



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

SEPTEMBER DEVOTIONS
2018



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)



BASIC

THE ROCK SM 2019

There are some **basic** things we must have in order to be called a Christian. We can't just say we are a Christian without some things being in place. We can't claim to be a chicken without producing some eggs, right? The reality of our life and walk with Christ is that this life is made up of **basic** principles. This year we'll look at some of these. We'll put them in 3 sections: Attitudes, Actions and Beliefs. These **basic** things come together in one life led by Christ to produce something extravagant.....all for God's glory.

We feel that these **basic** things be present in the life of the one that claims Christ as their savior and as one who claims to follow Christ and belong to God. We are always to be striving for and working towards these things as we seek to know Christ and make Christ known. We haven't perfected these things but are simply pursuing these things. These things aren't complex, they are **basic**.

This year we'll spend our time together focusing on these things. **Basic** things that must be present for the greater Life to be a reality. No one was ever extra without first possessing the **basics**. BELIEF influences Attitudes influences Actions. If this is true, and we feel it is, then we must ensure we are centering all our thoughts, attention, focus and priorities around what we believe to be true about God. Then and only then will our attitudes and actions proclaim Him loudly in a world that is desperate for Him.

So our heart this year is to be about the basic and allow God to bring about the extra.

ATTITUDE	WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY OF THE LORD. FULLY PLEASING TO HIM.
ACTIONS	BEARING FRUIT IN EVERY GOOD WORK AND
BELIEF	INCREASING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

COLOSSIANS 1:10

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. We will also give you a page for sermon notes...keep it all together right!?

In most cases our devotions will work with our sermons from The Rock. It will be another way to keep the idea fresh and hopefully help us drive the thought deeper down. This devo will be grounded in **the Word of God**. Scripture alone is our guide and help. The plan is to allow you the opportunity to open Scripture and see for yourself. We will help you each day with a simple devotion, grounded in Scripture but there is much more for you to see and read. **Throughout the year we will offer a Bible Reading Plan at the bottom of each devotion.** In some cases, our devotion will come from this passage but there will be some that are totally separate. Either way we want to give you the opportunity to trek with us as we journey through the Bible this year. We must get past the laziness of not getting in the Word of God. We hope you'll join us in this devotion book and reading plan but the end result is for you to get in the Word. Any way you do that is fine with us but how cool would it be if we were all trekking along together?

So have fun and dig in. At the least we hope you'll spend 5 minutes a day with our devotion. The end goal is to not only do the devotion but take some and read the reading plan Scripture of the day and jot down some thoughts. But again...the goal is simple.

The SET UP

Each day the devotion will provide a Scripture and then from there offer three things, an explanation, an illustration and an application. We must not be hearers only but doers. So, these 3 steps will help us make sense of God's Word and best discover the heart of God as we read His Word.

A Few Tips and Tricks to Keep in Mind While Reading...

You've often heard the words **observation, interpretation, and application** around the Rock. You'll hear them, work through them and hopefully they eventually become a regular part of how you handle Scripture. Here is one great way to think about these principles as we seek to discover the heart of what God is wanting us to see and do from His Word. This is also a great tool to use when reading Scripture with other...it's called the **One-To-One Method**.

We've even left you a blank page to the right of each devotion for this!!!

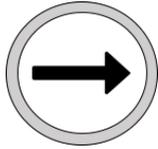
After reading the passage look for these three things:



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Want to go deeper than the above three things?

5 questions to ask when reading Scripture?

These questions will better help you 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!

Missionary Prayer – Each week we'll provide a name of a missionary we are partnering with. We encourage you to pray for strength, wisdom, and boldness for them, their ministry and family.

Today is really basic. We simply want to revisit what our year will be about. The cool thing is that every time we get together for any event it will help us in our pursuit of this team. So let's revisit our theme and begin to get our minds around Colossians 1:10.

Everything in life has **basic** principles. There is a rule or understanding that if you are going to be all that you must first possess, do, or believe some **basic** things. Another way to say **basic** is to say fundamental or foundational. No major sport star ever started out as a star.....there was a time he/she learned the **basic** fundamentals. Still to this day that star still possesses and practices these **basic** things. Take away the **basic** things and any situation turns into the story of what once was or what might have been. It's a sad story of a cool possibility.

If I were to claim to be something you would have some ideas of some **basic** things to immediately ask or look for to determine if I'm telling the truth or not. That or you really are foolish to believe everything I claim without some proof. If I claim to be an amazing juggler I would be able to do something **basic** like catch a single ball thrown to me. That's **basic** right? To ever be able to juggle multiple things I must first be able to juggle one thing. It seems really simple but in the end something complex is really just multiple **basic** things pulled together.

Our spiritual life is the same. There are some **basic** things we must have in order to be called a Christian. We can't just say we are a Christian without some things being in place. We can't claim to be a chicken without producing some eggs, right? The reality of our life and walk with Christ is that this life is made up of **basic** principles. This year we'll look at some of these. We'll put them in 3 sections: Attitudes, Actions and Beliefs. These **basic** things come together in one life led by Christ to produce something extravagant.....all for God's glory.

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Yesterday we threw out the big thought of Basic. Today we think a bit more towards the actual verse this thought comes from, Colossians 1:10

If you read yesterday, you noticed that Basic really included three things. Basic Attitudes, Basic Actions and Basic Beliefs. These are all found in our reading for today. See if you can find them.

Take a minute to read Colossians 1:10.

If we were to break this verse down into 3 sections I believe we see our 3 words.

