in Christ.  
Relief and Hope are now present in my life.

But there is still a war right?

Did angel dust not fall over you at that moment you began to follow Christ?

Didn't everything just become so easy?

NO, we still battle sin and this life.

That's why Jesus' words in Luke 9:23 are so crucial.

We must die to the flesh Paul talks about in Romans 8:8

We must die to that which we have already died to.

Confused?

We continually want to pick up this heavy load of the flesh each day.

We live in the power of us rather than God.

But rather than do this we should simply trust and walk in verse 11.

## **The Point**

Christ has freed us, walk in Him. It's really that simple though walking it out is difficult at times. We are not perfect but He is. We are not able, but He is.

## **The Challenge**

Rather than get down because you're not perfect, trust deeper! Trust in the one who is perfect and all together able.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

## **Prayer for the week:**

Deepen your knowledge of this great salvation. Pray that God will open your eyes to His incredible love, grace, mercy and provision for you.

# tuesday – october 28

Romans 8:12-17

## Heirs

Yesterday we established the fact that we are forever changed once we follow Christ. We are no longer condemned in light of our sins. We are forgiven and today we see some effects of that.

We are no longer condemned but free....that would be enough right. Thinking through the nasty slave situation our country went through at one time and seeing many movies, documentaries regarding the slave situation you find something interesting. In many cases the slave stayed where they were. The thought that they were free was enough. Many times we're the same with Christ. We are free....and we are good with that...that's a problem because there's more.

I think about someone who wins \$10,000 in prizes and before they ever receive the prizes they walk away. For them just knowing they won was enough. But I would be that person curious to know what it all was. What if it was \$10,000 of toilet paper. Does that change things.

So today let's look at Romans 8:12-17 and find out a little bit about what freedom in Christ means and looks like.

## Heirs

This no doubt is the main point of these verses. Think about this for a moment and allow it to sink in. To think about what it means we need to turn to another passage, gain some perspective.

Turn and read **Ephesians 2:1-3**.

What was our condition before Christ?

Thanks be to God for v. 4 in Ephesians "BUT GOD."  
God acted on our behalf.

And so follow with me here:

We are enemies of God....Christ saves us....we become heirs with Him.  
That. Is. Huge.

If that's not huge to you then you must not have a good understanding of what "heir" means.

What does it mean to be an heir?

If you are an heir it means someone made you his or her heir and you would get everything they had. Everything that was theirs was now yours.

Come back to the devo now and see that now that you are Gods, in Christ, everything that He has is yours.

He's freely given His Son for you but it didn't stop there.

Everything that He has {STOP}

think about everything He has:

- power
- wisdom
- honor
- majesty

I know...you were thinking free ice cream at any moment.

You see the things that we have as His heirs are things that are to be used to further His kingdom, to make His Name known in a greater way.

Turn and read **Galatians 4:4-7** real quick.

You see the same story here from Paul.

What a great story it is of hope, love, grace, mercy.

God showing out again by accepting us as His own. Amazing!

## **The Point**

In Christ you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. We are His, He is mine, life is good, no.....great....no....forget it....there is no word that can sum up what this means....glorious?

## **The Challenge**

See all that He has given you as a means to make His Name known. Tap into the power of God, the wisdom of God and join this fight with Him.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# wednesday – october 29

Romans 8:18-30

## Suffering

Wait a minute....I just read the title of this devo and then I'm trying to figure out how this a great hope....to suffer? Really?

Ok...perspective.....or reality check.

Consider where we've been the last 2 days.

1. We are free, not condemned
2. We are heirs, we are God's child. (all that is His is ours)

Because of these 2 facts suffering can be a great hope.

I'll explain but first read Romans 8:18-30

How is suffering a great hope? go back and read verse 28 again.

Because we are free in Christ and because we are heirs of God we can trust in the fact that whatever God allows in our life will be for the sole purpose of "our good."

**OUR GOOD** = for our good.

Now remember, we're still growing in this walk with Him.

Is. 55:8 says our thoughts are no where near where His are.

Our mind is weak, His is strong(est).

So "good" to us doesn't always match "good" to Him.

So we trust.

But, v. 26, the Spirit helps in our weakness.

v. 27, the Spirit intercedes for us (when we don't know what to pray)

Ever heard the saying "Father knows best?"

Ever understood it?

It means that sometimes your father does some things for your good that you may not understand.

Don't believe me?

Remember that time you wanted to eat your boogers for some reason?

Your dad would say "Don't do that."

You weren't happy, you wanted booger.  
But then maybe you trusted him and didn't eat it.

Now, hopefully now, you don't eat boogers.  
Why? Because you know it's stupid.

But back then, in the days of toddlerism you didn't know or understand why such a fine thing would be withheld from you.

Back to Romans 8 and non booger talk.....  
Our Heavenly Father, "Abba Father" v. 15, knows what we need in our life and from that wisdom He sends, He allows, He ordains.....for our good.

Even Suffering.  
Go back to verse 18.  
this should make more sense now.

You see the "heir" stuff is for now, to make Him known.  
But the goodie goodie gum drops we're thinking about....Heaven?  
That is this "glory that is to be revealed to us."

That is to come....for now....we walk in Him, trust Him.  
Father Knows Best!

