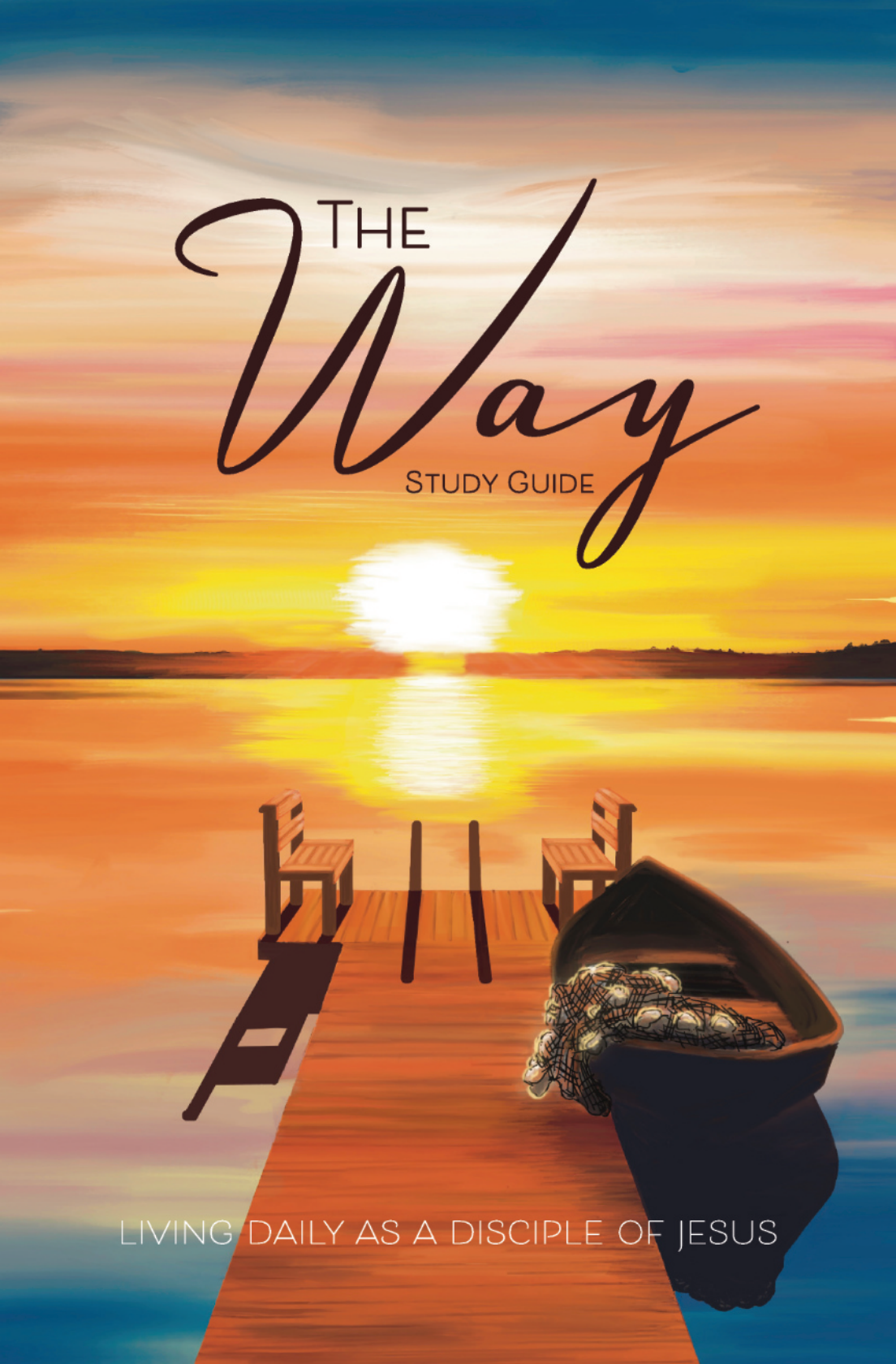

THE
Way
STUDY GUIDE
LIVING DAILY AS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS

He awakens Me morning by morning
He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple.
~Isaiah 50:4b NASB

THE WAY STUDY GUIDE

How to Live Daily as a Disciple of Jesus

I will instruct you and teach you in
The Way you should go;
I will guide you with My eye!

Psalm 5:8; John 14:6; Psalm 32:8

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Discipleship and Health Principles Chart ..... Inside back cover

*DP=Discipleship Principle

DEDICATED TO

Yahweh Yireh,
The Lord Who Provides

A WRITER'S PRAYER

My heart is overflowing with a good theme;
I recite my composition concerning my King;
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

My Father,
I can do nothing on my own. Thank you that Your Grace is sufficient, and Your Strength is made perfect in my weakness.

I do not want to think my own thoughts, so bring all of them into captivity to the obedience of Your Son Jesus.

I can say nothing lifegiving, so may Your Holy Spirit pour grace upon me that I may write encouraging words to reach those who are weary.

Not unto me, O Lord, but to Your name give glory.
May Jesus alone be high and lifted up in these pages.
I pray in the name of Jesus,
the One who cleared the Way to You, Amen.

(Psalm 45:1,2; John 5:30; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5; Matthew 3:11; Isaiah 50:4; Psalm 115:1)

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest fears for many of us as Christians is the idea of witnessing. Our fears are often articulated in questions like: *How do I bring up God in a conversation? How do I know they are even interested? What if I come on too strong and turn people off? What if they ask me a question I don't know how to answer? I am an introvert and even shy when speaking to family and to people I know...How could I possibly talk to a total stranger?* Taking a good look at these questions, we see one commonality: They are all focused on us—how we look and our perceived inabilities.

The good news is that God is not dependent on our abilities at all. No matter how talented, educated, socially aware, or prepared we are, we cannot bring the gospel to anyone's heart. Jesus is clear: "*No one* can come to Me *unless* the Father who sent Me draws him. . . . If I be lifted up, I will draw *all* men to Me" (John 6:44; 12:32). Paul echoes that thought: "Neither he who plants is anything nor he who waters, but *God who gives the increase*" (1 Cor. 3:7). Isaiah states repeatedly that God "will do it." In chapter 30, verse 23, he shows us just how lavish God's increase will be. "He will give the rain for your seed with which you sow the ground, and bread of the increase of the earth; It will be *fat and plentiful*. In that day your cattle will feed in *large* pastures." Knowing that God takes 100% of the responsibility for the salvation of every soul takes a lot of pressure off us!

Furthermore, when Jesus asks us to do something, He *never* asks us to go it alone. Christ's commission to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations" is coupled with the promise to be with us "always, even to the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). He pledges to "go before" us and make "darkness light" and "the crooked places straight" (Isaiah 45:2). And Paul, champion of missionaries, assures young Timothy: "But God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). God wants to remove our fear of witnessing and replace it with *His* strength, *His* love, and *His* wisdom to accomplish what we absolutely could not do on our

own. What reassurance that God promises to go before and behind us and be with us in every witnessing opportunity! (See Isaiah 58:8.)

However, there is one KEY element that needs to be in place or we will face witnessing for Jesus with fear. Look at the following passages In 2-3 words, what is God calling us to do?
Matthew 11:28 and 28:19 _____
John 7:37-38 _____
Matthew 28:6,7 _____
He is basically saying, "**Come to Me before you go for Me!** You have to be filled before you can overflow. You must be on fire in order to shine!"

You may have heard the saying: *You cannot take someone on a journey that you have not been on yourself.* **So, the journey to being an effective witness for Jesus starts with your own personal journey with Jesus.** Every true disciple maker is first a true disciple of our Master Jesus!

This study guide is divided into 5 parts:
Parts I to III are a call to COME to Jesus, igniting anew your relationship with Him; Parts IV and V call you to GO, showing how to become an effective witness and disciple maker for Him.

Note that this is *workbook* style, so grab your *Bible* and *pencil* and sit at the table rather than on the sofa! This study goes beyond a simple skim or read of the text; we are praying that you engage in the material. God wants *more* in His relationship with you than mere intellectual acknowledgement or agreement. *He wants your heart!* As you engage with HIS Word, HIS Word will activate change in your life and attitude. You will begin to see Jesus as your best friend and confidante, the One you can trust and run to in any situation!

We all come from different walks. Some of us may be seasoned Christians while others are just learning what it means to follow Jesus. One may know the Word of God inside out while another may not yet know if Hosea is in the Old or New Testament. One danger for someone who has been "well-churched" is to

approach the reading of the Word with an attitude of "I already know this" and move through the sections quickly. However, God says to you, "BE STILL and KNOW that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

So, we invite you to proceed with prayer, asking for the Holy Spirit's help to see the Scriptures you are asked to read in a fresh way, advancing with the humility and wonder of a little child who is reading these verses for the very first time. I assure you that God will answer that prayer!

While "'eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him,'" He promises, "BUT I have revealed them to you through My Spirit. 'For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.'" (1 Cor. 2:9,10, adapted)

Our prayer for you is that day by day, in your personal time with God through this study, He will reveal to you what your eye has not yet seen, what your ear has not yet heard, and what your mind and heart have not yet experienced of His great love and plan for you!

* * * * *

Note 1: The material has been split up into specific days, and though we do not encourage you to work ahead, feel free to take more time on one day as needed, even if it means only getting halfway through a lesson. Also, ask God to wake you up in the morning, so you can spend unrushed time with Him, in the Bible, in prayer, and through this material (Isaiah 50:4).

Note 2: If you are a prolific writer, consider buying a notebook to journal your thoughts.

Note 3: From time to time, you will need a Bible Concordance/ Dictionary, whether online or in print. There are many YouTube tutorials to help you navigate online Bible resources. (A favorite Bible app is *The Blue Letter Bible* (BLB).)

Note 4: This workbook can be used as a resource for group studies. Go to *indiscipleship.org*, click on resources, and choose "Companion to *The Way Study Guide*: Tips for Starting a Small Group Study."

GOD'S WAY TO PERSONAL REVIVAL
WEEK 1
WHO IS JESUS?

Lord, we do not know where You are going,
and how can we know the way?

I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. ~ Jesus (John 14:5,6)

DAY 1

Every day, before you open the Word, pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you in the reading and interpretation of Holy Scripture.

Pray: *Father, send your Holy Spirit to show me who Jesus really is. In His name I pray, Amen.*

When you think of the last book of the Bible–Revelation–what images come to mind? Beasts and dragons? Warning messages and plagues?

Read **Revelation 1:1-3**. According to the very first verse in Revelation, what is this book all about? _____

Verse 3 says we will be blessed if we: _____

_____

John started with the theme of this whole work: This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ! *Before* giving commendations and rebukes to the church, *before* describing last day events and how it will impact His people, *before* speaking of the beast and the harlot, Jesus begins this book with a revelation of Himself!

This week, we will explore who Jesus is and why He is worthy of our worship.

Starting today, we will begin a journey, looking specifically for *Jesus* to be revealed in fresh, new ways in His Word, particularly in the book of Revelation. We want to go beyond reading and hearing to *keeping* these words. We want to bring all we learn about Him into our life experience!

Why would God have to reveal Himself to us? He is our Creator…. Does He have to explain Himself? He could demand that we trust and follow Him "just because." However, in **Revelation 1:1**, we see a picture of a God who *wants* to reveal who He is to His children. He is not asking us to believe blindly, leaving us to wonder what He is *really* like!

Read **Psalm 113:4-8**. What does the Psalmist say about God?

_____

_____

_____

He isn't just sitting high, observing what is going on down here on earth—He is stooping low to get His hands dirty and help us at our worst! Because Jesus wants a relationship with us, He is taking the time to reveal to us who He is!

With this in mind, read the first description of Jesus in **Revelation 1:5 and 6**. Make a bullet-point list of all the descriptions of Jesus, and ask God to help you discover what each one tells you about Him.

- _____
  _____
- _____
  _____
- _____
  _____
- _____
  _____
- _____
  _____
- _____
  _____

After you have made your own list, compare it with the following. You probably have something to add to the list below:

- Faithful Witness—He never lies nor fails to come through; He is faithful in His witness and therefore, can be trusted
- Firstborn—This implies that He is one son among many. He is our older-and-wiser big brother.

- Ruler over the kings of the earth—He is in control; He is the most successful and most powerful of them all.
- Loved us and washed away our sins by His own blood—the Ruler over all loved us so much that He invested in us *personally* and died for us.
- Made us kings and priests to His God and Father—We are not mere subjects but co-heirs of the Kingdom of God (Psalm 113:7-8).
- To Him be all glory and dominion forever and ever. He is truly worthy of our worship!

Did you come to a new discovery about Jesus which you hadn't seen before? Did you see something beautiful about His character, something that makes Him more attractive to you? What was it? _____

_____

Challenge
Pray for the "one desire" that David expressed in Psalm 27:4. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you in a greater way today and throughout this week.

DAY 2
Have you had a well-meaning friend explain to you their recently read book or viewed film? We are often annoyed when they say, "Spoiler Alert!" before describing the ending scenes and ruining the story for us! On the other hand, was there a time when knowing the end of the story helped to comfort you?

Today we will explore Jesus' reassurance to be with us throughout our lives.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, You promise in* ***John 16:26*** *that "the Helper, the Holy Spirit" will teach me "all things" Send me this Helper, so Jesus can be more fully revealed to me today. In His name, Amen.*

Read **Revelation 1:7**. What does John declare about Jesus' return in this verse? _____
John gives us the end-of-story—the good news that Jesus is coming back again! Rather than "spoiling" the story, how does

that make you feel to know that Jesus is coming for you right from the start before you hear of beasts and dragons? _____

_____

God is reassuring you that even though a lot of difficulties and trials are about to happen on planet earth, you can hold on tight because He is coming back for you. There will be a happy ending to your story!

Read **Revelation 1:8**. Here Jesus speaks for the first time. Write down in point form what He says about Himself. _____

_____

_____

Compare this to verse **11** (see KJV or NKJV). What does Jesus call Himself here? _____

And now read verse **17b** (last sentence). What does Jesus say (again)? _____

Jesus is speaking each time! Why do you think He repeats Himself? _____

Have you ever sat with someone who is so distraught that you had to repeat a reassuring line over and over again such as, "I'm going to be right here with you"? What is Jesus' "reassuring line" through this repeated message to John and His church—and to you? _____

Read at least 4 verses from the list below and write down the reassuring lines from each verse.

Genesis 26:24 _____

_____

Deuteronomy 31:8 _____

_____

Joshua 1:9 _____

_____

Psalm 139:5 _____

_____

Isaiah 41:10 _____

_____

Isaiah 52:12 _____

_____

Often accompanied with *do not fear*, these comforting messages are directly from the Old Testament. Jesus is just repeating (again and again) what He has always told His people: "I promise to be present in *every* part of your experience from start to finish. I am your beginning and end because I am He who always was and is and is to come!"

Testimony
Months ago, when the call came for helpers to proofread this study guide, I thought to myself, *I need that!* While waiting for the guide to arrive in the mail, I learned that my husband would be transferred. I wondered if I would still be able to handle the 12-week commitment with the moving stress. Then, still anticipating my special mail, the postal system went on strike! Weeks passed.

Winter blew in; our home was put up for sale, and we hunted daily for a hard-to-find home in a small town three hours away. I prayed that God would show us that He was with us and to glorify Himself. He sent an offer on our house at the first open house. It sold in a few days. However, when we made an offer on a house we liked, it was rejected. We made an offer on another home, and it closed smoothly. I prayed, *Lord thank you for the house, but even more, we need to know that you'll be with us over there.*

Having received the guide in the mail a few days before making that second offer, I thought I was very behind. So here I was on day 2 of the first week, writing out the "reassuring lines" and exclaiming "Thank You, Jesus!" Then I read the next part: "I promise to be present in every part of your experience from start to finish. I am your beginning and end because I am He who always was and is and is to come!"

Written so long before, and stuck in the mail, these perfectly timed reassurances brought me to tears, and confirmed that He would be with us and that everything would be okay. Friend, He will finish what He has started for us. He is at the end and right there in between. He promised! (MS)

Read **Isaiah 45:1-5**. In particular in verses 4 and 5, the Lord

promised to be with Cyrus and help him even though _____
_____
Isn't that amazing? Our Lord is with us even when we don't know who He is yet! When we are still in darkness, He is working to make Himself and His way known to us!

Jesus says one more thing about Himself at the end of **Revelation 1:8**. He says that He is_____

Reader, as "All-mighty" God, He promises not only His presence but also His victory in any and every situation you are facing or ever will face. What is your response to God for such reassurance? Verbalize your thanks for His ever-present personal care for you. _____
_____

Challenge
Ask Jesus to help you totally trust Him today, knowing that He will come through in every situation. _____
_____

DAY 3
What is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen (in nature or manmade)?_____
Was it a sunset? Your brand-new car? Your first look at the face of a newborn?

Today we will see how beautiful Jesus is!