Attitude – “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully please to Him”

This is our attitude isn't it? This is to say that everything I do is approached with a certain attitude. “Please clean your room son.” Attitude comes up. “It's time to eat!” Attitude comes up. “TEST ON THURSDAY” Attitude comes up. Everything you face on every single day you live provides an opportunity for your attitude to be good, bad or indifferent. Paul is saying here that our attitude should be that which is pleasing to God. Uh-oh.

Actions – “bearing fruit in every good work”

Pretty simple right? Yes! Simple to understand but not always actually done. So, let's get this straight. We are to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and as we do this we are to bear fruit? Yes. But get this...I believe that the way in which you walk will determine the fruit you produce. Because the truth is we're all bearing fruit. But Paul is saying bear fruit in good work. That's to say, “bear good fruit.” I heard a quote one time that said this...”attitude determine altitude.” That means many times the attitude with which you walk in life will determine the type of life you'll live. Same is true here. A good attitude is the very beginning of every good fruit.

Beliefs – “increasing in the knowledge of God.”

This is it! This is the very foundation to all that you think, feel and do. The belief you have in anything will determine your attitude and actions in that area. Very simply put. Your belief of God will directly influence how you walk in life and what you do when you get there. WALK WISELY!

How is your attitude? How are you works? What is your belief?

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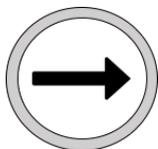
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In Acts 3 we see some crazy things. By crazy I mean just flat out God things. But we also see a pretty basic thing. In the end we see crazy in the basic things. If you're joining us in our reading plan you know what I'm talking about.

What we may not expect is the response of the crowd. Let me explain.

Acts is the book that immediately picks up the story of the Bible after Jesus is crucified, buried and then rises from the dead. He has gone up to Heaven, not like He died and went to Heaven but like He was alive, and people saw Him go upward, into Heaven. I know, unbelievable but also believable, it's Jesus after all!

So here we are...Jesus has left, the Holy Spirit has come, and the church of God is being established. So as Peter and John are preaching to all the people, about Jesus, many believed. Not only did people believe but people were healed.

This brings us to a problem really. Remember when Jesus was doing miracles and feeding thousands with hardly anything? It was almost like they were following Jesus for the stuff. Jesus even told them that. Well, now in the story we have followers of Jesus faced with the same situation. What do I mean?

Look at **Acts 3:11**. After Peter and John heal this guy the people cling to them....as if they are the hero's...but this is just a byproduct of what I want us to see today. Peter and John use that situation to point them to the real hero of the story. JESUS.

But what happens before that verse is the cool thing and the thing we all need to see. It's Peter and John giving what the people needed the most. It's **Acts 3:6**.

There's a beggar whose begging. Look at what Peter says to him.

“what I do have I give to you....JESUS!” ONLY JESUS!

This is the most basic thing ever...sort of. The guy wanted substance. He got life. The guy didn't get what he wanted but he got what he needed. Think of all the stuff we often seek to give to people. Think of all the stuff people often ask for. It's as if we don't even know what we truly need. How many times do we think we don't have enough to offer? I do this a ton! But at the end of the day I have all I need to have to offer....IN JESUS. At the end of the day stuff won't fix things, only Jesus can! So why stress over what I'm not or what I can't do and start relying on the ONE who is above all? Just give 'em JESUS!

Where is your trust? In things or in Jesus? How often are we like the crowds?

What are you giving people? What they want or what they need?

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What?

v. 1: “You were dead”

- We, as human beings, enter into this world as sons and daughters of Adam, which makes us spiritually dead.

v. 2: “following the course of this world”

- Our human nature is sinful and desires everything of this world. Our nature does not follow after Christ instead it follows after the “spirit that is now at work,” Satan.

v. 3: “we all once lived”

- This sinful, fallen, rebellious state was all of our identity! We were ALL “by nature” “children of wrath.” Because of our identity apart from Christ we were subject to God’s condemnation and wrath.

Why?

→ In this passage Paul wants us to see the state that we were in. The sinful identity that we have been born into makes us dead and in result makes us worthy of God’s wrath. Guys, we can do nothing of ourselves to escape His wrath. To escape this hopeless imprisonment requires nothing short of a new birth or a new creation.

What Now?

→ Take a minute and think about the sins you committed yesterday, this week. Maybe write down a few.

→ Now think about what the result of this sin is and its magnitude.

→ Often times, me included, we forget what our sin has given us. It has given us death; it has resulted in God’s wrath towards us. Let this soak in for a moment... I don’t know about you but as I think about the sinful identity that I was born into it causes me to go into prayer. I would now challenge you to go into a state of repentance... Pray that the Lord would forgive you of the sins you commit daily and name the ones you wrote down just a moment ago... Our sin should not go unnoticed. Guys we must understand how detrimental our sin is.

→ Tomorrow we will see that God didn’t leave us in our identity apart from Him, he has given us an identity with Him.

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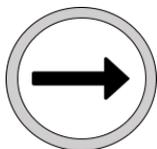
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What?

v. 4: "But God"

- In vs. 1-3 we see the hopeless state that we are in due to our identity that is apart from Christ but God does not leave us in our hopelessness. In v. 4 Paul writes a short phrase that is full of hope... "But God." Because of our sinful identity we are deserving of His wrath but instead, through His Son, He offers us mercy!

v. 5: "even when you were dead."

- We were dead. We did no action, no work to make us alive in Christ. Instead, while we were dwelling in our sin God made us alive with Christ. God did the action and the work! It is only due to His grace.

vs. 6-7: "seated with him" & "immeasurable riches of his grace"

- Those who are given an identity with Christ will be "seated with him in the heavenly places." His people are given a new spiritual identity in this age as well as new life physically in the coming age. Verse 7 explains why this is true. Because God's grace is immeasurable it will take the "coming ages," all of eternity, to fathom His grace towards us.

v. 8-9: "by grace" & "through faith" & "not a result of works"

- As we saw in verse 1-3 we deserve God's wrath but instead God extends an undeserved favor on us! It is by His grace that we are saved. It is nothing we did or said that saved us. Grace alone through faith alone saves.