## **The Point**

We must trust deeper in this great God we serve and walk with.  
He does know best and we must strive daily to be filled with His wisdom as we seek to make sense out of this life. All the while we embrace suffering, clinging to Him.

## **The Challenge**

Change your perspective. When you are filled with His wisdom the thing that matter to Him matter to you. The things that once fulfilled you (boogers) no longer fulfill you (thanks be to God!)

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**  
**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# thursday – october 30

Romans 8:31-36

## What you got?

Ok, this has been good....and there was so much more we didn't get into as we've just been covering the mountain top view.

**But in light of all we've seen**

1. We are free, not condemned
2. We are heirs, we are God's child. (all that is His is ours)
3. Father Knows Best!

What could ever hope to stand in our way?  
If this God be for us what could be against us?

You ever seen a movie that had that statement in it that had you ready to go out and drive a tank into the face of an enemy?

Forget the tank, you'd take a slingshot into the face of the Taliban. **Bring it!**

**Romans 8:31** is one of those statements.

We sing it, we print it, we bumper sticker it, we enlarge it.

But do we consider what this is saying?

Ok, I'm just kidding....it means what it says.

**Check out v. 33**

“Who is ever going to bring anything against God's elect?”

You know what that means?

It means it's settled!

When Jesus made the declaration ***“It is finished!”*** on the cross, it was sealed man!

Talk about hope, my goodness.

So what does this do in our lives?

It does the same thing that movie did.

When William Wallace (***Braveheart***) gave his speech I turned my house upside down looking for my sword. I settled on a butter knife and I went and destroyed some anthills.

This verse gives confidence to look the devil in the eye and say

## **What you got?**

**When the enemy comes at you full force, be confident.**

**But never be confident in what you can provide.**

Make sure you are confident in what it already provided.

Have hope and stand firm!

The enemy could begin with condemnation:

**I shoot that down with v.1 and then again with v. 34**

He then goes to the fact that I'm alone:

**"I'm an heir" I proclaim**

He then proceeds to say I'm not qualified:

**Um....I'm an heir dummy**

Then he goes into this long spill about suffering and I simply reply:

**Father knows best!**

Get this....who can bring anything against God's elect?

Those who are in Christ Jesus?

**NOBODY!**

### **The Point**

The enemy has nothing that you won't give them. Without applying what Christ has given and God has provided we will do the job Satan is attempting to do in discouraging us. Nobody can bring you down. You are His

### **The Challenge**

Live with this in mind. Live in confidence. Not that you are something big and bad but that you are God's child. Because of this, because of Jesus you are alive, free, an heir, untouchable. Live with this in mind. Now go and kill some ants.

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**

**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# friday – october 31

Romans 8:37-39

## Conquerors

If we're not encouraged by now prepared to be blown away. If after today you are not knocked off your feet we need to have a heart to heart.

Take a moment and read Romans 8:31-37

A question has been asked...we've answered it.....but we will get another resounding response in our text today.

The question is this:  
Who can stand against God's child?

There's a key word in that statement. If we miss it we set ourselves up for some pretty horrible moments.

The keyword is God. We must ensure we are walking with Him otherwise what we envision as an attack from the enemy could be judgement from God.

Go back and read Romans 8:28.  
there's a statement there; "for those who are called according to his purpose." This is pointing to the person who is walking with God.

But for the person who is walking with God....living life in a way that our greatest hope and desire is to glorify Him. For this person we must know that IN ALL THINGS WE ARE.....

## **More than Conquerors. v. 37**

Again, Don't miss this keyword. – (through him who loved us.)  
We can never for one second believe any of this "positive language" is because of anything we could muster up.

This is all for Him, through Him and because of Him..

In this I have confidence, great confidence, in Christ.  
In response and conclusion to this great hope, Paul tries to communicate what this means for us.

**Read Romans 8: 38-39 and respond to some questions below:**

- 1. Is there anything left off the list that could separate you from His love?**
- 2. What are some things that scare you or seem to be a struggle in your life as you attempt to live in this love?**

This love God has for us is powerful, all consuming and stronger than anything we have ever known.

Read John 10:28 and write out below what it is communicating.  
What does the text say?

## **The Point**

The point is simple. God's love for you is huge and nothing can ever separate you from this love in Christ Jesus.

## **The Challenge**

Dwelling, Living, Remembering this great love. How many times do the smallest of things derail us. How many times do we get off track spiritually because of the smallest things? Like a little brother, homework assignment, household responsibility. Do we really live with Jesus in mind? With Heaven in mind?

Decide today to trust in Christ daily by living with the knowledge that you've read The Bible and know the story and are trusting the story by faith in Christ.

Living this way removes some fears and removes the need to "perform" in order to receive. You've got His love....now go and live in it!

**What did the Word teach me about God, Jesus, Man (me)?**  
**What is the next step I should take after reading this?**

# saturday – november 1

## Reflection

Think 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 is something I need to work on in the future?
6. What would make my time in the Word better?
7. How consistent was I in my prayer life?
8. How did staying in God's Word affect my week?
9. How did NOT staying in God's Word affect my week?

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



## What's Next?

Make sure you pick up another devotion book at The Rock.  
This devotion will begin on Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>.