Pray: *Heavenly Father, Jesus said that if I have seen Him, I have seen You! Send Your Holy Spirit to show me how beautiful You are today! In His name, I pray, Amen. (**John 14:9**)*

Read **Revelation 1:9-10**. Where is John and what is he doing on the Lord's Day? _____
History tells us that John was exiled on this island reserved for convicts. There may have been other believers there, but at that moment of his vision, John was alone with God. What does he hear behind him? _____

Imagine being alone in nature, hearing the gentle rustling of

trees and chirping of birds as you meditate on what God has done in your life, and then you hear a voice that resembles the sound of a trumpet behind you. What would be your reaction?

_____

John may have been a bit startled, although he was "in the Spirit" who may have prepared Him to meet Jesus face to face (v. **10**).

Notice that John hears Jesus' voice before he sees Him. Why do you suppose Jesus chose to reveal Himself to John in that order? _____

A beautiful thought that our God does not want to dazzle us with His bright light until we are ready to receive it, but rather, He gradually reveals Himself to us, starting with how we are familiar with Him. In John's case, He knew Jesus' voice.

Read **Revelation 1:12,20**. What is the first thing John notices when he turns around? _____

What do they represent? _____

Read verse **13**. Where is Jesus? _____

John first notices *where* Jesus is before realizing what He looks like. Jesus is *right* in the *middle* of His churches! How comforting to know that Jesus is among us; He is in the midst of you and your family and whatever issues going on in any part of your life.

What does Jesus look like?

Read **Revelation 1:13-16**. List some of Jesus' physical characteristics:

His clothing: _____

His head and hair: _____

His feet: _____

His voice: _____

His mouth: _____

His countenance: _____

Is there a physical characteristic or two that are particularly meaningful to you, that show you something about who He is?

_____

Example: "His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace." Jesus went through the fires of testing times Himself, and His feet tell us to follow Him. He has been through trials and tribulation, and He will safely guide us through ours.

John had seen Jesus as a man. Even after the resurrection, though Jesus appeared in His glorified state, much of that glory was hidden in His human form. Now John sees Jesus as God. But whether Jesus appears as the Son of Man or the Son of God, He is always "God with us." He is even now walking among His churches, ever present in their midst! And He is with you individually, walking in the center of your life.

Testimony
I prayed for Jesus to reveal Himself to me as He did to John, first in a language that I would quickly understand and after, in a fresh new way: He didn't disappoint!

A little later, while I was taking a hike, a short rain shower drenched the ground. (No surprise: In Scotland, it rains almost every day.) The surprise came after the shower—a beautiful rainbow showed up in the sky. My heart always overflows with joy at the sight of a rainbow. It is as though God were speaking to me face to face, promising to fulfill in me His faithful covenant of a new heart and new Spirit, as described in **Ezekiel 36:26-27**. I praised Jesus for speaking to me in the most direct way possible in a language I understand. I prayed again that He would reveal Himself to me in a fresh way, expecting for something amazing to happen. And He did!

Right then, I recalled a recent call from a Christian friend who has two lovely, young daughters. He shared an interaction he had had with them, and I could see his heart for his girls, how he watched over them, counseled them, and sacrificed for them. Sometimes they distanced themselves from him, but he was always there for them. I grew up in a home where I didn't quite experience the love of a Christlike father so for me, to see

God as the Everlasting Father has been difficult. Right then, I had a fresh revelation of who Jesus is through my friend's love toward his daughters. I rediscovered the Father's great love for me!

I praise God for walking with me and talking to me in a language I understand—the rainbow—and opening my eyes to experience Him in this new way—as my Everlasting Father. And He can also answer this prayer for you. (AL)

Reader, even now, He is walking in your midst. Read **Zephaniah 3:17**. Look back at what you wrote in the description. In a few words, thank Jesus for how He has specifically revealed Himself to you today and for always being with you.

Challenge
Ask God how *He* would like to reveal Himself to you today.

DAY 4
Can you think of a time when you opened a door and were shocked to see what was on the other side? We planned a surprise birthday party for my teenage son. All his friends parked out of sight and were in the house awaiting his arrival. When he opened the door and heard everyone yelling, "Surprise," he jumped back. We saw the look of fear in his face, which was quickly transformed into joy when he realized what was going on! (LM)

Today you may be surprised to see Jesus in a totally new way than you have seen Him ever before.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, You say that Your "Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God." Reveal to me today the the deep things about Jesus. In His name I pray, Amen* (**1 Corinthians 2:10**).

Read **Revelation 1:17**. What was John's reaction to seeing Jesus for the first time as God? _____
It's interesting to see John, who had walked with Jesus for three and a half years and who probably recognized His voice

speaking to Him, fall down "as dead" at one look at Him.

Read **Colossians 3:3-4** and **Galatians 2:20**. How does John's experience mirror a spiritual truth for us? _____

_____

Like John, when we sit in the presence of God and realize how huge and awesome He is, we fall as dead men! But this fear need only last a moment. Read **Revelation 1:17.** How is John immediately reassured? _____

Just hearing Jesus say the words "Do not be afraid" must have been comforting to John, since it sounded so much like Him!

Pray and choose at least 3 New Testament verses from the 8 below, and prayerfully study times during Jesus' life on earth when He said, "Do not be afraid!"

Matthew 1:20; Matthew 14:27; Matthew 17:7; Matthew 28:5,10; Mark 5:36; Luke 5:10; Luke 12:7,32; John 14:27

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

"Do not fear!" is God's timeless message to His people from the beginning of time. Choose a minimum of 3 verses from the Old Testament list below, asking God to reveal to you how you never need to be afraid. Write down your thoughts.

Genesis 15:1; Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:9; Psalm 23:4; Psalm 27:1; Psalm 46:1-3; Psalm 56:3,4; Haggai 2:5

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

Read **Revelation 1:18**. What further encouragement does Jesus give John? _____

As Jesus was talking, maybe John was thinking of how His death had initially dashed all the disciples' hopes. They thought death had taken their Master away forever. What a beautiful image Jesus gave him! "I have the key! A key to the grave and death! A key to all that tends to death—whether discouragement or depression or disease or anything else evil. I have a key that unlocks any of those doors to get you out of what is hurting or killing you! I can speak resurrection into your life because I AM the Resurrection and the Life!"

At times, do you feel spiritually dead, without even so much as a desire for God? Or does someone you know have a spiritual life that seems impossible to revive? You have heard, "Where there's breath, there's hope," but God says, "Even where there is no breath, there is hope because I HAVE THE KEY!" I can and will resurrect the dead! I can and will "save to the uttermost those who come" to Me!" **(Hebrews 7:25)**.

God is so awesome, one look at Him may take your breath away. But He is quick to lay His hand on you and revive you. He says, "Greatly beloved! DO NOT BE AFRAID! I can do the impossible in your life—come to Me!" How is Jesus revealing Himself to you today? Write down your thoughts and prayers right now. _____

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Write down your favorite "do-not-fear" verse on a card to carry it around and memorize it. Share it with someone.

DAY 5

Did you ever have a teacher, boss, or leader who always showed up at the right time to help in time of need? He or she could tend to many tasks—helping you in one instant and answering someone else's question in the next? Jesus is a leader who does not stand on the sidelines.

Today we will explore how Jesus is with us as the "Amen" in our experience.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, I praise You for Your constant faithfulness to me, though many times I am not. Open my heart to receive Your word to me today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Reread **Revelation 1:13,20**. Where was Jesus in John's vision? _____

Jesus is in the center of His people, the church. Though the candlesticks referred to the seven literal churches in Asia at that time, they also represent His church in the seven periods of church history from Jesus' resurrection to the end of time.

Perhaps you have read Jesus' letter to the seven churches (Revelation 2 & 3). To view an example, read a portion of the message to the first church, Ephesus, in **Revelation 2:3,4**. Were the churches always perfectly obedient and loving? _____ Though two churches receive only praise from the lips of Jesus, most were given a mix of commendation and rebuke. However, the last-day church, Laodicea, receives *reproof alone—not one word of approval.*

Yet, Jesus is still "in the midst" of *all* seven, including Laodicea, in spite of its issues. Read **Romans 5:6-8**. What is God's beautiful message to us in these verses? _____

_____

God's love is unconditional—He, unlike us, is faithful and true, in spite of our rebellious attitude toward Him. His love is not based on what we think or how we act, but on His everlasting love and faithfulness toward us.

This message to the Laodicean church is especially for us who are living in the last days of history before Jesus returns. Read **Revelation 3:14**. How does He introduce Himself to this church? _____

_____

_____

Jesus has many names, but He chooses these three to reveal Himself to His people—to you—right now. Let's explore what these names mean.

The Amen

Look up the meaning of "Amen" in several sources. Write down all the meanings you find. _____

_____

Commentator HMM in the Blue Letter Bible says that this Hebrew word is related to the "word for 'believe' *(aman)* or faithful. Thus, it came to mean 'sure' or 'truly,' an expression of absolute trust and confidence." (Examples: **Matthew 5:18 and John 6:32**.)

Jesus was constantly telling His people: "You can have absolute confidence in the words I'm about to say! I always fulfill my promises!"

In light of the meaning of amen, read **2 Corinthians 1:19,20**. Why is Jesus the Amen?

_____

Read **1 Kings 8:56 (in NKJV).** Solomon tells his people, "There has NOT _____ _____ _____ of _____ His _____ _____." Jesus is the Amen, the yes to all the promises in the Bible! He has never failed us, and He never will. He went to His very death to keep those promises to us, and now He is the Guarantee behind all of them.

Now think of Jesus being the "Amen"—the faithful One—in the context of Laodicea. How does Jesus as the *Amen* apply to this particular church? _____

_____

Imagine such a promise being made to a church that is so wayward—a church who makes God sick to His stomach (see **Revelation 3:16**). No matter how far we have fallen, even if there is not one good word to say about us, God is still our Amen! He is always faithful! How reassuring for us today who are part of that end-time church.

Read **1 Kings 8:57-58**. What should be our response to God's faithfulness toward us? _____

_____

Think of what great news this is! Jesus, the Amen of our experience, not only keeps all *His* promises to us, but He also gives us the *power* to keep all our promises to Him. We can live by these promises, believing that *He will* do what He says He will do in our lives.

Take a few minutes and write down one or more promises from the Word of God that are most meaningful to you. _____

_____

Thank the Lord for His promise(s) to you and ask Him to fulfill it (them) in your life. _____

Challenge

Ask God who needs to read your favorite promise. Write down their names here. _____

_____

Text or give it to them personally.

DAY 6

Anne lost her son to a tragic accident in the prime of his life at the end of his freshman year in college. Since then, she has been put in the path of others who have suffered from the same situation. She is able to speak words of comfort to them in their pain and sorrow, in their questioning why God let this happen, and regarding the family dynamics that ensue because she has *personally* gone through the whole gamut of this experience herself. She is more effective than I am in comforting another person because while I could sympathize with someone who lost a son, I cannot speak from experience.

How does Anne's experience mirror in some way the Godhead's experience? _____

_____

Today we will explore the next two names of Jesus to His last-day church, Laodicea.

Pray: *O Lord, You have always been "faithful and true" in my life. So please send Your Holy Spirit to prepare me to receive Your Word today. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Revelation 3:14**).

The Faithful and True Witness
Look up the Greek word for "witness" in your concordance.
What is the word? _____
What English word do you think has derived from it? _____
In light of this, read **Romans 5:8,18,19 & Hebrews 13:8**. Why does Jesus call Himself the Faithful and True Witness?

_____

_____

Jesus is the Faithful and True *Witness* in the sense that, like Anne, He has *personally* lived a life like ours, as a human being from babyhood. He felt our emotions; he dealt with struggles, people, and heartache. He understands us, not just because He is the omniscient God who knows everything—but more importantly, through *personal experience*. He came *down* to our planet, to our level, and became part of His creation.

However, the ultimate proof that He is the Faithful and True Witness is that He became a *martyreo* for our sake—He kept His promise, giving up His life, though almost everyone at the time of His death was ashamed to be called His follower! Because He was faithful and true during His earthly life, you can be absolutely confident that He will be faithful and true to you now and for eternity.

Read **1 Thessalonians 5:24**. Can you see how Jesus has been faithful to you in the past, even yesterday, whether in a small or huge way? Thank Him for continuing to be faithful and true to you! _____

_____

The Beginning of the Creation of God
How is Jesus the *Beginning* or *Origin* of Creation?
John 1:1-5 _____

_____

2 Corinthians 5:17 _____

_____

Revelation 1:5 _____

_____

When it comes right down to it, we are not the originator of *anything*! Jesus, Creator of all things, decided to create us though He knew we would fall. *Before* sin came to our world, He made the decision to come and fix what would be broken. He chose to become one of His created beings and was the first to live a perfect life, paving the way for us to follow and have victory in our lives. And finally, He is also the "firstborn from the dead." He resurrected from the dead and so will we! Because He lives forever, so will we!

Of the three names of Jesus in **Revelation 3:14**, which is the most precious to you and why? _____

_____

_____

Let Jesus know that you want him to be the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning and the End of your experience! Thank God for how He has revealed Himself to you today. _____

_____

Challenge

Who in your life needs encouragement from the Word today?

_____

Take time to send them an encouraging Bible text now.

DAY 7

Think of the person who you feel most loved by, who has done so much for you and has been there for you through thick and thin. How do you respond to that person? _____

_____

It is natural to respond to lavish love and kindness even though at times, we may take these loved ones for granted. On the other hand, sometimes we are so appreciative that we feel like we cannot reciprocate enough, or words fail when we try to thank the person.

Today we will explore how to respond to a God who loves us so much.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, this week, we have seen how beautiful and awesome You and Your Son are! Today, may your Holy Spirit continue to open Your "deep things" to us! In Jesus' name, Amen* (**1 Cor. 2:10**).

Read **Revelation 1:11,18,19 (NKJV)**. In a few words, what does Jesus say to John in each case?

1. _____
2. _____

Sources record John as a leader in the church of Ephesus until he was exiled to Patmos in AD 95 (just a 60-mile/100-km boat ride away). John must have been so concerned about his little flock in his absence. How reassuring to him that Jesus mentioned his church first! Jesus was telling John, "I am taking care of my churches! I am among every one of them, and their ministering angels are in the palm of my nail-pierced hand!"

It's wonderful to think that Jesus gives us messages from His Word *first* for our *own* comfort, counsel, correction, and instruction. However, Jesus reveals Himself to us with a very important, second purpose in mind!

Look again at **Revelation 1:11** and **19**. In one word, Jesus is telling John to _____. Now remember that John is exiled on Patmos, an island reserved for convicts. Think of some of the excuses John could have used to tell Jesus he wouldn't be able to do this work. _____
No quill or papyrus? Just trying to survive? Scriptures are unavailable? John makes no excuses. He simply obeys.

Jesus tells Him to simply "write the things which you have seen" (v. **19**). And in essence, Jesus was removing John from one ministry (with the church of Ephesus) to put him in a secluded place of rest to do another ministry (write to all the churches). (See Jesus' desire for those who are doing heavy work for the Lord in **Mark 6:30,31**.)

John is obeying out of love for his Savior. He may have been thinking back at times in his experience with Jesus where he wishes his response had been different: his lack of faith when the boat was filling with water while Jesus was asleep in the stern; his expressed desire to pray for fire to come from heaven to destroy an unbelieving city; his avoiding the issue that none of them understood: Jesus' announcement of his imminent death.

Read **Mark 10:35-37**. What part of the past may have grieved this disciple the most? _____
However, what did John believe? **1 John 1:9** _____
_____ In spite of all his mess-ups, John knew he was forgiven and cleansed by his Lord.
How does John refer to himself in his gospel? **John 21:7,20**

_____

Five times in his gospel, John identifies himself this way. No matter how impure his thoughts or awful his behavior, Jesus, again and again, kindly, tenderly, lovingly brought this disciple to a true knowledge of Him. And in response, John, who knew he least deserved to have such treatment from his Saviour, loved Jesus.

Read **1 John 4:12-16**. What is John's main theme in these verses? _____

Of all the New Testament writers, John probably most closely resembled Jesus in love. He identified with the people, as though they were his "little children" (**1 John 2:28**). His ministry to Ephesus was motivated by love for Jesus and His church. And now, his obedience to the command: "Write!" was also in response to Jesus' great love for him.

Review some of the highlights from this past week.
Did you see Jesus in a totally new way?
Did you see that He is in your "midst" through thick and thin, through the ups and downs of your experience?

What name or aspect of His character from **Revelation 1** and/or **3:14** speaks to you the most? Record your thoughts. _____

_____

Challenge

1. At the beginning of the week, you were asked to pray for the "one desire" that David expressed in **Psalm 27:4**. Do you see the beginning of that prayer being answered in your life? Thank Him now! (If not, keep praying. He will surely answer that prayer. (Also, know that you are being prayed for.)