Why?

→ Within verses 1-9 we see the great reversal. We should find great joy in the fact that God did not leave us in our dead identity apart from Him. He has made us alive and has given us an identity with Him.

What Now?

→ Think back on your identity apart from Christ. Now meditate on who you are now with Christ. Apart from Christ you were dead, but God now has made you alive with Him. It was nothing you did or said that deserved His favor. I would now challenge you to go into a time of thankfulness. Thank God for the grace that he willingly has lavished upon you and the identity that he has given you.

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**Typically Saturday is a day of catch-up or review...
today we wanted to finish our thought from Ephesians 2.**

v. 10: “ His workmanship” & “ created in Christ Jesus for good works”

- For those that are in Christ, we are His workmanship! He has created us so that we may know his grace and love for us. This then results in good works. Our good works are not the things that save; they are only a consequence of God’s new creation work.

Why?

→ Paul wants us to understand what our identity and purpose is. We are God’s workmanship! This is our new identity in Christ. We are created for good works. This is our purpose now in Christ.

→ Christ has given us His identity. Due to his work on the cross our identity can now be found in Him. Therefore our purpose is to have a faith in Christ that results in good works. This has been the plan since before the beginning of time. If God has prepared good deeds beforehand, we must consider how and where we will walk today in order to fulfill the identity he has given us and the eternal purpose he has for us in Christ.

What Now?

→ Think about what we have read over the last 3 days. We have seen the magnitude of our sin, the immeasurable grace that God lavishes on us, and our new identity and purpose in Christ.

→ See guys the point of this passage is to understand our sinful state and the great grace that God has given us. Our sinful nature has made us unworthy of life with Christ. Our sinful identity instead deserves the wrath of God. There is no action we can do, there is no prayer we can pray, there are not enough Sunday services we can attend, there is not even enough Bible we can read to save us. We can do nothing. But God has done the impossible. He has done the work and sent His Son to take our sinful identity upon himself. He wore your identity so that you might wear His. The consequence then of this new identity will be an overflowing of good works.

sunday – sermon notes September 9

Speaker: _____

Text: _____

What?

What is evangelism? – Evangelism is actively telling people about the grace that has been given to mankind through the Gospel. If you're a Christian, it's telling people the love and grace that God has shown you by freeing you from your enslavement to sin. If this has truly happened to us, it shouldn't be hard, but it is. Why is evangelism so hard?

Let's take a look at Acts 8:26-39.

→ **Why does Philip join the Ethiopian in the chariot?**

God didn't speak aloud from the sky... the Spirit directed Philip's actions, convicted Philip's heart, and spoke to Philip's conscience. The Holy Spirit pushed Philip to take advantage of an opportunity to simply share the Gospel.

→ **How does Philip start the conversation? How does he end it?**

Philip simply asks the Ethiopian about what he's doing. He starts a conversation with the man by simply asking what he's reading and if he understands... but Philip doesn't let the conversation die without explaining the "good news about Jesus." And by the end of the passage, we see that the man can't contain his excitement to believe in Jesus and become a part of God's family!

Why?

→ This account was written partly to show us the simplicity of evangelism and the beautiful results it can have. The Holy Spirit moved Philip to go to the man. Philip listened... He talked... He asked questions... He shared the Gospel... The Ethiopian man accepted this beautiful gift of grace. Evangelism can be as easy as talking to a man in a chariot... it doesn't have to be hard.

What Now?

- The Holy Spirit worked in Philip to go and share the Gospel, and Philip obeyed. We all are confronted with people daily that don't know the Gospel, and the Spirit convicts our hearts to present the Gospel to those people. Don't suppress that conviction. God wants you to share the Gospel. Let people see the grace you've been given through Jesus Christ. **Get uncomfortable... Be awkward... Share the Gospel.**
- Write down 2 people you can share the Gospel with..... *Pray for them. Love them. Have God-Centered conversations with them. Share the Gospel with them.*

What?

One of the oldest commands in the Bible is to “love your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19:18) From the beginning of Scripture God calls us to love people. It's been a call to serve, care, “do unto others as you would want done to you” Basically don't treat people unfairly... But in John 13:34-35, Jesus calls us to something a lot more difficult... **“as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”**

→ **How has Christ loved us?**

Christ showed us his immeasurable grace through the cross... yesterday you read Acts 8:32-33 in your devotion... that passage is talking about Jesus! *“Like a sheep was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him...”* Jesus was the most innocent man in history. He was put on this earth for the sole purpose of glorifying God through sacrificing His life for us to be restored with God. Now Jesus is calling you to love other people just like he has loved you through the cross

→ **How can I love others like Christ has loved me?**

You start loving others by sharing Christ with them. Don't just invite people to church and expect the pastor to do the work ... If you are a child of God, you've experienced the deepest & most beautiful love there is to experience, why wouldn't you share it? ... Friend, tell others about how Jesus has totally changed your life & how he can change theirs too. He can bring joy, hope, & true love to the broken.

Why?

John recorded Jesus saying this because it was radical. Jesus' whole earthly ministry was about serving, healing, giving, providing, preaching, and teaching the people. He wanted to point them to God through actions and words. Jesus' ultimate love was shown on the cross, and here ... Jesus calls us to show that kind of love to one another. Be sacrificial, serve others, give to others, share the Gospel with others

What Now?

- One way we can be evangelistic is to serve people like Christ has served us. Spend time with the people at the nursing home, serve at the homeless shelter, help out at the pregnancy resource center. **Love people with your actions.**
- The most **hateful** thing you can do to someone is to not tell them about Jesus. Jesus rescues us from sin, gives us hope, and brings joy to our life. People need that. Tell them to stop chasing likes on Instagram and share Jesus with them. **Love people with your words.**

What?

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news." Paul quotes Isaiah 52:7. Just for a minute, think back to that Isaiah passage... R.C. Sproul paints a picture of a messenger sprinting to a town that has anxiously awaited to hear a report... he's coming with news of a victory, and you can tell it... the joy on his face is glowing, he's sprinting full speed, and dust is being kicked up... how beautiful the feet of the messenger... Now think back to this Roman's passage a couple verses earlier, Paul says that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved... anyone can have victory! But Paul doesn't end there... he poses a couple of questions..." HOW WILL THEY CALL ON HIM IN WHOM THEY HAVE NOT BELIEVED? AND HOW ARE THEY TO BELIEVE IN WHOM THEY'VE NEVER HEARD? AND HOW ARE THEY TO HEAR WITHOUT SOMEONE PREACHING?"

→ **What does Paul mean when he asks these questions?**

In verse 13, Paul says that anyone who calls on the name of the Jesus will be saved... but Paul wants you to see that there still is work to be done. People can't call on someone they've never believed in, and they surely can't believe in something they've never heard of! How can we help people hear this message? We preach... don't get scared of that word... preaching the Gospel can be behind a pulpit on Sunday morning or it can be done around the lunch table. When Paul says to preach, he means we have to proclaim, announce, let it be our message!

Why?

Why does Paul even mention this? **Because this is life or death stuff** ... people are dying every minute and going to Hell ... People who die without Jesus are spending eternity as enemies of God because they haven't heard the Gospel ... Paul wants you to ask yourself the question... "Am I okay with that? Do I care that people are spending an eternity being punished for their sins instead of the joy of being with God?" We must have an urgency to preach the Gospel.

What Now?

- **You can get the Word of God to your classmates...** God has placed you in your school to reach and influence your peers... *"how are they to believe in who they haven't heard?"* Be the feet of the Gospel to your teammates, students, and friends. Your classmates need someone to put their hope and joy in rather than in this temptations and things of this world.
- **You can get the Word of God to the World...** We as a church partner with the Seed Company to translate the Bible for people across the world that don't have the Bible in their language... **These people do not have a Bible...** That means they don't have the Gospel. Help them get it... Talk to a leader at the Rock to see how you can donate or get involved and make an impact across the world.

Most of the time when we think of the word “Ministry”, we think of a pastor, teacher, minister of music or maybe a missionary. Although we aren't wrong; ministry is so much bigger than just this select group of positions in the church.

As believers, we have all been called to carry out the work of the Lord, right? So, maybe you're asking, “What can I, as a middle or high school student do to minister?”

If you follow the word ministry back to the Greek origin the word is *Diakoneo*. Now I may be wrong, but I don't think any of y'all are fluent in Greek, although that would be pretty impressive. I know I'm definitely not so with a little help from Dr. Google, I learned that **Diakoneo** translates to “to serve.”

As a follower of Christ we have been called to serve, which you read about in John 13. What better example to look at than the one Jesus himself gave us in this passage! Jesus, being GREATER than all, and having every right to demand the disciples wash his feet, humbles himself before his disciples and washes their feet. What an amazing act of service! Imagine getting home from practice from football, basketball, softball, baseball, cross-country or whatever sport you may be involved in, after sweating for hours on end and someone volunteering to wash your feet! You would think they were **CRAZY, right?** Well this is how greatly Jesus humbled himself to show us how much he loved and cared for his disciples. He doesn't stop with just giving us an example of serving fellow believers, he then commissions the disciples and ultimately us to also serve.

In verse 14 he says, *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.”* So next Wednesday, y'all need to be ready to come to The Rock with a wash cloth and some soap so we can wash each other's feet before service. Obviously kidding, but this commission he gives to the disciples carries on to us!

We need to look to serve one another as fellow believers in Christ. This takes selflessness on our part! It's not always going to be convenient for us to carry out these acts of love and service but we should still enjoy it because it is ultimately the work of Christ and not for our gain.

So we should not only take advantage of the opportunities that come up to serve but we should also be seeking out opportunities to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. We should find joy in helping meet the needs of our friends and even elders of the local church. Maybe an elderly lady in the church has poor health and needs some stuff done around the yard. No one enjoys doing hard yard labor for free, but maybe a group gets together and helps her with a joyful heart because that is what the Lord has commanded us to do, not because it's what it is convenient to us. So now you know that not only pastors are ministers! All that have been saved by the grace of God, have been commissioned as ministers or servants.

Reflection:

How can I better serve my saved, like minded friends? (Acts 4:32)

How can I better serve my church?

When I serve, is it with a joyful attitude as Jesus displayed to us in John 13?

Am I seeking out opportunities to serve others or am I selfish with my time?

As we read and learned about yesterday, all of the children of God are called to ministry! That may look different for each and every one of us, yet we are ALL called to serve.

Yesterday we talked about the importance of humbling ourselves among our local church and our brothers and sisters in Christ and serving them joyfully! That is a huge part of ministry, but there is still another group of people we are called to minister to: the unreached or lost.