2. Write **Psalm 27:4** on a card and pray/memorize it this coming week.

3. Think of one person (or more) who could use a word of encouragement from your testimony; contact them, and share one of the Bible verses and your revelation of God. You may be surprised at their response.

Jesus says to you personally:

Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.
I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold,
I am alive forevermore. Amen.
And I have the keys of the Grave and of Death.
Revelation 1:18

GOD'S WAY TO PERSONAL REVIVAL
WEEK 2
WHO AM I? WHAT DOES JESUS OFFER ME?

How can a young man cleanse His way?
By taking heed according to Your word.
Psalm 119:9

DAY 1

Did you complete yesterday's challenge, including contacting someone else via phone, text, or in person to give them a word of encouragement? If you haven't yet, it's not too late! You can even pause a moment to do that right now!

Last week, we saw how beautiful and attractive Jesus is, and how He wants to be involved in His church—so much so that He is pictured ministering among the seven lamps, representing both the seven literal churches of John's day and the seven eras of His church from John's day to the end of time. Jesus asks John to write a love letter from His heart to each church, words that we can treasure personally as well!

This week, we will specifically explore Jesus' message to the Laodicean church.

Pray: *Father, please send the Holy Spirit to impress my mind and heart with Your message for me this morning. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read the following verses and record where John was in the last days of Jesus' life:
At the last supper, **John 13:23** _____
At the cross, **John 19:26,27** _____
In the courtyard, **John 18:15,16** _____
Of all the disciples, John was the boldest to come into public during a time when the rest of the disciples were hiding (or denying) Him. Even in the courtyard, he was not questioned (as Peter was) because he had made it clear that He was a follower of Jesus.

However, remember John's reaction when he first saw Jesus with his own eyes. (**Revelation 1:17**) _____

_____

In spite of his good reputation, in the presence of God, John's seemingly good standing fell so short—and he personally noticed it!

How well does Jesus know you? List all the ways listed in **Psalm 139:1-4**.

_____

_____

Read **Revelation 3:15**. What does Jesus say He knows about this last-day church?

_____

What does He wish for us? _____

Read verse **16**. What is God's response to our condition?

_____

We cannot fool God. God is saying that He would rather we be stone cold toward Him than halfway committed. He finds open apostasy less offensive than hypocrisy and mere formal, half-hearted worship. That makes Him want to vomit!

Read **Revelation 3:17**. What does this church say about itself?

_____

What does Jesus say about it? _____

_____

What is the difference between the reaction of John and that of the Laodicean church to their condition?

_____

Ouch! This last-day church, of which we are a part, doesn't even *see* its issues!

I went for a routine check-up and was told by the doctor that there were signs of cancer in two areas of my body. Did I want to hear that news? Obviously not. Who wants to hear that they are sick, especially with a disease as life-threatening as cancer? I could have thought, "I feel totally fine right now, and I doubt I have what the doctor says I have!" But I knew what could

happen if I chose to ignore this news. Though I wasn't happy to hear it, I was glad that the doctor told me, so we could work toward getting rid of the cancer in my body! The doctor wasn't responsible for the news–he didn't give me cancer! He was the one who diagnosed the issue and would hopefully provide a solution for my condition. (LM)

God is like our doctor. He knows our condition, and He knows that we are totally incapable of fixing it ourselves. He gives us the "bad news"–the revelation of who we really are–not to punish us but to heal us. We got ourselves into this mess, and He is the only one who can get us out! And how willing He is to do it if we would but take what He has to offer! There is so much comfort in this message: Jesus KNOWS us and He CARES about our condition. If He didn't, He wouldn't bother confronting us about our personal spiritual danger.

Reader, pray **Psalm 139:23,24**. Come to Jesus as you are, and ask Him to reveal to you what needs to take place to take you from being lukewarm to hot. _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Ask Jesus to show you any Laodicean characteristics you may have and to help you confess all your shortcomings to Him. Accept that He has already forgiven you and is in the process of transforming you.

DAY 2

What is some of the best advice you have received in your lifetime? _____

_____

Sometimes you appreciate the advice given, sometimes not.

Today, we will explore the advice Jesus gives us in order to overcome our Laodicean condition.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, open my heart to receive this advice from the One who loves me the most. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.*

Read **Revelation 3:18**. What three things does Jesus advise we buy from Him and what are they for?

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____

1. Read **1 Peter 1:6,7; Zech.13:9**. What is this gold refined in a fire? _____

2. Read **Isaiah 61:10**. What are the white garments Jesus wants us to buy from Him? _____
   _____

   Read **Revelation 3:18**. Why do we need these white garments? _____

3. According to **Revelation 3:18**, why do we need eye salve?
   _____

   Read **Acts 9:17; John 16:13**. Who is God's eye salve that gives us sight, so we can see what He wants us to see?
   _____

Our Heavenly Doctor not only gives us an accurate diagnosis of our illness, but He also knows the perfect remedy to heal us of our disease! He says, "Yes, you are wretched, miserable, and poor, but I will give the wealth of faith tried in the fire of trial and tribulation; you are naked, but I will take away your shame and clothe you with My robe of righteousness; you are blind, but I'll give you My Holy Spirit, so you can be spiritually discerning!" Reader, when someone gives you advice, you should always consider the source. Read **Jeremiah 31:3**. What does God say about His feelings toward you? _____
_____

Do you believe it? In **Romans 8:31**, God says He is *for you*! Right now, pray **Isaiah 55:1-3** and tell Jesus you want to accept

His invitation. Ask Him to anoint your eyes with the Holy Spirit, so you can see yourself as *He* ***knows you.*** _____

_____

Challenge
Review the three promised items. Ask God to give them to you today.

DAY 3

Stand up right now and face north. What would be the ideal tool to check if you are facing in the right direction? _____ This instrument points directly toward a fixed point on our globe, the North Pole, and is a sure guide to let you know which way is *true north.*

Today, we will study God's compass, His Word, which points us to True North—Jesus—who is calling us out of our lukewarm condition to turn back to Him.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, You say in* ***Psalm 32:8*** *that You will instruct and teach me in the way I should go and guide me with Your eye. Through Your word today, guide me in the direction of Your Son who died to give me salvation. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Revelation 3:19** out loud. Jesus says He _____ and _____ us. Look up the following words in their Greek forms in your Bible app and give the English translations for each one:
Rebukes: _____

_____
Chastens/disciplines: _____

_____
What does He say is His motive for correcting us? _____

Read **Jeremiah 31:2-4,33**. List all the things that the Lord says He will give us and do for us. _____

_____
And why does He even bother? v.**3** _____

_____

Reader, *love is why*. The Word of God Himself confirms that He loves us! Because He loves us, He accepts us as we are;

however, also because He loves us, He doesn't leave us where we are.

Notice the progression in **Jeremiah 31:2**. He gives us *grace* and *rest* (salvation); in verses **4 & 33**, He promises to *build* and *adorn* us, *writing* the *law* in our hearts and minds (redemption). Out of His great love for us, He saves AND redeems us from all sin in our lives, so we can once again dwell in His physical presence forever! What ultimately proves His great love for us? **John 3:16** _____

_____

Read **Revelation 3:19** again. What does He call us to do? _____

_____

Now, in your Bible concordance, look up the following two words in the Greek, and write down all the English translations:
Zealous: _____
Repent: _____

Read the following verses and write down the name of the messengers and their messages:

Text	Messenger	Message
Matthew 3:1,2	_____	_____
Matthew 4:17	_____	_____
Acts 2:38; 3:19	_____	_____

The main message in true revival is always the same: "Repent!" But how can we find the desire or receive the power to repent from something we love to do and do not want to let go of? Read **1 John 4:19**. What did Jesus do *first*? _____

_____

What is our *response* to this great love He has for us? _____

_____

As we become closer to Jesus, our love for Him outweighs the love we have for our sinful ways. This leads us to repentance. Sometimes, our sin has become so much a part of us that we feel we are helpless before its power over our lives. However, God has not left us alone.

Read **Ezekiel 36:26,27**. Write out all the promises God makes to

us in this passage. _____

_____

God is ready to do heart surgery on us! He is ready to cut out our heart of stone and give us a new heart!

Reader, Jesus loves you. He has given you and me the gift of a new heart. When we turn away from Christ, we damage our own heart. We fill our hearts with bitterness, anger, selfishness, and pride. Jesus offers to give you heart surgery today. Will you pray right now, claiming the promise in **Ezekiel 36:26,27**, asking God to transplant your old stony heart with a new one? Ask Him to help you live a victorious life by the power of His Holy Spirit.

_____

_____

Challenge
Copy **Ezekiel 36:26** and **27** down on a card, meditate on it, and memorize it today. Ask God to keep your heart soft so you will be zealous and repent when he rebukes and disciplines you!

DAY 4

If you live in America, you may be able to distinguish the call of a coyote, wild cat or deer in the wild. But could you identify a kangaroo or ring-tailed lemur by its sound? Chances are, unless you have lived in Australia or Madagascar, you could not. How about Jesus' voice? Would you recognize it if He were to call you tonight?

Today we will talk about hearing the voice of God speaking to our hearts.

Pray: *O Father, please give us your Holy Spirit in His fullness so that we may hear Your voice clearly in the Word today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Revelation 3:20.** This verse tells us about the relationship of Jesus with His Laodicean people in the time of the end. If the door represents our hearts, where is Jesus according to this text? _____ ____ He may be an influence in our life, but from afar. He may be our Redeemer — but perhaps not our Ruler.

What is Jesus doing at our door? _____
Is He most often our Guest (who leaves at the end of our time together) rather than a Resident (who is with us all the time in our up-and-down moments, even when all we have to eat is a can of beans)?

Does Jesus try the door handle? Does He ever peek in without permission? According to the verse, what is the only way for Him to enter our house? _____ Your Creator and Redeemer does not feel entitled! He comes with humility, waiting for us to respond to His voice of invitation and let Him in.

Read **John 10:2-4**. What does Jesus, our Good Shepherd do?

_____

_____

and what does He call us to do? _____
Again, the choice is ours. Will we listen to His voice and follow Him where He leads?

Down through time, God has always spoken to His people, though they have not always listened. Many of us want to hear the voice of God in our lives for counsel and guidance—but being sensitive to His voice often begins with listening to the hard things He is calling us to do—such as the call to repent. Reader, Jesus is calling you. Do you hear him call you through his written Word right now?

Challenge
Take a few minutes, and read **Revelation 3:20** again. Then put the Bible on a chair in front of you, kneel down if you are able, and ask Jesus:

- To help you listen better when He sends the Holy Spirit to speak to you.
- To show you the message He has for you in **Revelation 3:20**.
- To help you be still and listen for five minutes.

DAY 5
What is your favorite memory of a special guest coming to eat at your house when you were young?

_____

Were you excited to hear their knock on the door? How about Jesus? He is so anxious to come into our homes and hearts! Are we as excited to hear His knock on the door of our heart?

Right now, we will discover Jesus' passion to go deeper in His relationship with us.

Pray: *My Father, You call me to "taste and see" that You are good. Send your Holy Spirit to help me be hungry for more in my relationship with Jesus Christ. May I be one of the "blessed" because I trust in You! In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Psalm 34:8**).

Read **Revelation 3:20** again. What two things is Jesus ready to do? _____

What kind of relationship do you have with someone you invite into your home to eat with you? _____
Jesus wants a living and growing relationship with you. *Daily*, He wants to come in and even prepare the meals that you will eat together!

Jesus loved to break bread with His disciples. Read **Matthew 26:17,18**. How did Jesus spend His last day with His disciples?

_____

Read **John 21:12**. After His resurrection, what was Jesus' invitation to His disciples?_____
Read **John 15:16,17**. How is our relationship with Jesus life-changing? _____
Isn't that a beautiful thought? That HE chose US? Eating His food daily will help us, in turn, to bear the fruit of love toward others.

The Word of God provides some practical ways to have a *daily*, living relationship with Jesus. Complete the sentences below:

- **Isaiah 50:4**: This is a prophecy about Jesus (see v.6). While He was here on earth, His Father woke Him up daily to spend personal, unrushed time with Him. Each evening before bed, you can also ask Him to _____ you anytime in the morning so He can teach you personally.

- **Matthew 28:18**: Daily give up your right to lead your life. Instead, live under the supreme _____ of Jesus.
- **Acts 1:4,5,8**: Daily ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the _____. Be a fearless _____ for Christ wherever you go!
- **John 5:39; Matthew 7:24**: Every day look for fresh picture of _____ in the Word of God; ask Him to help you to _____ the Word to your life.
- **2 Cor. 5:7**: Practice living and walking by _____ (not by _____) every moment!

Reader, Jesus wants more in His relationship with you. He longs to be with you in every part of your life and in every moment of your day! Bow your head right now, and invite Jesus Christ to come in and dine with you. Invite Him to stay. _____

_____

Challenge
Start implementing the principles mentioned above, starting with the first one, *tonight*! He wants to spend unrushed time with you tomorrow morning.

DAY 6

Can you think of what seems like an impossible situation in your life? Maybe it's the healing of a relationship or the attainment of a goal you have had for years.

Today, discover Jesus' plan and power for you to be with Him in eternity.

Pray: *Dear Father, today please send the Holy Spirit to help me discover Your plan and power for me to be with You forever. I ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Revelation 3:21**. What right will Jesus give us in heaven? _____
Wow! What a promise! Sometimes we feel like heaven and eternity are out of our reach, that we are sinners beyond the saving power of the Savior. But Jesus promises a place on His throne. Notice what Jesus promises us in these verses:
John 14:3 _____

Hebrews 7:25_____

In **Revelation 3:21**, how does Jesus address those who come to Him ? _____

What do Jesus' letters to the seven churches teach us about overcoming? _____
Search for Jesus' message about overcoming in each of the letters to the seven churches in **Revelation 2 and 3**).

Ephesus (2:7) _____
Smyrna (2:11) _____
Pergamos (2:17) _____
Thyatira (2:26,27) _____
Sardis (3:5) _____
Philadelphia (3:12) _____

How is Jesus' promise about overcoming different to the Laodicean church than to the others? (See **Revelation 3:21**.)

_____
Jesus' promise that we may overcome is very unique to our last-day church. He says we can overcome as He overcame and sit *with* Him on His throne. *Jesus connects our overcoming with His overcoming!*

So how do we overcome, especially what seems to be so much a part of us, such as an overwhelming temptation or addiction? Jesus is NOT intimidated by our "impossible-looking" sins! According to **Colossians 1:27,28**, what "mystery" are we to make known to unbelievers? (6-7 words) _____
_____ Christ in us makes us overcomers.
Read **Matthew 28:18**, what does Jesus have now? _____
How does **Revelation 12:10,11** say we will overcome?

_____

When we want to overcome, we call on the Overcomer! He is living *IN* you, Reader! He has already overcome whatever you are facing, and He promises, *My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in your weakness. You can do ALL things through Me who strengthens you.* (**2 Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:13**.)

Give Him who has all authority in heaven and earth total authority over your life, including your sins and temptations! Jesus has the power and authority to free you from your addictions, habits, attitudes, and everything else that holds you in bondage. You have the opportunity to give up all you are to Jesus and ask Him to live each moment as the Overcomer in you!

Challenge
Kneel down if you are able, and spend some quiet time with Jesus. Tell Him you let Him in and submit to His authority as Lord of your life so He can change how you think and act, what you say, how you approach life. Thank Him that He is your Overcomer! Thank Him for being the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning and the End of your experience!

_____

_____

_____

DAY 7

This week, we have seen what Jesus says about our true condition and also what He offers to fix all our sin issues!

Today we will walk through God's perfect solution to save us and keep us saved.

Pray: *Dear Lord, this week, I have looked at my lukewarm situation and Your offer to change it. Today please send Your Spirit to teach me Your perfect solution for my condition from Your Word. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Isaiah 6:1-8**. How much of God did Isaiah see? _____

_____

What else did he see and hear? _____

_____

What was Isaiah's reaction to the whole scene? _____

_____

_____

What did God do for Isaiah? _____

_____

Where did the live coal come from? _____

It came from the place where the lamb was sacrificed. Here we see the grace of God on full display! He forgives our sin through the sacrifice of *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*—Jesus! (**John 1:29**). Although His presence overwhelmed Isaiah who saw himself for the sinful man he was, God already had a solution in place—Jesus' sacrifice on the cross! After Isaiah had an experience with God; after he acknowledged and repented of his sins and was cleansed by God's live coal from the altar, what was the first thing God asked him to do? _____

Reader, like John and Isaiah, as you stand in the presence of God, do you see yourself in a truer light. Do you feel unworthy? Do you hate your sins that come between you and God? God is leaning down and putting His right hand on you, to revive you now. He says, *Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last! I began this great work in you, and I will complete it! I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it* (**Revelation 1:17; Philippians 1:6; Ezekiel 36:36**). This is a lifetime process. He will carry it on to completion until He comes again.