We learned earlier this week about evangelism and the importance of reaching the lost, but there's no better way to open the door to evangelism than starting with the act of serving someone and expressing the love and joy of Christ through that service. (Colossians 3:23)

Some of y'all may have already been on a mission trip, but if not you've probably seen a video or heard someone talk about their experience. On a mission trip, the main goal of being there is to reach the lost for the kingdom of God. This may look like just going door to door sharing the Gospel, but a lot of times, serving or ministering to the unreached is how that relationship is started. Maybe that looks like running a sports camp or a VBS for the kids and through that service, the door is opened to not only express the love of God but also evangelism like we learned earlier this week. This also may look like going to a house that needs repairs and helping do the repairs for the people. Whatever this looks like in the opportunity presented, we are to do it with a joyful heart expressing the love of Christ that he first expressed towards us. (1 John 4:19)

In our reading today we read about the predicted betrayal of Judas. Jesus knew that Judas would betray him and told the disciples that one of the twelve would. Even though he knew this, just moments before bringing it to the topic of discussion, he still washed the feet of Judas with joy.

We are told in Matthew 12:30 that whoever is not for God is against him. The people that aren't of like mindedness or are against God like we talked about yesterday can be the hardest ones to serve and to love. But once again, Jesus gives us a perfect example of serving the unsaved by serving Judas, knowing that he would have him arrested and crucified not long after. The people in your life that are hard to love is more than likely because they haven't experienced the love of Christ like we as believers have. They need ministering to more than anyone and maybe God has placed you as a minister in their life.

Reflection:

What can I do better to Minister/serve the lost?

Am I expressing the love of God through service, even to the ones that are hard to love?

saturday -

September 15

CATCH UP DAY

CATCH UP DAY

sunday – sermon notes

September 16

Speaker: _____

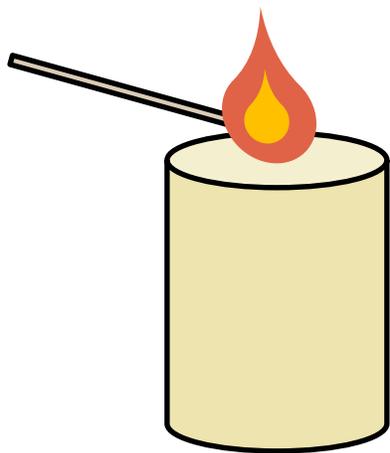
Text: _____

Main Idea: As Christians, we are called to be in fellowship with one another so that we are equipped for the trials of life.

Yesterday we talked about the basis of community; today we're going to focus on how we're distinctly called to fellowship with other believers. Every time I don't know a word, or at least don't know it really well, I slide over to our B.F.F. Google.

According to Google, fellowship is defined as "friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests." It's a pretty good definition of the word, and it fits in really well with our lives as sons and daughters of Christ.

Think of fellowship as a match, and Christians as a candle. Each Sunday, we are set on fire for the Lord through gathering together in worship, praying with one another, opening the Bible and reading with each other, and even just hanging out together. However, by the end of the week, or even by mid-week, our flame is almost out. We've declared the Lord in our schools or workplace so heartily that we are in need of another lit match – another time to be with other believers.



Essentially, we are the candle. We burn bright for the Lord daily in how we talk, how we love, in how we live our lives. So, wouldn't it be true that after we have given all that we've got, our flame is gone out? Because of that, we need our match – our time of fellowship. A chance to be encouraged, prayed for, and loved on by those who are in the same area of life we are in.

This is exactly what Hebrews calls us to. The author of Hebrews breaks down why fellowship is so important. He literally says that fellowship is to be with one another in love, to encourage each other. The author was just telling the audience about how they were called to follow Christ, and that it wouldn't be easy by any means. But, how can we bear this burden? By walking alongside fellow believers that encourage you in your walk of faith by loving you unconditionally, just as Christ loved us.

Main Idea: Christ's example of humility in his sacrifice for us – a sinful people unworthy of grace – is a demonstration of the humility we should show in our own community of believers.

We always talk about how, as students – in Middle School, in High School, in College, in Life – a community of fellow Christians is invaluable. As believers, we need time to fellowship with other believers, just like we need oxygen, so we can breathe.

When we think about what community is and how it is built, an immediate answer would be love. To be a community, we have to love one another, right? Even so, we can do bad things in the name of love, or so that others love us more. What is the foundation of an authentic, strong community? The answer is in verse 3 – **humility**.

Verse 3 is where we're introduced to the idea of humility, where we're called to "*count others more significant than yourselves*". When I first read this verse, I thought that it meant that I had to lower myself and my self-worth in order to raise others up. But, that can't be true because our definition of ourselves lies in Christ and what he has done for us. Therefore, how do we make others more significant? I think the answer lies in the way in which Christ lived his own life, where he daily exemplified his humility. I mean think about it, Jesus (the King of Kings and Lord of Lords) was born in a feeding trough, he healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and ultimately made a way for wretched sinners to be with God eternally.

So how does this apply to our community?

We no longer deem ourselves "lower", but instead we see others, our brothers and sisters, nonbelievers, EVERYONE worthy of our service. No one should be exempt from our service, because no one was exempt from Christ's humility and grace.

Now that Christ's humility is the example for our own what happens now?

How does this change anything?

That's answered in verse 4 – *by looking to the interests of others*. We rejoice when others succeed, we mourn when others grieve, and we encourage others all along the way. That's why a community is so invaluable in the life of a Christian. We go out into the world 7 days a week, we proclaim the name of Christ, we serve unbelievers, and we show the love of God. By Sunday or Wednesday, or Tuesday morning bible studies, we should be spent. Exhausted by how hard we have shown love to the world. But, our brothers and sisters are there to hold us up, our community is there to help refill our spiritual tank by reading the Gospel and rejoicing in God's faithfulness and humility together.

Broken. Alone. Discouraged. Weary. I don't know about you, but I, for one, find myself in at least one of those categories once or twice a week. This world can quickly and easily consume you leaving you discouraged and depressed. Now I know what you're probably thinking, "This is a devotion. I thought it was supposed to make me feel better and encourage my faith." Hold on. Trust me and keep reading. It gets better.

Imagine you're in a row boat trying to cross a vast ocean. At first, you're confident in your ability to get there on your own, but as time passes you get tired and suddenly the trip seems impossible. When you are at your most exhausted point suddenly the current begins to carry the boat, then the waves begin to help, then the wind, and before you know it you can rest and gain the energy to start rowing again. Now think of this journey as life, and the current is Christ carrying you through a trial and the waves and wind are the people He has placed in your life as friends or family that help you get through the trial as well.

As Christians we will most certainly go through tough times, and when we do God has given us help. We weren't designed to go through this life alone. I don't know about you, but that is like a breath of fresh air to me. In Colossians 3 we see the attributes we are to put on as followers of Christ, and we also see the command to be with one another. Paul says it not only once, but twice! "Bearing with one another" (v.13) "teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom" (v.16). It's amazing the weight that is lifted off of you when you realize Christ has given us friends to provide help and encouragement. Paul testifies to that fact in Philemon when he states, "I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother" (v.7.) JOY AND COMFORT! I don't know about y'all, but that's how I want others to feel after I've spent time with them. Let's strive to love others as Christ has so graciously loved us. Once we do that we not only encourage each other, but we shine a light in this dark world.

"The way we in the Church respond to each other in the toughest of times shoots up a flare. It tells the watching world that we are broken and busy people, eternally bound together with the unbreakable chord of Christ's love." – Erin Davis

I guess when I consider the word worship I tend to think of raised hands, a special song during church (google the song *The Mississippi Squirrel Revival* by Ray Stevens...worship!), or just church in general. Could it be more than just church? Maybe we should consider what does that word really mean. Lucky for us we find ourselves a month into school now! I am sure you are enjoying vocabulary/word maps, as well as using the 5 W's to understand something unknown better. Why should a student of the Word be any different? So, let's consider the word WORSHIP through exploring it with the 5 W's!

Who*What*When*Where*Why

WHAT: v. to show reverence & adoration for a deity/to honor or respect as a god
This definition (and several others) makes it clear that anything can be worshiped as a 'deity' or god (without a capital letter). I would think this means anything you consider sacred/of the utmost importance to you; we know becomes a god to us. Really, what we give our time, talents, effort, and ultimately our hearts to on a regular basis I think we could say we worship. We give it a high enough respect to take most of our time, energy, and thoughts. TRUE WORSHIP doesn't have to be prompted or begged. It happens naturally because we are in love with the one we are serving. So, are we right in that? Can we just pick what we worship regularly? Or maybe, it just happened...I didn't realize I was worshiping something other than God.

WHO: Psalm 2:11a says 'Worship the LORD with reverence,'...WHO? The LORD!
Read Exodus 20:1-5 the Lord makes it pretty clear who we are to worship...HIM and HIM alone!

I think you were right with the Sunday School answer of God (with a capital G) is who we are to worship. Scripture makes it very clear! We don't get to just pick what we worship, BUT WE DO! We make a choice everyday what is the most important to us, what will receive our time and affection that day...all day. Okay, the Bible says God is the One I worship, but seriously WHY should He get everything I have all day?!

WHY: We were created to worship Him. Isaiah 43:7 We are commanded to worship Him. Duet. 6:13. The Holy Living God that spoke the world into existence gave me life, created me, to worship Him? Yep! Sure did! He demands I worship only Him? Yep, sure does! He deserves all your time (He gives it), talents, (He gives them), effort (He created it too), and my heart (absolutely!). All means all because that's all that all can mean! He gets it all! Seriously? So you are saying I walk around only talking, only thinking, only going to church, only doing this Jesus thing all day long? So I can quite school and only worship? I mean you said He wants it all, all the time?

Let's see tomorrow about WHERE and WHEN.

Maybe that will help answer all these questions?

For right now, today, consider what/who am I giving my all to?

Is it academics, music, sports, that guy/girl, self, social media, technology (fortnite)? Have you 'accidentally' made a thing your god by giving it your all/reverencing it/adoring it? You are worshiping it and didn't even know. Then stop, **A**cknowledge He is God right now!, **C**onfess you have messed up by giving something other than God your respect and reverence, **T**hank Him for loving you and giving you all He has, and **a**Sk Him to help you worship Him alone.

Okay, today may be quicker! We only have to cover the Where and When of our word worship. We left with the thought yesterday of Worship is giving God our reverence and adoration because He created us for it and demands it. God wants and deserves our all! He created us. He died for us. And, well we owe Him everything we have because of EVERYTHING He is and did for us!

Quick review of worship means to show reverence and adoration to the One who deserves it. I feel certain scripture clearly taught us yesterday that is the Lord, God!

I believe the **WHEN:** and **WHERE:** will be answered through the following verses...

He must increase but I must decrease. John 3:30

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men. Colossians 3:23

First, in order to reverence something and adore it properly we HAVE to place it higher than ourselves and anything else for that matter. This means getting rid of our agenda and being more interested in His. He MUST increase and I MUST decrease. Esteem Him higher than myself...when? ALL TIME TIME! We have been taught to pray scripture. Pray John 3:30. Lord, please help me to decrease, and You to increase in all I do.

Second, when we worship something it tends to be the first and last thing on our minds daily. When we shift our eyes toward the Lord (quiet time and prayer time daily will do this) then we can focus our list from yesterday to be done heartily for the Lord and not for men...not even myself. Let's apply this...

We love a lot of stuff. That stuff isn't all bad. It just becomes bad when we begin to worship (adore and reverence) it above the Lord. When we are working heartily as to the Lord, that means we work our best with Him in mind, not us and our good in mind...Him and His. That means He is our focal point of success. We ultimately want to bring God the glory.