Testimony

Returning from a mission trip, we were debriefing in the car when all of a sudden, one of the women went silent. We could all feel the tension, but no one said anything. As the last one to be dropped off, I felt I had to say something: "Josie, is everything alright?" She burst into tears and proceeded to download everything she had been feeling. She told me that I had belittled her and put her down the whole weekend; she felt she could do nothing right. I was shocked; the only thing I could say was "I'm sorry!" We hugged and prayed together, but as I entered my apartment, I could only think, *She is way oversensitive! Surely, she is exaggerating about what had gone on!*

However, I couldn't sleep. I kept remembering things I had said to her that were not kind. At the same time, I fought those thoughts with "But I'm not like that…". God spoke to my heart; He asked me several times if I wanted to know who I was, and I told Him no! But I could not shake what had happened nor find peace or sleep. I literally wrestled with God all night.

Finally, I told Him yes. I wanted to know, no matter how painful it was. I acknowledged my actions and confessed my demeaning attitude. It was embarrassing to realize that this was not something that creeped into my character just a few months ago but that it must have been with me all along, and I had never seen the true nature of my character. With repentance came peace…and finally sleep!

Josie and I were totally reconciled, and we have become very close, still doing mission work together! Though sometimes this old nature of mine does rear its ugly head, I am quick to recognize it and ask God for His "way of escape," which He never fails to give to me, every time! (LM)

Reader, right now, spend some time personally praying through the verses in **Isaiah 6:1-8**. Afterward, tell Jesus that because He said He took away your sin, you believe it! _____

_____

_____

Write down one or two promises on a card or paper and put them in your pocket, so that while you go about your daily routine, you can be reminded of His great love and mercy toward you all day long. Also pray for one person (or more) to share an encouraging promise with today. Write their name(s) here. _____

Challenge

1. Read **Ezekiel 36:24-36**, completing A and B as you read.

A. Make a list of all the things that God says He will do:

I will… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Make a list of what God says you will do:

You will… _____

Notice that God takes the responsibility for the fulfillment of every single step toward rebuilding and restoring your relationship with Him! He wants to make you a garden of Eden, bearing fruit on your trees and an increase in your fields, so you can, in turn, be an encouragement to others around you. What is your response to Him who promises all this to you? _____

2. Keep reviewing and memorizing **Ezekiel 36:26 & 27** this week.

GOD'S WAY REVEALED
WEEK 3
GOD WILL PROVIDE FOR HIMSELF

O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself;
it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.
Jeremiah 10:23

DAY 1

Have you been somewhere and smelled a scent—maybe freshly baked bread or cookies—that remind you of home? Have you heard someone making a statement and think: That sounds just like so-and-so? How about Jesus? Do we recognize Jesus in His Word?

Today we will see how Jesus chose to reveal Himself to the world.

Pray: *Dear Father, as I open Your Word, please send the Holy Spirit to reveal who Jesus really is. In His precious name I pray, Amen.*

Let's look at one of Jesus' discourses with the Jews. Read **John 5:16-18** and determine who Jesus is talking to specifically. Who were the "Jews that persecuted Jesus," who "sought to kill Him"? _____

Jesus was talking to church leaders—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Jewish teachers of the law.

According to Jesus in **John 5:39**, why were they studying Scripture? _____

All Jewish boys in the first millennium were required to learn to read and familiarize themselves with the Word of God, but in order to become a follower of a rabbi and eventual leader in the synagogue, they were required to know it *by heart*. Those parents who hoped that one day their son would become a rabbi trained their boy to have the first five Books of Moses memorized by as early as age 10 (yes, even Leviticus!).
Reread verse 39. What did Jesus say all the Scriptures talked about? _____

Read verse **38** & **40**. Write down Jesus' bold statements:

_____

_____

_____

Think about His statements. Jesus is telling these leaders of His church, who know most, if not all, of the Old Testament by memory, that they don't have His Word living in them! Ouch! Why not? Because they do not recognize Jesus in the Scriptures—all they see are a bunch of stories about their ancestors, laws to rigorously follow, and details to feed their intellect.

Because they do not see Jesus in the Word, they neither *believe* nor *come* to Him—the Giver of Life—for that eternal life they so earnestly desire! How sad to think of someone having the Word of God totally memorized, yet being lost because they do not know the Person the writings are all about!

Jesus said the Scriptures testified or revealed Him. At that time, what comprised the *Scriptures?* Jesus was referring to the part of the Bible we now call the _____ .
Who was Jesus according to **John 1:1**? _____

Think of this: *The Word made flesh, chose to explain His mission through the written Word of God—the Old Testament!* Why do we study Scripture? Are we seeking a product—eternal life—or the Person who put His own life on the line for us and desperately wants us to *know Him*?

Reader, take time to do some self-examination. Are you looking for Jesus in all of His Word? **Pray** the following if you genuinely want this experience:

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, I ask that You help me commit to seeking Him in the Word daily. Lord, may Your Holy Spirit open my mind and heart to receive what You want to reveal about Yourself in Your whole written Word. Amen.

Challenge
Open the Word today and intentionally look for a fresh picture of Jesus.

Day 2

Jesus Revealed to Adam and Eve, part 1

Although they know almost nothing about their baby in the womb, soon-to-be parents are already consumed with him or her. They don't know the color of hair or eyes, how tall the growth, if green beans or broccoli will be the preferred vegetable, what career will be chosen, but the parents' focus is on the coming of that child. Many families have a "reveal" party to announce the gender of the unborn, one of the few things they are able to find out about their child at that stage!

In the first week of this study, we had a big "reveal" of Jesus Christ, seeing Him for who He really is—beautiful, all-powerful and all-sufficient, reassuring and ever-present in the life of His church. We also had a "reveal" about our own pitiful condition and God's solution for backslidden Laodicea.

For the rest of this week, we will journey back to the time we allowed sin to enter our world and our hearts. **We will see, right from the beginning, God's gentle unfolding of His plan to bridge the gap between us and Him, to create in us a heart to love and trust Him once again.**

Pray: *Father, You loved us so much that You sent Jesus to die for us "while we were still sinners"! O Lord, please send the Holy Spirit to reveal more of Your love for me in spite of the fact that I don't always follow Your plan. In Jesus' powerful name, I pray, Amen* (**Romans 5:8**).

Can you remember a time when you dreaded facing someone in a position of authority–like your parents, a teacher, or a boss?

As preteens, my sister and I would usually run to the door, anxious to meet our mom and dad when they came home. But on the day we broke Mom's favorite lamp in the living room (because we were racing around the house as we shouldn't), when we heard them come through the door, we stayed in our room, pit feeling in our tummies, quietly "reading" our books. We did *not* want to come face to face with them because we had shame written all over our faces! (LM) Can you relate?

Today we will look at the first time humanity had those same feelings of unease in the presence of God.

Read **Genesis 1:26-31**. How did God speak to His newly created beings, Adam and Eve? _____

We can imagine that every day since creation, at the sound of Jesus' footsteps coming down the garden path for His evening walk with them, Adam and Eve ran out to meet him, for they loved spending time in His glorious, loving presence.
Read **Genesis 3:3**. What was God's clear instruction? _____

_____

Read verses **4-7**. The serpent told them their "eyes would be opened" to be what? _____
Were their eyes opened? _____
Did they see what Satan promised? If not, what did they see?

_____
What change happened in them? _____

_____
What did they attempt to do? (v.**7**) _____

_____

Read **Genesis 3:8-9**. What time of the day did God come?

_____
How did He show up? _____
What was Adam and Eve's reaction when they heard God's voice? _____

Notice that God came in the "cool of the day," not the heat of the moment. He gave them time to try to "fix" their situation. Then He came to meet them as He usually did, *walking*, not stomping, in the garden. He did not lambast them with reprimands for their disobedience, but simply asked: *Adam, where are you?* Like disobedient children, the idea of being in His company filled them with a strange foreboding, and they hid.

We know that Adam and Eve's fall into the enemy's trap did not take our omniscient (all-knowing) God by surprise!
Read **Revelation 13:8**. Before the earth was created, what role did Jesus willingly agree to take? _____
Remember **Romans 8:37-39**? _____can separate us from the _____ of God in _____.

Look again at **Genesis 3:6-8**. What did sin change? God's view of us or our view of Him? _____
Read vv. **9-13**. What does God do? _____
Notice that God doesn't point fingers, but He asks questions!
God's first question to Adam was: _____
Adam responds: _____
Then God asks Adam: _____
Adam responds: _____
God asks Eve: _____
Eve responds: _____
Sin not only changed our view of God, it changed our view of each other. Adam and Eve's shame turns to blame!

Read **Ps. 51:5**. What did sin do for all of Adam and Eve's descendants? _____
For these past 6,000 years of earth's history, each person born has the seed of rebellion in their hearts, making us natural enemies with God. Yet, God continues to pursue us.

Read the following verses, and record what God does in spite of ourselves:
Genesis 3:9. We hide, but God _____
Exodus 14:12-14. We whine and complain, but God _____
Luke 15:13, 20. We move out and away (with all of our Father's belongings), but God _____
Rev. 3:20. We close the door, but God _____
Neh. 9:17,18. We continually refuse to obey; we forsake God and return to slavery, yet God _____
John 3:16. We cannot change our present condition and are on the death row roster, but God _____

Reader, do you feel like your view of God has been skewed by your sin, maybe via a parent, church member, or other person? Are there areas of your life where you feel like you want to hide, even from God? Whatever may have been your past experience, you can now say: But God…

Reader, God is communicating to you right now: **"I am *for* you, and I want to save you!** (I said it plainly in **1 Timothy 2:4**.) Come to Me now, without trying to fix anything up in your life. I will take you as you are!"

Challenge
How has He revealed Himself to you today? Write down one new, beautiful discovery about God, thank Him for it, and invite Him to come into your heart right now! _____

_____

_____

DAY 3

Jesus Revealed to Adam and Eve, part 2
Does God look more beautiful to you after yesterday's study? He didn't wait for Adam and Eve to be sorry or to come out of hiding. He calmly came to them, providing them an opportunity to explain themselves, and gave them the Good News—the gospel—in one, simple sentence.

Today we will explore what He offers the human race since our first sin.

Pray: *Dear Lord, may Your Holy Spirit show me what You offer me today to save me from sin. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Genesis 3:15**. To whom is God speaking (see v. **14**), and in your own words, what does God inform him? _____

_____

Enmity, from which we get the word *enemy*, means "deep-rooted hatred" or "actively opposed or hostile to someone." Adam and Eve listened to God's emphatic statement to the devil: "You may have made friends with my children, but I'm going to create "deep-rooted hatred" between you and them and their children! I am going to crush the power that you now have in their lives. And yes, I will get wounded in the process, but I'm going to be victorious.

Read **Jeremiah 31:33**. What will God put in our hearts and minds to make us "enemies" with Satan and friends with God? _____
He does not just adjust our legal standing. His ultimate desire is to restore us to our original state before the fall, to the place where we would again delight in His presence and His ways.

Review the challenge at the end of last week. If you didn't do it, go back to page 41, and complete it now.

At the end of **Ezekiel 36:36**, He emphatically and plainly states that He has _____ and He will _____ . Reader, notice that God takes the responsibility for the fulfillment of every single step toward rebuilding, repairing, and restoring your relationship with Him! Do you *believe* that Jesus can do this in your life? Do you believe that He is on your side, that He wants to save you? _____

Remember **2 Cor. 1:20**? Jesus is the YES and the AMEN to every promise. He is the gold that backs up all the promises in our spiritual bank. Tell Jesus that you want Him to make you an enemy with Satan and friends with Him! Pray that **Jer. 31:33** becomes a reality in your life today. _____

_____

Remember that He has spoken it and promises to _____ it!

Challenge

Come to Jesus as you are, believing that He *can* and *will* fulfill all His Word in you.

DAY 4

Jesus Revealed to Abraham

There is a story told of a railyard engineer, who took his young son to work with him. After setting him up to fish by the nearby river, the father went to the control room, keeping his son in view while watching for a train. His job was to switch the tracks at the right time to get the train safely across the bridge and out of the path of another train that would soon come in the other direction on the same track.

Just as the train was arriving at the bridge and seconds before he had to pull the lever, he noticed that his son was no longer at the river but had wandered on the train platform and was curiously looking down into a hole which housed the cog works of the machinery. At that moment, the father saw his son fall inside. He had seconds to make a decision: run and save his son, or pull the lever and save the trainload of passengers who,

for the most part, would never know the sacrifice made for them.

This is a microcosmic look at the decision of our Father in heaven. He chose to pull the lever, to give His Son to save a world that was racing down the track of time to certain death, though they neither knew nor cared about His sacrifice.

From the first sin, God institutes worship that involves the sacrifice of an innocent animal, a representation of what it would cost *Him* to win us back. (See **Genesis 3:21** and **4:4**.) The people of God are heavily influenced by the enemy, and many begin to think they are required to offer the blood of a lamb or ram to appease God and win His favor.

But God said *He* would take care of the enemy and turn our hearts back to Him. How can He get that message across to His people? God decides to use a grueling experience to convey His true motive to His chosen "father of many nations," Abraham.

Today we will discover the gospel according to Abraham.

Pray: *Father in heaven, in the Bible, You call Abraham "My friend." Speak to me like a friend today, through Your Spirit, as I study the experience of Abraham. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Isaiah 41:8**).

Read **Genesis 12:1-4**. What did God ask Abraham to do? ____

_____

What is God's promise to Abraham? _____

_____

What does Abraham do with God's call out of his country?

_____

How old was Abraham? _____ How many children does he have at this point? _____

Read **Genesis 15:1-6**. Write out all of God's promises to Abraham: _____

_____

_____

What was Abraham's reaction? _____

Abraham *believed*. He believed God would do what He promised, and God "accounted it to him for righteousness." Read **Romans 4:16,17 (NKJV)**, especially the second part of verse 17. Abraham believed that God gives _____ and calls _____

In other words, because he believed God's promise to give him descendants in number as the stars of heaven (though not even one was in existence yet), the promise was as good as fulfilled, as far as Abraham was concerned.
Read **Genesis 21:5**. How old was he when he and Sarah had Isaac? _____ Abraham waited 25 years from the time God first promised descendants for the promise of God to be fulfilled. How do you suppose he felt about this son after that long wait? _____

Read **Genesis 22:1-19** in one sitting. Afterward, answer the following questions, using the verses marked in parentheses if necessary.
(**1-4**) What does God ask Abraham to do? _____

_____

What was Abraham's reaction? _____

_____

Though he didn't question God, I'm sure he had questions. If you were living this scenario, and God asked you to sacrifice your miraculously born son, what would you be asking God during your three-day journey to Moriah? _____

_____

Abraham's journey may have been a Gethsemane experience as he thinks of being separated from his son: *Oh God, all things are possible for You! Take this cup away!* (compare **Mark 14:36**) Yet, no matter how he feels, no matter how much his spirit is tortured, no matter where "logical" reasoning wants to take him, Abraham obeys and continues forward.

(**Genesis 22:7**) On the way up Mount Moriah, what does Isaac ask his dad:_____?
Abraham unwittingly responds with the gospel message in one

sentence: _____ (**8**)
How did God provide? _____ (**13**)
What did Abraham call the place? _____ (**14**)
Read **John 8:56**. Jesus says Abraham _____

_____

Abraham understood the gospel. He realized that sacrificial services did not represent what man should do for God, but rather *what the Lord would do for man through the coming Messiah*. God told Abraham through the experience: *Not your son, but MINE! HE will be the Substitute for mankind.*

Abraham and Isaac's story brings across the full impact of the message of Christ's righteousness by faith. Abraham believed and obeyed when it made no sense to obey. God fulfilled His promise: He cleared the way. He provided for Himself a Lamb, Jesus, whose sacrifice provided a way for us to once again live in peace in the presence of God.

Read **John 3:16** with new eyes, focusing on the first half of the verse. What are the two actions of God the Father in this verse?

_____

Reader, God loved *you* and gave His Son as a substitute in *your* place on death row. He provided for *you* though you didn't deserve it. Will you, like Abraham, believe on the One who made this sacrifice for you today? If so, say aloud: **God is *for* me and *wants* to save me, and He has *provided* for me through Jesus!** Thank Him now for His beautiful gift to you.

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Keep coming to Jesus in high and low moments today, thanking Him for His sacrifice.

DAY 5

Jesus Revealed to Jacob
Have you ever bungled something up so badly at work or home that you just felt like hiding? Have you ever had a fall-out in a

relationship and were left certain it was beyond repair? We all face circumstances like this, but with God, there is no such thing as an irreparable situation.

Today we will explore how God completely transformed Jacob, the deceiver, into Israel, the man who wrestled with God and prevailed.