OK our list from yesterday, sports? YES!!! God gifted you that talent. USE IT TO HONOR HIM. Don't place it before Him, point it toward Him. Academics...yes, dude you gotta go to school! Honor Him in it! Let your conversation please Him. Find moments to point others toward Him in your lifestyle and actions. Music...YES! Honor Him with it. You know what you should listen to and what you shouldn't. He hears it with you. What are you dragging Him through? That guy/girl...YES! Honor the Lord in a relationship; all relationships! Self...um John 3:30 friend! Social media...Yes! Doesn't have to be bad! Pop Jesus to the BAE position and be honorable in your post, I mean throw an encouraging verse in here and there? Technology...YES! Most definitely. If this has become your God...STOP, just STOP it and grab the WORD (put it on your night stand over your phone alarm) and read it FIRST!

In short, give God more of your time, talents, effort, and ultimately our hearts by seeking Him first. Keep Him at the heart of all you do. That's worship. It isn't just at church. It is an all day, every day mode we go into when we John 3:30 and Col. 3:23.

saturday -

September 22

CATCH UP DAY

CATCH UP DAY

sunday – sermon notes **September 23**

Speaker: _____

Text: _____

As our reading plan continues through Acts we come to Paul's arrival in Tyre.

Let's pay a little closer attention to verses 4-6.

Paul does something immediately as he walks off of the boat - search for disciples. Most of us have heard the words disciple, discipleship, and discipling in and around the church... but some of us may have some questions.

Maybe we come to that word and don't really know what it means or question why Paul would seek them out first when he landed.

Let's answer both of those questions today!

A disciple is simply - someone who adheres... takes on... clings to the teachings of another. A disciple is a follower or a learner. It refers to someone who takes up the ways of someone else.

Anyone can be a disciple of anything! One could be a disciple of a guitarist for example. The disciple of a guitarist would study what the guitarist does, how he does it, why he does it... The disciple listens, learns, and studies all for the hope of becoming more like guitarist.

Now if we think about this with Jesus and us in mind, we see that a disciple of Christ is one that clings to *Jesus'* teaching, one who is a follower or a learner of *Jesus!*

Being a disciple of Jesus simply means that you are a follower of Jesus' teaching learning from him to be like him!

Paul knew what a disciple was and knew that disciples needed to stick together... In this section of the passage we see three things a disciple does:

In verse 4, Paul not only sought out the disciples when he first arrived, but he spent all seven days with them! - Paul shows us that disciples spend time with each other, they are to be around one another! The life of the disciple is not spent alone... in the good and the bad! As disciples, we are to be together!

In verse 4, the disciples try to council Paul through the guiding of the Holy Spirit. While they were wrong with their council because the Holy Spirit DID want Paul to go to Jerusalem, they help us to see that disciples are to council one another through the Holy Spirit's leading, ultimately through the Word. As disciples, we are to council one another!

In verse 5, we see disciples pray for and with one another! The disciples are concerned with one another and so they offer up prayer to the Lord for each other. They pray for safety, provision, for the Lord's work to be fulfilled through each other! As disciples, we are to pray for one another!

So, what does this passage help us do and understand?

It makes us question ourselves! - We've got to ask the big question - am I a disciple... have I given my life to the Lord and become a disciple??

If you are a disciple - are you surrounding yourself with other disciples? Are you counseling one another through the Word? Are you praying for one another?

Discipleship Does

Matthew 28:19:20

We have been introduced to what a disciple is now Jesus himself introduces to us to what a disciple does. Jesus expresses three commands to his disciples and all disciples in **Matthew 28:19-20. Take a minute and read that.**

The Three Commands:

First, go and make disciples! Jesus is saying to be multiplicative... big word... but this means to multiply, or make more of something. Christ is saying a disciple should go and make more disciples. Getting specific he says to go into all the nations and make disciples. Jesus' heart was to leave no land, no people group untouched.

Second, the disciple is to baptize the new disciples. Baptism is a public profession a new disciple makes to show the world that he or she is a follower of Christ! HA, this doesn't mean to go dunk your friends next time you're hanging out near a body of water (pool, creek, Dasani water bottle). to you, this means to encourage them in their faith and help lead them toward their public profession of faith.

Thirdly, Christ says the disciple is to teach the new disciple all that Christ has taught them. This is done through the Bible! This is what discipleship is. Discipleship is a disciple mentoring and teaching another disciple the Word, helping them to understand greater how to apply it to their life. Jesus is very specific that we are to not just make disciples and baptize them but that our journey with that new believer continues... we are to disciple them!

In some ways discipleship is like parenting. When two parents have a baby they only have so many years to teach him what he needs to know before he goes out into the real world. This time in their lives give a great picture of discipling, training one up, mentoring them.

At many times discipleship can get hard. Thankfully the Lord knew this and he made a promise to us. Look at verse 20... Jesus said that he is with us always. Discipleship can be difficult, it can wear you out, the one discipling and the one being disciplined... but take heart because Christ is with you always!

So, the call of these few verses is to go and make disciples, to baptize them, and to disciple them!

Yesterday you asked yourself if you are a disciple... if the answer is yes then you must ask yourself also: am I making disciples? am I helping them and teaching them that life doesn't stop at becoming a disciple but is just starting!

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. - Colossians 1:28

Let's narrow in on the verses 28-29.

Here Paul helps us understand discipleship even more. He shows us how we are to disciple and what we are to do as we disciple. Paul helps us to see what to practically do and what the goal of discipleship is!

Paul says that we are to proclaim Him! Who is he talking about...?

Jesus of course!! Our goal, our call-in discipleship is to proclaim Christ.