Pray: *Dear God in Heaven, may the Holy Spirit show me how You can transform me as You did Jacob. In Jesus' powerful name, Amen.*

Abraham's grandson Jacob was at a very low moment of his life: He had deceived his father and was running away from an angry brother who wanted to kill him (**Genesis 27-28**). He probably felt so alone and guilty, wondering if God was still with him. On his way to Uncle Laban's house, Jacob stopped to sleep. Read **Genesis 28:10-12**. Describe his dream. _____

_____

_____

Read verses **13-15**, What did God promise Jacob? _____

_____

_____

He had just greatly sinned, acquiring his brother's birthright through deceptive means, yet God promised him that He would be with him and that He would provide for him, even giving him land and descendants! Wow! What a gracious God! Again, the gospel on full display—a free gift to His totally undeserving child! Read verses **16-22**. What was Jacob's response to such love and forgiveness? _____

_____

Decades later, Jacob, accompanied by a large household of wives, children, servants and livestock, returned to his father's house, not knowing if his brother Esau still wanted his life or not. Jacob sent word to Esau through messengers, hoping to find favor in his sight. What did the messengers report and what was Jacob's initial reaction? **Genesis 32:6-8** _____

_____

What did Jacob do in his distress? Read verses **9-12** _____

_____

_____

Jacob said he was _____

_____ (v. **10**) He reminded God (first three words in verse **12**): _____

Jacob humbled himself before God, yet pleaded for deliverance from the wrath of his brother, not because he deserved it but on the basis of God's promise to him!

Read **Genesis 32:24-32**. In short, what was Jacob's experience that night after he prayed? _____

Who was he wrestling with? (v. **30**) _____

What did God do for Jacob? (v. **28**) _____

_____

This was a pivotal moment in the life of Jacob. He came home carrying years of unreconciled guilt. The meaning of his name, deceiver, seemed to be the very essence of who he was, even during the years he worked for his uncle as a sheep herder.

He struggled all night with One he originally thought was an enemy. When he realized he was struggling with a heavenly being, he asked for a blessing—and would not let go until he got it! He wanted forgiveness, cleansing, and peace. In that struggle, God transformed him and gave him a new name to match his new character: He was no longer "Deceiver" but "Struggled with God and Prevailed"—that is, Israel—and he became the father of the Jewish nation.

Read **John 1:51**. Centuries later, Jesus interpreted Jacob's dream (of **Gen. 28:12**). What does He say the ladder represents? _____

Read **1 Timothy 2:5,6**. How did Paul put it? _____

_____

Reader, not only does Jesus say that He is *for* you but He also promises to be *with* you! He is the ladder stretching from heaven to earth, the one and only Mediator between you and God. And He wants you to come home, especially if you are carrying a heavy weight of sin. What does Jesus promise us if we come to Him? (See **Matthew 11:28**) _____ .

Is there something you are struggling with? Do you feel like you are facing an impossible situation? Don't wait to make it better. He alone can fix it. Remember God is for you. He wants to save you and has provided a way for you! Come to Him now. Spend time with God in prayer. Wrestle with Him, and don't let Him go until He blesses you!

Challenge
Write **Isaiah 62:1,2** on a card, replacing "Zion" and "Jerusalem" with your name. Meditate on it during the day. Ask God to fulfill that promise in you. Believe that He will do it!

DAY 6

Jesus Revealed to the Children of Israel
Did something ever seem so simple to you that you doubted it was true? That was my reaction when a friend told me to use a steamed onion to relieve my ear infection. I was incredulous but decided to give it a try. After three nights, to my surprise, my infection was gone! The people of Israel struggled with unbelief. They refused to humbly follow God and trust in His simple plan and provision for them. Every step of the way in the wilderness, they succumbed to doubt rather than have faith that He would provide for their every need.

Today, we will look at God's relentless pursuit of the children of Israel in spite of their unbelief and disobedience.

Pray: *Oh God, please send me Your Holy Spirit to show me Your amazing love in relentlessly pursuing me in spite of my disbelief and disobedience through the stories of the children of Israel. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

What were some of the ways God provided for the children of Israel according to the verses in **Nehemiah 9** below?
Vv.**9-11** _____
V.**17** _____
V.**19** _____
V.**20** _____
V.**21** _____
Vv.**22-25** _____

God had done so much for His people—delivering them from Egyptian bondage and feeding and protecting them during their years of wandering in the wilderness. Yet, time and time again, though they hardened their hearts in open rebellion, wanting to return to their bondage in Egypt, our "gracious and merciful" God was always "ready to pardon" them!

Let's look at one specific incident in the wilderness. Read **Numbers 21:1-9** in one sitting.
What had God just done for the people of Israel? (v.**3**) _____
_____
In spite of that, just a few days later, what happened to the people? (**4,5**) _____
What did they say to Moses? _____
_____
Does this sound familiar? Sometimes, does a spirit of complaint so poison our hearts and minds that we even despise what God sent to be a blessing? What did the Lord do? (**6**) _____
_____

Read **Deuteronomy 8:14-16**. Write down what was naturally in the "great and terrible wilderness." _____
_____
Venomous serpents were native to this wilderness. The people of Israel began to take God for granted. They had forgotten that their sustenance and protection was due to His watchcare and doubted Him with every test that came their way in that wilderness journey.

Scorpions were also indigenous to the wilderness, but God allowed serpents and not scorpions to enter the camp and bite them. What do you suppose God was trying to tell them? (See **Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9**) _____
Among the many lessons, God was reminding them that, by despising His protection and sustenance, they were aligning themselves with the "serpent of old," and being "bitten" by the sin in their lives.

What did the people do? (**Numbers 21:7**) _____
What did Moses do? _____
What did God ask Moses to do? (**8**) _____

What were the instructions for healing? (**9**) _____

_____

LOOK AND LIVE!
But why look at a bronze serpent, the symbol of sin and Satan? Obviously, God wouldn't ask Moses to put up an idol (see **2 Kings 18:4**). So why this statue? Thank God for His Word—it gives us a clear answer!

One night centuries later, a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to talk with Jesus. During the discourse, Jesus said something very strange. Record it below. **John 3:14-15** _____

_____

Who did the serpent in the wilderness represent, according to Jesus? _____

Do you get the full import of that sentence? Jesus called Himself sin! He called Himself evil. While He did not sin, He would become sin—so we could be released from its bite in our lives.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and thus knowledgeable in the Scriptures. When Jesus mentioned that He would be lifted up as the serpent in the wilderness, his mind immediately went to that story, though he probably didn't understand all the implications. Read **John 8:28-30**. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees, and again, He alludes to his being lifted up. What is the reaction of many of the people? _____

_____

Perhaps Nicodemus was among those who believed. However, not until the cross did Nicodemus openly follow Jesus. Read **John 19:38-42**. What did Nicodemus (and Joseph) do for Jesus? _____

When Jesus was lifted up on the cross, Nicodemus remembered Jesus' words. Nicodemus *looked and lived*! What seemed like the end of all things for the disciples—the crucifixion of their Master—was what convinced many teachers of the law. They looked at Him, He who became a serpent on that cross for them, they *believed*, and they lived—they were forever transformed (**Acts 6:7**).

Do we often, like the children of Israel at every test and trial, whine and longingly look back to our years of bondage, or do we trust our Heavenly Father to supply our need in His good time? Read **Hebrews 2:11**. No matter how unfaithful or complaining we are, what does God say about us? _____

Testimony

After I graduated from university, all I wanted was to live abroad. I told myself I would never settle in the US. So, I traveled as a teacher in different countries for about five years. At the beginning of 2019, I was in Slovakia and started planning my next destination. I thought about going to China because I wanted to make more money. However, I started struggling with depression. A counselor told me that I needed to go back to the US and be around family and friends. I kept thinking: *No way will that happen! I felt lonely when I lived there!*

So stubbornly, I followed my plan to go to China. However, since the moment I arrived, I began to have strong urges to go back to the US. No one else there was telling me to leave. I wondered, *God, are You telling me to go back? What will I do when I go back? I can't teach there without certification!*

I had no peace, so after two weeks, I finally said to God, "Okay, I don't want to go back, but I will listen to you. I will go back, but I don't know what I will do!" I quit my job. Although I was supposed to pay for breaking the contract, they let me go without charge. On the way home, I stopped in Australia to visit a friend. While there, I got an email for a teaching position at an academy that did not require teaching certification. I applied, and within a week, I had a job and a place to live! Two months later, everything shut down in China due to Covid!

As I look back at this whole experience, I can see the goodness of the Lord in my life. He kept working with me even in my stubborn moments. In fact, He even bent over backwards for me, always working in my favor. How amazing is our God! Now, though it is not always easy, I give myself and my plans to Him daily because clearly, His plan will always be much better than mine! (AW)

Reader, God is not ashamed of you! Rather, He is *for* YOU. He *wants* to save YOU. He has *provided* a way for YOU. Confess your lack of trust in ***specific*** areas of your life. Ask for an increase in faith and trust in Him! Ask Him to help you be obedient to His calling, not to look at what you don't have but be grateful for His great blessings in your life. _____

_____

_____

Challenge
In a journal, write down all the ways God has provided for you, just this week alone! As you write them down, express your gratitude to Him for always being there when you need Him.

DAY 7

The Big Reveal
God tried to communicate His message of love and redemption to His people through the stories of their forefathers, life experiences, and especially the word of His prophets, but they continuously struggled with unbelief. How could God show in detail His great plan of salvation, the one promised to Adam and Eve, Abraham, Israel, and their descendants, in a language His people would understand? How could He fully reveal to them how He would provide the way to make them enemies with Satan and friends with God, bringing them to a place of peace where they could dwell in His presence?

He gave them a powerful visual: The Sanctuary.

We now begin a study on the sanctuary, brilliantly designed by God Himself to fully disclose to us His plan of salvation. It is relevant to us today, for it shows us the way of Jesus—how He came to us and how He accompanies us on our way back to the Father so that we can dwell together with God for eternity!

Today we will specifically study God's purpose for the sanctuary.

Pray: *Father, as I begin this study of the sanctuary and its purpose, please send the Holy Spirit so I can "behold the beauty*

of the Lord, and inquire in His temple," as David described in ***Psalm 27:4****. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Do you remember where Jesus was when John saw Him in vision? (**Revelation 1:13**) _____
A Jew reading that verse in John's day would know exactly where Jesus was standing—among the candlesticks in the Holy Place of the sanctuary, the center of all Jewish life.

Whether set up or on the move with the Israelites, the tabernacle was always in the center of the people (**Exodus 25:31,37; Numbers 2:17**). How beautiful is this representation of Jesus who is always right in the middle of His people, among His churches, camping in our midst. He just wants to be with us—all of us!

Read **John 1:29**. What other important symbol, part of the sanctuary services, is often used to represent Jesus? _____
_____
Since the first sin in the garden, God had instituted a sacrificial offering on an altar as part of worship to Him. God's first message was: Yes, you have sinned (and no, you can't do one thing to fix this problem!), but I have already thought up a plan to provide a way out for you…and it will involve a sacrificial Lamb.

Read **Revelation 13:8**. When was Jesus slain, according to this text? _____

Like all of God's promises, they are as good as done, though we may not yet see their fulfillment (**2 Cor. 1:20**). The Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world" means the whole plan of salvation was set in place *before* the earth was even created. In spite of God's foreknowledge of sin and all the woe that would ensue, He created us anyway, knowing that His plan to save us, and keep us and the whole universe eternally safe, would mean a huge cost to Himself! And, as we have seen this week, He made it immediately available to everyone, even in Old Testament times.

From the first sin down through time, God has been constantly reminding His people of His promise: *I will* save you from the

enemy! *I will* provide a way out! *I will* transform your hearts. *I will* be faithful even when you're not! *I will* do it all!

Look up the word "sanctuary" and its other name "tabernacle" in the dictionary and a Bible commentary. Write out all the meanings and highlight your favorite definition(s). _____

_____

_____

When God introduced the notion of a sanctuary to Moses, before giving any architectural plans, He gave the purpose for its structure. Read **Exodus 25:8** and write down the reason in ALL CAPS. _____

Wasn't that God's message from the beginning? *You have become friends with the enemy and can no longer be with me in my physical presence. But I'm going to work it out so we can be together again like old times…I just want to BE with you!* The sanctuary is all about God's desire to DWELL with us and how He was going to make it happen.

Read the following verses from the beginning and end of Matthew's gospel, and write out the ultimate fulfillment of His plan:

1:23 _____

28:20 (last line) _____

Reader, think of the import of God's idea! God did not want to simply communicate with us from His throne but wanted to come and be with us where we are, to live with us where we live.

Ask God which verse you should read from A and which from B below (or read them all for an extra blessing). Put your name in the verses, asking God to reveal to you how He wants to "dwell" with you. (For example, Psalm 23:1–The Lord is Michael's shepherd. He shall not want.)

A. Psalm 27:4,5; Jeremiah 31:33; John 14:1-3

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Revelation 7:14-17; Revelation 21:3,4; Revelation 22:1-5

Challenge
Take one verse from the above list that really hits home. Write it on a card, meditate on it, and memorize it. Ask God to prepare your heart so He can dwell more fully with you.

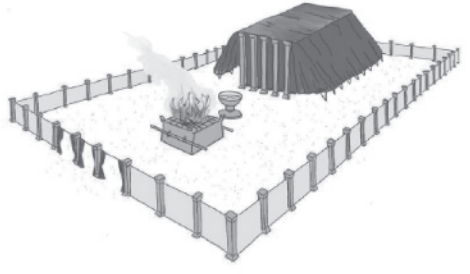
Prayer or Thought Journal

GOD'S WAY REVEALED
WEEK 4
YOUR WAY IS IN THE SANCTUARY

Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary;
Who is so great a God as our God?
Psalm 77:13

DAY 1

What is one thing that you saw your parents do or heard them say over and over that you do or say today?
My older son not only looks like his dad, but his mannerisms, how he expresses himself, the way his brow furrows when he concentrates, and how he shakes his arm to move his watch to his wrist are also just like him.



God recognized that His people had been away from Him for so long that they forgot what He looked like, and so, they didn't act like Him at all! God desired to be with them to show them what He was really like, so they would fall in love with Him and desire to become like Him. So He devised a plan—the sanctuary—where He, our great and awesome Creator, would come down to dwell with His creation.

This week, we will continue to study the sanctuary, God's full disclosure of His plan to save us and take us back to our original standing with Him, so we could all dwell with Him for eternity.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, send me Your Holy Spirit to help unlock the truth about this "wonder of old"—Your way in the Sanctuary. In Jesus' name, Amen (***Psalm 77:11***).*

What kind of structure was the sanctuary? Read **Exodus 26:7; 2 Samuel 7:2,6** _____God didn't ask Moses to

build Him a palace or any other majestic building. From the outside, the tabernacle looked like a humble tent. The outer walls of the whole structure were _____ _____(**Exodus 27:9**) and the inner ones were covered in _____ (**Exodus 26:14**).

Oh, the humility of God! The God who made everything that ever existed wanted to be with His people so badly that He was willing to live like them, in a tent covered in animal skins, surrounded by plain, linen curtains!

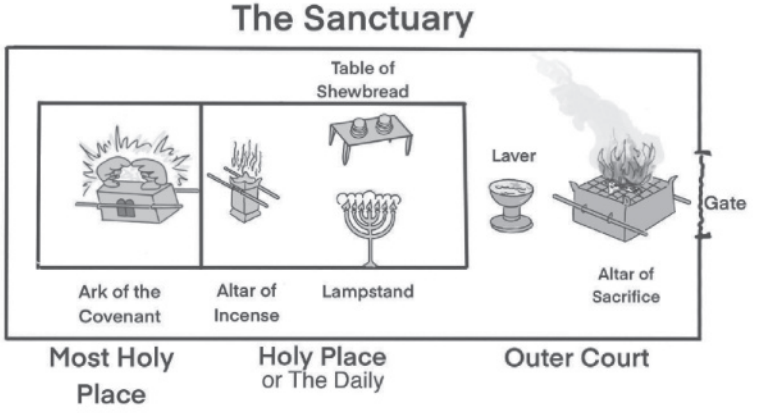
Read **2 Corinthians 5:1**. What is tent synonymous with in the New Testament? _____
Read **Philippians 2:6-7**. When Jesus left His heavenly home, what did He also leave behind? _____
According to the following verses, as a human, what was Jesus subject to?
Luke 2:7 _____
Matthew 21:18 _____
Matthew 4:1_____
John 4:6,7 _____
Matthew 27:50 _____

God knew that in order to reach us, He had to come dwell with us. But He did not come in His divine nature or even as a human king or nobleman; rather, He stooped, leaving His royal robes and crown behind, to become an ordinary, poor human being! Jesus was so desirous of winning us back that He left His "God-body" (whatever that looked like) to dwell in the humble "tent" of our mortal one, coming into the world as we all have to—as a vulnerable baby---being subject to the weaknesses of mankind!

Read **Psalm 113** as a personal prayer, praising and thanking God for His willingness to stoop down to be with you and save you! Commit your life to Him today!

Challenge
Ask God to help you pick one of the passages below, regarding the sanctuary/tabernacle, which would be especially meaningful

for you today. Meditate on it, and journal your thoughts.
Exodus 33:7-11; Psalm 15:1-5; Isaiah 4:4-6; Ezekiel 11:16-20



DAY 2

Hundreds of thousands of pages have been written about the sanctuary, and there are just as many layers of application. It would be virtually impossible to exhaust everything that God has woven into this representation of His plan of salvation. In the next few days, we will do a "whirlwind tour." A step-by-step drawing of an aerial view of the sanctuary will help you understand the compartments and their meaning for us today. Just know that there are "unsearchable riches" and "hidden treasure in secret places," waiting for those who go deeper in this study (**Ephesians 3:8; Isaiah 45:3**).

If you were about to give someone a detailed plan for the construction of a building, where would you begin? Maybe with a general layout of the structure and a list of materials (like the previous diagram)? It may seem counter logic, but before a general overview, God presented one specific piece of furniture—the place where He would actually reside during His time with Israel in the wilderness—a rectangular box overlaid

with gold, the Ark of the Covenant. This piece of furniture was housed in the MOST HOLY PLACE, representing the throne room of God (**Exodus 25:10,11,22**).

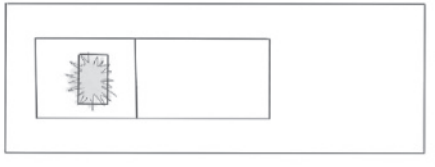
Today we will learn the meaning behind the Ark of the Covenant and how it relates to Jesus' ministry to us.

Pray: *Father in Heaven, today I ask that Your Holy Spirit will illuminate the significance of this beautiful and mysterious ark of the covenant, which was Your dwelling place among men. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

The Ark of the Covenant (or Ark of the Testimony)
Read **Exodus 25:22.** What did God say would happen at the ark? _____

_____

_____



How beautiful to think that God's first line of instruction to the Israelites through Moses, as it was to John and to His New Testament people was to reassure them that HE indeed intended to BE WITH THEM, to live among them, to meet and speak with them! (See **Revelation 1:8** and **Matthew 1:23**),

Let's look at one of many experiences of Israel with the ark of His presence among them. Read **Joshua 3:11-17**. What was God's promise to Israel as they looked forward to entering the promised land? _____

_____

Notice the two main areas of the ark that show Jesus' great work of reconciliation for His people. Go back to **Exodus 25;** read verses **17-21**. What was on top of the ark? _____ _____On top was one of two pieces of furniture in the tabernacle made of solid gold—the mercy seat.

Read Zacharias' prophecy about Jesus in **Luke 1:72**. What would Jesus perform among us? _____
Read **John 3:17**. God did not send His Son to _____ _____ but _____ _____. Jesus is the mercy seat. In His mercy, He chose to lay down His life, so we could be forgiven and made right, so we could stand blameless in the presence of the Most Holy God!

What was attached to the two ends of the mercy seat? _____ (**Exodus 25:19**) What were the angels looking at specifically? _____
Now read **John 20:11,12**. On resurrection morning, what did Mary see when she looked into the empty tomb? _____ _____

For a moment, imagine these angels keeping watch over the true "mercy seat"—the body of Jesus—while He rested in the tomb over Sabbath. He was mangled and bloody, wrapped in linen cloths, and sleeping the sleep of death, but never had He looked so beautiful to them; the angels gazed on the One whose love and mercy toward sinners shone like gold! Who could fathom such Love that would die for sinners—even those who showed no remorse? (See **Romans 5:8**.)

Read **Exodus 25:21**. What was inside the ark? _____
Read **Matthew 5:17.** What did Jesus say He came to do? __ _____ Depending on your version, Jesus said He came to fulfill or to complete the law or to accomplish its purpose.

Where did God say He really wanted His commandments? **Hebrews 8:10** _____ Where was Paul quoting from? _____ (See the margin of your Bible for the reference; otherwise look up **Jeremiah 31:33**.) As the commandments were inside the ark, so were they written on Jesus' heart, and His desire is to write them on ours.

How fitting that God began the building instructions with the ark of the testimony, the piece of furniture that actually described

the person of Jesus who was the very definition of *GOD WITH US*. He was the Word of God who came in the flesh, lived among us, taught us, and worked mighty works for us; then He died for us, lay in the tomb, and resurrected to life again, with a promise that we too would one day be resurrected to dwell with Him forever.

1 Peter 1:12 says that "angels desire to look into" these things! Notice their posture on the ark and imagine them, one at each end of the body of Christ, their eyes staring at the *mercy seat*—Jesus, the incarnate Word of God.

Reader, tell God you want to have that same yearning to contemplate your Savior. Ask Him who "dwells between the cherubim" for a desire to see and understand His mercy and sacrifice for you in a greater way. Ask Him to write His law in your mind and heart, so you can be like Him! _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Meditate on **Psalm 63:1-8**, asking God for the same thirst that David had for God.

DAY 3

Perhaps you have played the memory game where you had a few minutes to look at a picture of a busy place, such as a city street or a classroom, and try to store in your mind as many things as possible from that page. Then you were asked to turn the paper over and write down all the things you remembered from the picture. Usually, it was so cluttered that it was impossible to remember even half of what was on the page. Now imagine walking into a beautiful house that had only a few pieces of furniture. It would be easy to go away and remember each piece, especially if you were told of the special significance of each one.

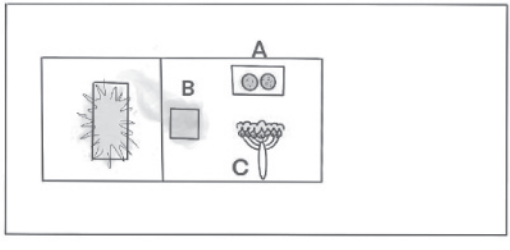
The temple God asked Moses and the children of Israel to build was very simply furnished with only six pieces of furniture housed in three rooms or compartments: the Most Holy Place (which we studied about yesterday) had one piece of

furniture, the Holy Place had three, and the outer court had two. Every detail of the sanctuary layout and furnishings shows us something of God's progressive plan to save and heal us through the ministry of Jesus. The Holy Place (also called the Daily) was an in-between space, separated from the outer court by curtains and from the Most Holy Place by a veil.

Today with Bible in hand, let's get a quick overview of the furnishings in the Holy Place and how they represent Jesus and His ministry to us and for us in this great plan of salvation.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, as I learn of Your Way in the furnishings of the Holy Place, open my eyes to see how You are the Provider of all things that sustain life, whether food, oxygen, or light. Thank you, Lord, that you abundantly supply all my need "according to Your riches in glory by Christ Jesus." In His name I pray, Amen* (**Philippians 4:19**).

A. The Table of Shewbread



On the north side of the Holy Place was a small wooden table, overlaid with gold (**Exodus 25:23,24; 40:22**). Read **Leviticus 24:5-9**. What was put on top of the table? _____ In what arrangement? _____ When was this done? _____

Now turn to **John 6:32-35**. What did Jesus call Himself and what is His promise? (**35**) _____
To what did Jesus compare Himself? (vv. **32, 33**) _____
_____ This manna, or bread from heaven, daily sustained Israel for 40 years while they wandered in the wilderness (See **Exodus 16:14,15**). Read **John 6:56-58.** What radical statement did Jesus make about that manna? _____

_____ What else did Jesus liken to bread? **Matthew 4:4** _____ And what does John call Jesus? **John 1:1,14** _____

Notice the connection made in the above verses between Jesus and the bread of life and the Word of God. These three are one. The sustaining manna which fed the Israelites in the wilderness was a symbol of Jesus who, if "ingested," would sustain us. And He embodied the complete Word of God in His person on earth. And now in His physical absence, through the help of His written Word, God provides a way to speak to us. Oh how He wants us to _____ (**Psalm 34:8**)[1] (See Endnotes for more details.)

B. The Altar of Incense

This golden, square-like structure was placed before the veil across from the ark. (See diagram on page 63.)
Read **Exodus 30:7,8**. What happens there? _____

_____

What does the burning of incense represent? **Revelation 5:8**

_____

God asked the priests to burn this sweet-smelling incense twice a day, in the morning and evening, and to leave it burning *perpetually*. What does that word in italics mean? _____

_____

What could be represented by the continuously burning incense on this altar? See **1 Thess. 5:17**. How does Paul say we should pray? _____
Read Jesus' words in **Luke 11:5-13**. How does God want us to pray? _____

How did Jesus pray? **Luke 6:12; Mark 1:35** _____

_____

How else are we called to pray? **John 16:23,24** _____

_____

Notice that the altar of incense was strategically placed: right in front of the veil separating the Holy and Most Holy places.

As the incense rose up continuously over the veil and into the Most Holy Place, so God has given us prayer as a way for us to communicate with Him anytime and anywhere! Jesus is the ladder, upon whom angels ascend with our requests and descend with our answers; his sacrifice ratifies all the promises that He has made to us, so we can confidently pray in His name, believing we will receive what we ask for (**John 1:51; 14:13,14; 16:23**).

C. The Lampstand

This seven-branched lampstand was made of one hammered piece of pure gold. It was placed on the south side of the Holy Place, and its lamps were tended by the high priest (**Exodus 25:31-32; 40:24).**

Read **Exodus 27:20**. How often was the light to burn? _____
Who does the light represent? **John 8:12**_____
As the lamp continuously burned, so Jesus' light will never stop shining on mankind, drawing people "out of darkness into _____
_____ **1 Peter 2:9**.

Who else does the lamp represent? **Revelation 1:20; Matthew 5:14-16** _____

Read **Isaiah 60:1-3**. In what condition is the world? _____
What hope is there for the world, according to these verses?
_____

Through Jesus, this scripture has been fulfilled. He is the light that has come and risen upon us—to make us lights to others, including "Gentiles" and kings. Remember in Revelation, we see Jesus standing among the candlesticks—His churches. Jesus is the priest in our sanctuary tending our lamps so they never go out, and thus, we can continuously shine for Him in this dark world.

The Holy Place echoes Abraham's "gospel"—*GOD WILL PROVIDE*. Jesus—He is our bread, our sustenance; our means of communication with heaven, our strong tower to run to, our emotional sounding board who hears our desperate prayers, and our light in darkness. He is Provider of all things we need in order to live and thrive spiritually and yes, the Provider of all our

good works! As David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want," that is: I lack nothing! (**Psalm 23:1**)

The Holy Place is a little sanctuary in the sanctuary—the furnishings show how we can safely dwell in the secret place of the Most High and under the shadow of the Almighty (**Psalm 91:1**).

Reader, would you like to dwell in the presence of the all-sufficient One—through prayer and Bible reading, allowing Him to diffuse light from His presence into your soul, so you can shine out to others? If so, tell Him now your very desire and ask Him to help you fulfill your promises to Him. _____

_____

_____

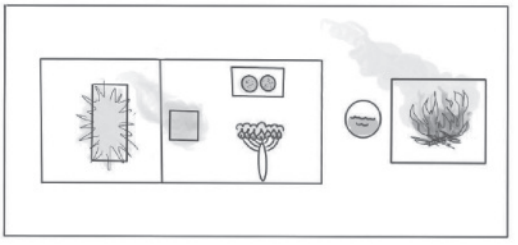
Challenge
Pray through and meditate on **Psalm 91**, especially verses **9-16**.

DAY 4
Have you ever opened a beautifully wrapped gift and been disappointed with the contents? On the other hand, have you ever put your hand in the pockets of an old piece of clothing and, to your pleasant surprise, found cash inside? Like a treasure found in an old pocket, the golden walls and furnishings of the Holy and Most Holy place were enclosed in a structure surrounded by humble curtains made of plain, white linen, nothing to naturally catch the eye. This was the outer court, also called the courtyard.

Today we will examine the furnishings in the outer court and how they represented God's work for us on earth.

Pray: *Dear Father, thank You for sending Your Son to take my place on the altar. Lord, may I see and understand in a greater way the significance of Your sacrifice for me. In the name of Jesus, the Lamb of God, Amen.*

The Altar of Burnt Offering
The largest piece of furniture in the sanctuary, the altar, was overlaid with bronze (**Exodus 27:1,2**). Read **Exodus 29:38,39.** What happened daily on that altar? _____



Afterwards, the priests went into the Holy Place and sprinkled the blood on the veil which separated the Holy from the Most Holy Place. This ritual constantly reminded Israel of the grievousness of sin, such that it required the sacrifice of an innocent victim.

Describe what the sacrifice represented. **John 1:29; Isaiah 53:5,7** _____

When was the first offering of a lamb on the altar? **Genesis 3:21** _____

Remember that immediately after sin entered the world, *before* Adam and Eve were asked to leave the garden, God sacrificed the first animal to provide a covering for His wayward children. Thus, He established the idea that a blameless victim, the coming Messiah, would offer Himself as payment for our penalty in order to provide a garment to amply cover our guilt and shame.

The Bronze Laver

The laver was made from bronze mirrors (**Exodus 38:8**). Read **Exodus 30:19.** What was its purpose? _____

_____

Who and what does the laver represent?

Titus 3:4-6 _____

John 3:5 _____

Read **Isaiah 55:1**. What do we need to bring with us when we come to this "water" for cleansing?_____

The best part is that everything God promises us is absolutely free! We just have to come and drink!

Knowing it's a place of daily sacrifice and open to the general Jewish public to worship, close your eyes and imagine the sights, sounds, and smells of the outer court of the sanctuary. Write down some of your thoughts:

What do you see happening there? _____

_____

What kinds of sounds do you hear? _____

_____

What smells are in the court? _____

_____

In your thoughts, you may have seen and heard: people praying aloud or talking between each other; mothers telling their children not to run in the sanctuary; sacrificial animals in a gated enclosure, bleating and mooing. You saw wood being placed and animals being hoisted onto the altar. Maybe you witnessed a sacrifice. Perhaps the acrid smell of blood and burning flesh mingled with incense filled the air, and smoke from the fire irritated your eyes. And in the center of it all, your attention is drawn to the sacrifice in the fire, burning on the altar… It was a busy, noisy, smelly place!

Now meditate on this: Where does God dwell in the sanctuary? Only in the Most Holy, as the Shekinah Glory, hovering over the mercy seat, surrounded by gold, angels, and peace? Oh no! We have seen, through the ministry of the Holy Place, that He is also our bread, breath, and light—our very sustenance! But even more meaningful is that He appears in the messy areas of our lives—in our noisy, smelly, unsightly times.

As the outer court was enclosed in simple, white linen, so our Savior came as an ordinary, poor man, and He wore the humble garb made of plain, white linen, nothing to naturally catch our eye. He dwelt among us and then voluntarily climbed on the altar of the cross to become the all-sufficient sacrifice. Truly, He is God with us from the beginning to the end of our experience; truly He is WITH us no matter where we are.

Reader, meditate on **Psalm 48:8-10**. How do you respond to Jesus who is with you and for you, who wants to be involved in every part of your experience, no matter how messy or bad it gets?_____

_____

_____

Testimony

"Take it to the Cross; bring it to the Sanctuary." This phrase is on a sticky note in my prayer journal.

One year before, I was in prayer about a situation in my life that was plaguing me. As I got on my knees and prayed, this phrase resonated in my mind for the first time. I didn't really understand what it meant, but afterwards, God reminded me of Asaph and His situation, which He described in **Psalm 73**. As he was complaining about his lot and reflecting on the triumph of his enemies, he came to a sudden conclusion: "When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me—until I went into the sanctuary of God. Then I understood their end" (verse **16,17**). It was in the sanctuary that he received a response to his worries, a solution to his problems.

I began to understand what the Holy Spirit meant to teach me by this phrase: It is in the sanctuary where I can find every answer, including the answer to the situation I had been worrying about. Today I love to study the sanctuary, the symbol of Jesus and His ministry for us, for I know therein God has an answer to every question in my life. (AP)

Challenge
Write down **Psalm 48:9** on a card, and meditate on it; memorize it. Today, ask God to show you His lovingkindness in His temple today.

DAY 5

Imagine being lost in a tropical forest. Thick, woody vines and trees barely allow sunlight to reach the ground, and you cannot see beyond the dense canopies of vegetation that surround you. You are stuck with no way out.

Now imagine you hear a hacking sound and see in the distance the shaking of leaves and limbs as well as the forming of a small clearing. This chopping noise comes closer, and you realize that someone is making his way in the forest toward you. Then you hear him calling out to you, telling you he's coming to save you. Sure enough, a man with a machete, sweaty and bloody from His grueling journey through the forest, arrives where you wait anxiously, and he says, "I've cleared the way for you to get out of this mess! Follow me!" Then he turns around and starts walking back where he came from.

What would you do? Would you trust him and follow or decide to remain in the forest and try to find your own way out? Hopefully, you would opt to trust the man with the machete and follow him out of the mess you are in. This is a picture of our situation on planet earth; the man with the machete is Jesus.