Proclamation is done mainly through our words. We are to be proclaimers of Christ! We, as Christians know that proclaiming isn't done only with our mouths... we are able to proclaim Christ through our actions as well! So that means at school, at home, at work, in the locker room, at band practice... everywhere, we are to be proclaiming Christ with our mouths and our actions. Our words should be sound like Christ's words, our actions should look like Christ's actions!

Paul also says that we are to be warning everyone and teaching everyone... this may sound a little weird "warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom?"

What Paul means is that we as Christians should tell everyone the great truth of Christ. Paul may call it a warning because there is great danger in not knowing Christ as our Savior.

Paul says that we do this with all wisdom and if you are like me you'll ask the question well how do I get all wisdom... well that's quite simple, from the Bible! The Bible is full of anything and everything we need to know to "warn and teach" others!

Paul ends this verse saying that we do these things (proclaiming, warning and teaching) all for one reason, "that we may present everyone mature in Christ."

Our goal as Christians should be to present everyone as a mature Christian when they come face to face with the Lord. That is the hope of the discipleship that the ones we are discipling, the ones we are warning and teaching, would grow more in the likeness of Christ.

Paul is helpful when it comes to discipleship. We must ask ourselves today:

Am I proclaiming Christ so that I am helping someone mature in Christ?

“That we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ”

We've already said how essential discipleship is in our lives and how the hope in discipleship is to grow into followers of Christ who are growing more in the likeness of Christ! Our hope is to grow up into Christ... to become a mature Christian: perfect, whole, complete just like Christ– We want to get there, that's the goal!!

As we are on this journey to become more like Christ it takes a certain kind of heart to grow in the likeness of Christ. Just like our hearts need to be in a specific shape or health to run a marathon our hearts need to be in shape... I've listed a few characteristics that are very helpful if we are to grow closer to Christ!

Our Hearts Must Be:

1. **Right before the lord** – Justified

We must be saved before we can be discipled. Salvation has to exist in our lives because of the necessity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is what fuels, convicts, and helps us grow as a Christian. The only way for the Spirit to reside in us is salvation through Jesus Christ. Then and only then can we begin our journey!

2. **Humble** Humble is a hard thing to be. Part of discipleship is losing your pride. Listening to things you don't want to hear. However, in discipleship our end goal is to grow in the likeness of Christ. We have to allow those who disciple us to give us biblical criticism. (2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness) - it's okay to be corrected by the Bible!!

3. **Moldable** If scripture is to be used for teaching, reproof, correction, and training we have to let ourselves be moldable to it.

Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

4. **Honest**- Being honest is an essential piece to discipleship. Being honest where we are in our walk with the Lord, in life, and with struggles. We have to be honest with those discipling us and ourselves... where we are at...with the things we are struggling with.

5. **Patient** - Persevere joyfully through the time it takes for discipleship knowing you are growing in the likeness of Christ. Discipleship is not quick. It takes time! We won't look like Christ overnight... but day after day seeking and studying his Word, training in righteousness we will become more like Christ.

There are a few things we can do practically that will help us in striving to be more like Christ...

Find a mentor- Pair yourself with someone who is where you want to be. Find someone older and wiser who has the knowledge, patience, and love to teach you and grow with you through discipleship.

Spend time in the word - Stay in the Bible! A lack of time in the word is the easiest way to halt all spiritual growth.

Put into practice what you have learned - In your work place, at school, at home, in your relationships put to practice what you have learned.

As Christians we are called to do and be many things. Our greatest call came directly from the mouth of Christ – “go therefore and make disciples” (Matthew 28:18). Sounds simple, right? It is so very simple; however, it is easy to become intimidated by the seemingly overwhelming task of pointing others to Christ. Take heart! Christ has not called us to a task that he has not prepared us for.

In Ephesians 4 we see Paul state that there is one God who is over all, through all, in all, and He has equipped us for this work (v.6-16). How encouraging! So, go confidently making disciples and pointing others towards the all-consuming love of Christ.

Here are some practical points to remember as a disciple maker:

1. **Be patient** – The work of moving others towards Christ is not a quick process. It takes time, but in the end, it is so worth it. Remain patient as you work through the stumbling blocks that will inevitably come.
2. **Be forgiving** – Ephesians 4:32. Along with being patient be forgiving. Remember that we are all broken people working towards one goal – to honor and glorify Christ. Though this is the goal sometimes we trip and stumble, making mistakes. When you are discipling someone, be forgiving when they trip. Show them love just as Christ has.
3. **Pray diligently** – Ultimately, we alone cannot bring about change in each other's lives. That can only occur through the mighty work of Christ, so as you disciple others, pray diligently for them. Pray that Christ will grip their heart and push them to change. Pray that you can be an empty vessel for Him to use to reach others. Pray that He be glorified in all things. Just pray each day, every day for the person you are discipling.
4. **Remain faithful** – Don't be flaky. Show up there for them when they need you, and be faithful, persistent in your pursuit of them as Christ is so faithful and persistent in His pursuit of us.
5. **Be present** – This one is probably the easiest. Just be physically and mentally present. Put your phone down and actually listen to what they are saying. You can't disciple someone if you are distracted or daydreaming.
6. **Live holy** – Philippians 3:17. 1 Timothy 4:12. 1 Peter 2:9. Lastly, let your life be an example to them. Live set apart from the world, holy and on fire for God.

saturday -

September 29

CATCH UP DAY and also watch College Football Day

CATCH UP DAY

sunday – sermon notes **September 30**

Speaker: _____

Text: _____



our desire is to help students and leaders know Christ and make Christ known
roopville road baptist church – 835 north hwy 27 – roopville – ga – 30170 - therocksm.org