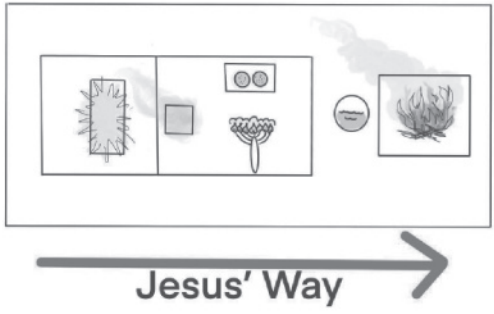
Today we will see in the sanctuary how Jesus came from heaven to clear the way, making plain the path to heaven for you and me.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, You tell us in* ***Psalm 77:13*** *that "Your way is in the sanctuary." May Your Holy Spirit help me to see clearly the truth about Your way. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

We have already seen, through the symbolism of the pieces of furniture in the three compartments, God's elaborate plan to save us through Jesus. Today we will look at another layer of truth in the sanctuary: the specific *way* Jesus took from heaven to earth, in order to clear the path for us to follow Him back. In **John 14:6,** Jesus says He is the_____, the _____, and the _____. Amen! He is the Way that leads us to salvation and total restoration, so we could once again be friends with God and dwell in His presence!

Read **Luke 15:1-7**, asking God to help you see this passage with new eyes.
What is the shepherd's attitude toward his one, little lost sheep? _____
What does he do for it? _____
Does he reprimand or punish it? _____
Does the parable speak of failure? If not, what? _____
Who are we in the story? _____
Who is the shepherd? _____

The bigger picture: We are lost sheep, entangled in a dense thicket, unable to find our way out on our own. But through His great mercy, Jesus left the "99" unfallen worlds to go out into the wilderness of earth to seek and save us because we could not come to Him; in fact, in our brokenness, we could not even ***see*** Him. Not only is God's way ***for*** us, but His *way* ***to*** us is also in the sanctuary.



From the Most Holy to the Holy Place
Remember the ladder in Jacob's dream and Jesus' interpretation in **John 1:51**? Jesus voluntarily became the ladder between heaven and earth, that is the one and only Mediator between God and man. Read **John 6:33**. Where did Jesus say He came from? _____Read **Philippians 2:6**. What was Jesus' status in heaven? _____

In this sanctuary "visual," we see the beauty of Jesus' condescension. Though He was equal with the Shekinah Glory, His Father, and they dwelt together in the Most Holy, He lay aside His kingly robes and His godly form, and traversed the veil. What did He become and by whose power? **Matthew 1:18** _____

Willing to live in a lowly human "tent," the Spirit transformed Him into a human embryo in the womb of Mary. What wondrous love is this—that God "emptied Himself," making "Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of" us mortal humans, with all our physical and mental limitations and weaknesses (**Philippians 2:7**).

What do we know of Jesus' early life until He begins His ministry at age 30? Make a list from **Luke 2**, verses:
7 _____
21 _____
22 _____
40 _____
41-49 _____
52 _____
What work did he do while at home? **Mark 6:3** _____
What do we know about His family? **Matthew 13:55,56**
_____

When did He fully know His mission? **Luke 2:42,49** _____
When did He actually begin His ministry? **Luke 3:23** _____

We know precious little about His early life. In human eyes, it seemed like a lot of wasted time—30 years at home with His family, working in His earthly father's business in the infamous city of Nazareth. Why did He wait so long before starting His ministry?

Look at the diagram of the sanctuary on the previous page. When Jesus left the Most Holy and traversed the veil, what place did He go to (symbolically) in the sanctuary? _____
Read **Exodus 30:7,8**. Who was allowed in that place? _____
How often were the services done there? _____

The Holy Place was enclosed by curtains and only visited by the priests who ministered there, sprinkling the blood from the morning and evening sacrifice on the inner veil before the Most Holy, tending to the lamps and incense, making sure the fires did not go out, replacing the bread weekly (**Leviticus 4:5-7; 24:3,4; 24:5-9**). It was a quiet, protected place, characterized by soft lights and calm, reflective serving. Isn't this a beautiful description of what a home should be?

Like the Most Holy, the Holy Place was not exposed to everyone's view. It was a secret place. What did Jesus say about the role of the *secret place* that may tell us something about His early life in the "secret place" of His earthly home?
Matthew 6:2-4 _____
Matthew 6:5,6 _____
Matthew 6:17,18 _____

When Jesus entered His ministry, what were some of the habits recorded in Scripture that He must have formed in His earlier years?
Mark 1:35 _____
Luke 4:4,8,12 _____
Luke 4:14,15,40 _____
Luke 4:16-20_____

While He was working with His earthly father in the carpenter

shop, He was also following the way of His Father in the sanctuary:

- *daily* eating the words of His Father (symbolized by the shewbread). His ability to quote Scripture and to find Isaiah's words in the scroll—in a day when there were no chapter or verse markers—shows His familiarity with the Word;
- *daily* communing with His Father in prayer (altar of incense); and of course,
- *daily* letting His light shine in His world of Nazareth (lampstand).

Reader, do you desire to dwell in God's secret place, under His shadow and in His light? Tell Him so. _____

_____

Challenge
Today, review and mediate on **Psalm 27**. Ask God to hide you in His secret place today.

DAY 6
Today we will study Jesus' journey from the Holy Place to the Outer Court.

Pray: *Lord, You stepped down and humbled Yourself to become a man and go "even to the death of the cross." Help me appreciate Your great grace towards me today. In Your name, I pray, Amen* (**Philippians 2:8**).

At 30, Jesus stepped into the outer court, the place of His ministry among men.
Look at the sanctuary diagram. What is the next piece of furniture? _____
Read **Luke 3:21,22**. What marked the beginning of His ministry? _____ What happened when Jesus came up out of the water? _____

_____
Give a brief overview of Jesus' ministry from **Mark 1:12-39**.

_____

_____

_____

Baptized not only by water but also by the Holy Spirit, Jesus went about teaching, preaching, calling disciples, healing people, casting out demons…yet He always spent long hours with His Father (see verse **35**).

The final piece of furniture is _____
Read **Philippians 2:8** and **John 3:16**. As the sacrificial Lamb, Jesus _____ so that _____believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

Read **Matthew 27:51**. At His death, what happened to the veil which separated the Most Holy from the Holy Place in the temple? _____ What do you think that symbolized? _____
Jesus' death was the final hack through the dense foliage of our sins that separated us from the Father. Our Savior totally cleared the way for us to the Father and heaven, though He came out bleeding, bruised, and broken.

But what happened three days later? (See **Luke 24:5-7**) _____
_____

Read **Revelation 1:18**. How does Jesus describe Himself now?
_____
Praise God! Our Saviour lives forevermore! He has the keys to the grave and death, which is a promise to raise us when He comes back to live with Him forevermore! (See **1 Thessalonians 4:16.**)

Jesus has gone before us. He fulfilled that original promise to Adam and Eve, making the way possible for us to be enemies with Satan and friends with God forever (**Genesis 3:15**). He came down and met us on our level and saved us out of the wilderness of sin where we were trapped.

And now, what does He bid us do? Read **Luke 9:23.** Note that there are three parts to His calling: to_____, to _____, and to _____. He calls us to *join Him daily* in denying ourselves, in suffering with Him, and in following Him!

Testimony
I attended a prayer meeting where the Pastor shared many stories about a God who still lives and who is ready to reveal Himself to those who seek after Him. While the testimonies were powerful, what most impressed me was the joy on the Pastor's countenance and his melodious tone of voice as he was speaking about Jesus as his Saviour and Lord—something I had never seen before.

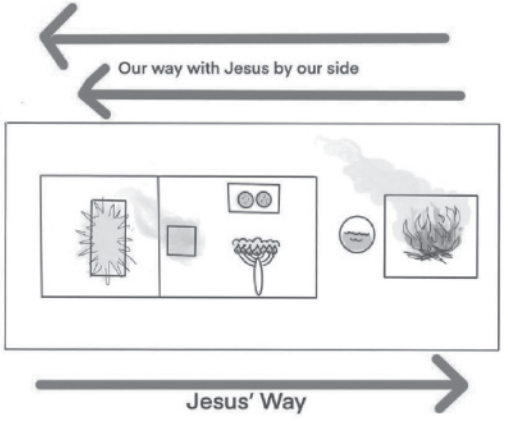
I left that meeting and prayed: *Lord, I want what he has…I want that relationship with You that will also bring me this joy that I see on his face, I want to be able to share You with others and speak from personal experience as this Pastor does.* Looking back, I see how, from that moment, God had planted a true desire for Him in my heart.

One of the first things God revealed to me was that this joy came through daily, meaningful time spent with Him in the morning in His Word and prayer. **Mark 1:35** says Jesus got up "very early in the morning, while it was still dark." God called me to surrender my wake-up time to Him, so I started to pray before bedtime: *Lord, please send Your angels to wake me up when You think we should meet. Make sure that I am well rested and with a heart full of joy to meet You in the morning.*

Even though I prayed this prayer every night, I still used my alarm, thinking to myself: *just in case I need some extra help in the morning.* God remained faithful to my prayer and always woke me up before my alarm rang. Although it was not always easy to get up, I started a wonderful journey with Jesus. He revealed Himself to me in new ways; my prayers became more fervent; my understanding of God's will in my life clearer. Eventually, I felt impressed to stop setting my alarm. I can testify that I have never been late to work, to catch an early bus, or to attend a meeting. He has always been faithful!

But the point is not the time I get up or whether I set an alarm or not. In the past two years, as I have spent more and more time with Jesus, I feel increasingly comfortable coming to Him as I am in any situation, to open my heart to Him as a friend.

He has inspired me to allow Him to uproot selfishness, pride, apathy, judgmental thoughts, bitterness, and unforgiveness from my heart. This journey has revealed to me that Jesus is longing to meet with me every day, and my longing for Him has also grown. My growing desire is to follow Him wherever He leads, every moment of the day. And this experience with Jesus has given me the joy that I had prayed for! (AL)



Reader, have you also had an increasing desire to come closer to Jesus, the man with the machete who calls you to *follow* Him? *Follow* is Jesus' promise to you that you will never be alone! *Follow* is His promise to accompany you through the whole sanctuary experience, guiding you, teaching you, holding your hand in hard times, sitting with you when you can't move forward, drying your tears, rejoicing with you in victorious times. He will *provide* for you every step of the way, *from beginning to end.* All you have to do is "pick up your cross and follow" Him through the tabernacle, and He will safely lead you home to His Father's house!

Challenge

Memorize and meditate on **Luke 9:23** today and this coming week.. Tell Jesus that you want to follow His call to follow Him all the way through the sanctuary experience.

DAY 7

As a child, when teams were being picked for a game or sport, do you remember feeling very relieved when you were chosen? Were you ever the last to be chosen, at a point when there was no other person to choose from? The good news is that God always chooses you because He wants to, not because He has to!

Today we will explore what it means to be a disciple who follows Jesus.

Pray: *Dear Father, According to* ***Revelation 14:4****, the last-day people will "follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Fill me with Your Holy Spirit to help me comprehend what it truly means to follow Jesus. In His name, Amen.*

Read **Matthew 4:18-20**. Can you see Jesus walking in the sand by the seashore, maybe barefoot, passing by boat after boat coming in with their catch? He pauses at Peter and Andrew's boat, gives an invitation, and continues on His way down the beach. When Jesus called these brothers, He clearly and simply gave them two components to becoming His disciples. What were they? _____& _____ What qualifications did Jesus tell them they had to have to follow Him? _____ What was Peter and Andrew's response? _____

How about you? Do you long to live every day as a disciple of Jesus Christ—to *follow* Him and allow Him to make you a fisher of men? Perhaps you wonder if you are currently living every day as a disciple of Jesus. You may be thinking, "So His way is in the sanctuary…but where do I begin?" or even perhaps: "Frankly, I don't have a great, maybe not even a good relationship with God. There are even places in my life I would rather be than with God. But I want to have that desire." Reader, God loves it when you are open and honest and tell Him how you *really* feel; He knows it already, and He has an answer to your prayer!

Let's first look at what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Pray as you look up the following Bible passages to see what discoveries the Holy Spirit gives you on what exactly it means to be a disciple of Jesus:

Matthew 4:18-22 _____

John 8:31,32 _____

John 13:35 _____

John 15:7,8 _____

Matthew 16:24 _____

Matthew 28:19,20 _____

Acts 1:4,5,8 _____

Before we talk about how to become a disciple of Jesus, we invite you to prayerfully take the following survey. This is only between you and God, so you can be totally honest about your answers. You need only circle **yes** or **no**:

1. Are you thirsty for something more with Jesus than what you currently have? **Yes No**
2. Do you have peace about your salvation by grace through faith? **Yes No**
3. Do you surrender daily to Jesus as Lord of all you are and all you have, including your attitude and electronics? **Yes No**
4. Do you ask for and receive by faith a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit daily? **Yes No**
5. Do you have daily, meaningful, unrushed time alone with God in His written Word? **Yes No**
6. Do you have daily, meaningful, unrushed time in prayer? **Yes No**
7. Do you love your family sacrificially? **Yes No**
8. When you are home, do you have daily family worship with your spouse and/or children? **Yes No**
9. Are you free from everything that would make you a slave (bitterness, addictions, electronics, porn, appetite, etc.)? **Yes No**
10. Are you presently discipling someone outside your church family to trust, follow, and share Jesus? **Yes No**

Although the results may be eye-opening and sobering, this survey is not meant to condemn or discourage but rather, to help you pinpoint areas where you need and would like Holy Spirit transformation. Pray right now and ask God what He wants to tell you about the results of this survey. Ask Him which one, in particular, needs your focus right now.

_____

_____

_____

Challenge

1. Claim **Philippians 4:13**, asking Him to prepare your heart to receive and live the principles of living *daily* as a disciple of Jesus as You follow Him, step by step, in His way in the sanctuary.

2. Continue to memorize **Luke 9:23** this week. Ask God to make you willing to pick up your cross daily and follow Him.

Prayer or Thought Journal

GOD'S WAY TO *BE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 5
PRINCIPLE 1: COME TO JESUS AS YOU ARE

Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths,
where the good way is, and walk in it.
Then you will find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

DAY 1

What do you do to prepare for visitors coming to your house?

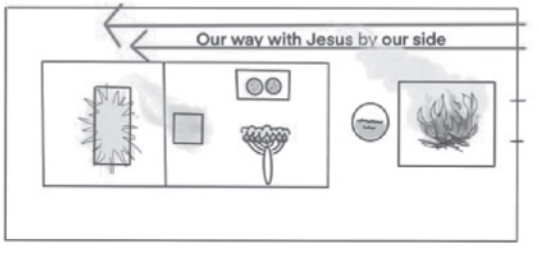
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Do you rest much before their arrival? _____

Now what if Jesus were coming to your home? Do you sometimes feel like you need to be in a certain condition before you open your door to spend time with Him? Maybe you think you must be positive, happy, responsible, or all cleaned up spiritually and mentally.

This week, we will explore what it means to come to Jesus just as we are, without changing anything first.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, please send the Holy Spirit to prepare my heart as I study Your Word to understand, receive, and live the principles of living daily as a disciple of Jesus. I want to follow you, step by step, in Your way in the sanctuary. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Psalm 77:13**).



Take a look at the sanctuary diagram. How big is the altar of sacrifice in comparison to the other pieces of sanctuary furniture?

_____

What compartment is it in? _____ The altar held the most prominent place in the outer court, the compartment accessible to all believers, and was the center of worship for the Jew. The

fire constantly burned brightly, making it the center of attention.

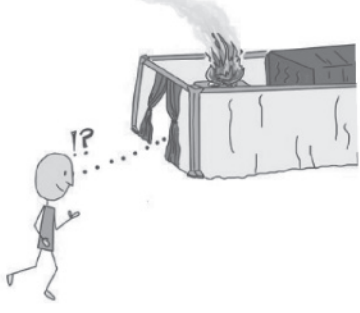
As the altar was to the Jew, so the cross is to the Christian—the most prominent symbol of Christ's sacrifice for us. What did Jesus say about the effect of His cross? **John 12:32** _____

_____

Who did Jesus say really draws us to Him? **John 6:44** _____

_____

As in the illustration, though you may have walked by the "sanctuary" many times, this time you notice the bright, high fire from the sacrifice—Jesus—and want to know more about this God who gave His life for you. That is the Father drawing you, making you curious and desirous to know more about Him. Truly, He is in charge of our salvation from beginning to end.



Look again at the sanctuary diagram. What is between the sanctuary gate and the altar? _____Because there is absolutely nothing for us to do or become before approaching the altar. According to Jesus' own words in **Matthew 11:28**, when do we come to Him? _____

And what does He promise us when we do come to Him?

_____

According to Jesus, what qualifies us to come to Him? **Luke 5:30-32** _____

Have you ever gone to the doctor when you are well? Or tried to fix yourself up to appear better before walking into his or her office? That sounds ridiculous to us, but we forget that Jesus is a physician. What sickness does He specialize in, according to **Luke 5:32**? _____He wants us to come, recognizing our need, so He can take care of our problem. Read **John 6:37**. He says, *Those who come to Me, I will* _____

_____.

Testimony

When I was a teenager, I had an accident while racing on horseback with my friend. As my horse lunged forward across a rough stretch of field, I lost my grip and slipped under her pounding hooves. She trampled my right leg very badly. My friend took me home where I tried to take care of my leg while my parents were out of town for the day. Upon return, my mother noticed that my foot was swollen and had a strange color. She immediately took me to the doctor. He examined my leg and foot and asked me seriously: "Son, do you want to keep your foot?" "Yes, sir!" I replied. "Then go immediately to the hospital," he ordered, "so they can work to save your foot before it has to be amputated!" I am so thankful for my doctor who saw me just as I was, but I'm just as thankful that he did not leave me that way. I still have the ability to use that leg and foot today. (DM)

Thank God for doctors who take us as we are. Thank God for Jesus, our Great Physician, who does the same. Jesus does not say to come to Him when we have our life in order before He will accept us! He says, "Come as you are!" This is not a one-time invitation—oh, no! He invites us to come just as we are to His altar *daily*, even *moment by moment*, no matter how we are feeling.

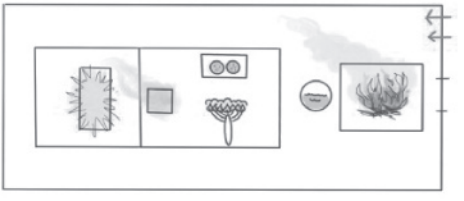


Reader, Jesus says,
"Come to Me when you are sick and wonder why I don't intervene.
Come to Me when you are exhausted and don't feel like caring about anything or anybody, when you have sinned against Me or people and feel too ashamed to approach Me—come to Me anyway—even if it's the tenth time you fall today!
Come when you feel discouraged and alone.
Come to Me when darkness presses around you and you feel overwhelmed with depression.
Come to me when you are victorious and happy and all is going well.

Come to Me when you are angry that I did not show up or did not protect you and when your requests seem to be met with silence.
Just come! I will never turn you away!"

What are you dealing with right now that may be holding you back from coming to Jesus? Reread **Matthew 11:28**, and ask Jesus to help you believe in His love for you, to believe that He wants you to come as you are, no matter what condition you are in spiritually, so He can give you rest! It just takes a baby step—come to Him now *without changing anything first.*

Challenge
Every moment today, practice coming to Jesus as you are—happy, sad, worried, peaceful, defeated, or victorious.



DAY 2

When I was young, a friend and I wrote unflattering names on a school wall about a teacher we didn't like. We thought no one would find out. Our consciences got the better of us, and we decided to tell the teacher what we had done. Imagine our surprise when he said that he knew we had done it all along. He had not approached us, but rather waited till repentance came to our hearts. There were consequences, but he treated us as though we had done nothing...and he actually became one of our favorite teachers.

Maybe you have also had an experience where someone extended to you unwarranted grace—which would be especially impactful if you had a skewed view of what that person was like. Sometimes we don't come to Jesus because we are worried that He won't accept us. Maybe we feel we have gone too far. Perhaps we feel like we have fallen so badly that we have to do all kinds of acrobatics in order to have assurance of His acceptance again.

Today we will continue to explore Jesus' attitude of grace toward us sinners when we come to Him just as we are.

Pray: *Dear Lord, today I am asking that Your Holy Spirit impress deep into my heart that I can come to Jesus anytime, just as I am. Thank You, Lord, that I am "accepted in the Beloved." In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Ephesians 1:6**).

Do you feel assured of your salvation? Do you have peace about your salvation by grace through faith? If you do not, you are in the same space as the lost son in the parable of **Luke 15:11-24**. As you read it, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see it in a whole new way.

In one word, describe what the son did with his time and money. _____ What makes the son decide to go home? _____
What speech does he prepare to say to his father? _____
_____

Now describe the father:
What does he do when he sees from afar his son coming home? _____
How does he greet his son? (Remember where his son is coming from!) _____
How does the father respond to his son's prepared speech about becoming a servant? _____
Does the father ask him to take a shower before putting the robe, ring, and sandals on him? _____ What else does the father do for him? _____
Does the son deserve one iota of the treatment he is receiving from his father? _____
Complete this sentence based on the truth in this parable: Once a son, _____ a son! Once a daughter, _____ a daughter!

Reader, you may feel like you are (daily!) returning to the pig stye or standing in the servant's rather than the son's or daughter's role? But like the father in the story, our Father in heaven wants you to be assured that you are ALWAYS His child.

Today, we will begin a short study of seven simple steps to reassurance of God's great love and mercy toward us.

Many of these verses may be familiar, but we again invite you to pray before you begin for the Master to touch your heart, as you study anew how to be completely assured of your salvation.

Read **Romans 5:8** and **8:38,39**. What do these scriptures declare that brings home the truth about the good father in the parable of **Luke 15**? _____

_____

Step #1 — I can be sure that _____loves _____ and that _____ can separate _____ from His love (not even my sin)!

He not only declares His love to you but has also demonstrated His love to you! While you were yet a sinner, He made provision for you. Though you may be a prodigal, as soon as you come to Him, the Father reassures you that you are indeed His child. You are *immediately* accepted by Him.

Come to Jesus as you are, and when you do, you also come to God the Father who gives you your salvation in Jesus! He does not disown you and put you in the servant's quarters when you sin, any more than a father disowns a son who comes in dirty from playing outside in the dirt. When you come to Him (again and again), He cleans you up (again and again).

Testimony
I was suffering from severe depression and feelings of guilt. At one point, I spent almost two weeks in a residential treatment for depression and anxiety recovery, and I had a divine encounter with God and rededicated my life through baptism.

However, after I returned home, I came face to face with an identity compromise. This threw me into a panic and a downward spiral. I kept praying that God's name would be glorified through the trial. Every sin I had ever committed was thrown in my face, telling me I was totally unworthy. I became very afraid and pleaded that God would take away the trial. I tried to look to Jesus and imagine the guilt He carried to the cross. How He must have pleaded with His Father not to leave Him and not make Him face the cross! How painful it must have been for Him to know it would leave Him vulnerable to the enemy! What anguish of heart!

In the midst of my fear and anxiety, Jesus said, *My daughter, I am crying with you and have been ever since you began to suffer depression and anxiety. I understand your need better than you do. I am pleading for you before the Father. You are worth every bit of agony I felt. I endured it for you.* I realized for the first time God's recognition of my worth.

A week later, I was reminded of a grievous sin I had committed and was overcome by shame and remorse. I was out walking, praying, and crying out to God for forgiveness. The enemy wanted me to believe that the shame would separate me from God. Yet, Jesus through the Holy Spirit said, *I took your shame to the cross with Me, along with the remorse.* I realized that Jesus recognized my (and every other human's) worth by taking my sin, shame, and remorse though it caused Him so much pain that He died of a broken heart. I have never felt so valued. Truly, worthy, worthy is the Lamb who was slain! He endured it all without a word. He even *chose* the abuse so I could spend eternity with Him. (SS)

Pray: *Dear Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. We praise You that absolutely nothing can ever separate us from Your great love. You even endured the cross, despising the shame, so You could have the joy of including us in Your heavenly family for eternity. Oh Lord, we are forever grateful and indebted to You. We pray this in the name of Jesus, the slain Lamb who alone is worthy, Amen.*

Challenge
Today, moment by moment, continue coming to Jesus just as you are. Thank Him that nothing can separate you from His love.

DAY 3

Yesterday, we saw the great love of a father for his son that never changed. Do you remember the prodigal son's attitude when he left home and the shift in attitude he had when he decided to return? He went from an attitude of entitlement to an attitude of humility. How do Jesus' words in **Matthew 23:12** relate to this story? _____
How beautiful God is! When we realize how sinful and little we

are before God, He does not rub it in. In fact, it is at that point that He reminds us that we have an exalted position as His child!

Today we will explore steps 2 to 7 in our study of how to be reassured of our salvation.

Pray: *Lord, open my heart! "Teach me, for You are the God of my salvation. On You I wait all the day!" In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Psalm 25:5**).

Read **Romans 3:23**. What problem do we all have? _____
Romans 6:23 (first part) What is the result of our sin? _____
Step #2 — I can be sure that I am a _____
in need of a _____

Read **Romans 6:23** (last part). What does God offer you? ____
_____

Step #3–I can be sure that salvation is God's free _____
to _____.

Read **John 3:16**. How does the gift become yours? _____
Step #4 — I can be sure that Jesus is my _____
when I _____ in Him.

Read **Revelation 3:20**. What is your answer to Jesus' request?
_____
_____

Imagine someone knocking constantly at your door, and you keep making excuses for why you don't want to open it. "Wait! I still have a few corners to clean up. Dinner isn't finished yet." Often, we want to let Jesus in when it's all cleaned up and ready to go. We want to impress Him with our great home-cooked meal.

But remember that Jesus doesn't want you to clean up or serve Him a three-course meal. He wants to come in and do the cleaning for you. He wants to sit at your table when all you have is a glass of water and a little bit of bean soup. In fact, He wants to bring you the meal! He will transform every room of your house if you allow Him.

Step #5 — I can be sure that Jesus wants to make His _____ in my _____ by faith.

Read **1 John 1:9**. What does Jesus do immediately when you confess your sins? He _____ me and He _____ _____ me from _____ unrighteousness.
Step #6 — I can be sure that Jesus totally _____ my heart.

Read **1 John 5:13**. What does this verse tell you that you can know for sure? _____
Step #7 — I can be sure that Jesus gives me _____

Our Father God is the Giver of all good _____ (**James 1:17**). These endless gifts include salvation, eternal life, a new heart, _____ (**John 14:27**), and _____ (**1 Peter 1:8b**).

Read **Revelation 3:20** again and invite Jesus to come into your heart to be your Savior. Are you ready to come as you are and trust your life with Jesus as your Savior? If so, pray the following:

Dear Father in Heaven,
Thank You for Your faithful love to me no matter what my condition. You are the Giver of the gift of salvation. I am a sinner in need of Jesus as my Savior. I thank You for sending Jesus to die so I can have eternal life and be covered by His perfect righteousness. I choose to believe that this gift of salvation and righteousness is mine now. I ask Your Son Jesus to come into my heart by faith and be my Friend, Savior, and Lord. I confess my sins and claim His forgiveness and cleansing from all of my unrighteousness. Thank you that I can be sure about my eternal life with Jesus my Savior. In His name, Amen.

Challenge
Today, practice coming to Jesus as you are at every and any moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done. Be assured of your salvation in Jesus, which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.

DAY 4

Can you remember moments when you told someone for the "umpteenth" time to do something, and they still didn't do as they were told? (If you have children, you will know what I mean.) Would you admit that sometimes you have to be told several times before you "get" a concept or obey an order from a person of authority? Humans are often slow to do what they are told, even when they know what is right and good for them. Jesus' disciples did not always follow His biddings, and this is especially evident in the life of Peter. However, Jesus never gave up on Peter.

Today we will explore Jesus' call to Peter to rest in Him.

Pray: *Good morning, Lord! Thank you for the stories in the Bible that help us see how you love us and work with us no matter where we are spiritually. May Your Holy Spirit give me important lessons from the story of Peter for my life today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Jesus called Peter to be a disciple with the simple phrase: _____, and I will make you _____ (**Matthew 4:19**). Peter did follow Jesus for 3 ½ years. However, he (along with all the other disciples) struggled to rest in Jesus and allow Him to take control of his life. He wanted to be in charge. Name some areas where Peter struggled with letting go:

Matthew 14:29,30 _____

Matthew 16:21-23 _____

Matthew 17:24-27 _____

John 13:8-9 _____

During the Passover supper, after detailing His upcoming death, Jesus mentioned that all the disciples would be "scattered." Indignant, Peter made an arrogant declaration in front of the whole group. What did he say? **Mark 14:29** _____

_____

What was Jesus' response? (v. **30**) _____

_____

Jesus knew Peter was not prepared for this trial, and He wanted to warn him. However, Peter, probably with wounded pride that

His Master would doubt his fidelity, spoke "more vehemently": _____(**31**)

Read **Mark 14:32-34**. After supper, they went to Gethsemane, their usual spot to pray, but Jesus was not His usual self. What was going on with Jesus? _____

_____

Read **Luke 22:40**. What did He ask His disciples to do? _____

_____

Why? _____

Go back to **Mark 14** and read verses **35-38**. After His first time pleading with His Father for deliverance, Jesus came back to find His disciples in which state? _____

Who did he address in particular? _____

What did Jesus say? _____

_____

Jesus was in one of the lowest states He had ever been during His three-and-a-half-year ministry, yet He tried to prepare His beloved disciple. "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." Did Peter take the admonition seriously? See verses **39-40**. _____

Read verses **43-47**. In the next instant, Jesus was betrayed. "One of those who stood by" cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Who was this "one" according to **John 18:10**? _____ What did Jesus do? **Luke 22:51** _____ _____ Peter was unprepared; he had not taken Jesus' counsel to "watch and pray," so he was left to depend on his own feeble strength and fell into temptation. He made a big mistake, one that could have cost him his life. Although Jesus had already warned Peter, and He knew what Peter was about to say in the judgment hall, He covered up for his death-deserving action and healed the man Peter injured!

Read **Mark 14:53,54**. Write down how Peter followed Jesus and where he sat. _____

Do you already see Peter setting himself up to fall? Are there times where we follow Jesus …from a distance? Times we sit with servants of the enemy, comfortably warming ourselves by the fire?

Read verses **66-72**. In a few sentences, what happens next?

_____

_____

_____

Over and over again, Jesus tried to get Peter to understand that his strength was not in himself but must be rooted in prayer and in watching Him. Over and over again, Peter dismissed, ignored, and even repeled the counsel of his Lord, and yet Jesus did not give up on him. Jesus didn't push back but drew closer to Peter who was distancing himself from Him. Continuously, Jesus tried to get Peter's attention, but Peter had to go through an extremely difficult trial before he learned that he didn't have it all under control and that he couldn't do it on his own.

Go back and read **Mark 14:65**. What was happening to Jesus as Peter denied His Lord? _____

_____

What was recorded about Jesus' reaction to Peter's denial in **Luke 22:61**? _____

Imagine Jesus' suffering! Yet, in spite of the pain and humiliation, He remembered Peter. What did Peter see when Jesus turned to look at him? A pale, bloody face and trembling lips? A look of pity and forgiveness that pierced his heart like a sword? The Bible records that at that moment, "Peter _____the word of the Lord."

Just a few hours before, he had vowed to go to prison or even death for his Master, yet just then, he announced that he did not know Jesus. Face to face with His Lord, he realized that Jesus knew him—way better than he knew himself! Jesus had read the deceit and hypocrisy in his heart, which he himself did not see. Peter went out and spent a night in prayer, weeping, wrestling, and repenting.

Reader, do you find yourself like Peter, making promises you cannot keep? You are very determined and sincere, but for some reason, you just can't measure up to what you think God is calling you to? You are not alone. This is the human experience without Jesus' help. Jesus does not tell you to do

your best and come to him to do the rest. Oh no! He says, Come to me *as you are*, and I will give you rest.

Read **Luke 22:61,62** again, and imagine beholding the beautiful face of Jesus, looking at you with nothing but kindness in His eyes. Right now, surrender everything you are and have to Him, asking Him who is living in you to be faithful *for* you.

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Ask the Lord to help you remember His word to you, and come to Him, just as you are, moment by moment today!

DAY 5

Sometimes, when someone hurts us, though an apology was made, we have a hard time getting past the pain they served us. Sometimes we will take an opportunity to "rub it in" a bit, not letting them forget what they had done to us. How about Jesus? What was His attitude and behavior toward the person who grievously hurt him?

Today we will continue to explore Jesus' call for Peter to rest in Him.

Pray: *Dear Father, please send Your Spirit to speak to my heart as I explore Jesus' call to Peter to rest in Him. I am also "weary and burdened," and need that promised rest. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen* (**Matthew 11:28**).

Jesus was resurrected three days later. When the women went to the tomb early Sunday morning, they saw the tombstone rolled away and a young man inside. Who did he instruct them to tell? **Mark 16:7** _____

Have you ever allowed someone who has hurt you to "suffer a little bit" with their guilty conscience before letting him know you have forgiven him? Not Jesus. He did not allow Peter to wonder about how His Lord felt about him. **He reached out in a special way to the one who had hurt Him most**.
How gracious is our God! How undeserving are we! Through

the mention of his name, Jesus told Peter that He had extended complete forgiveness to him, right from the moment He had looked at him from across the judgment hall.

Read **John 21:3-14**. The disciples were by the seashore, perhaps wondering what they would do next. A boat in the water, the smell of fish, and perhaps nostalgia caused Peter to declare to the others: "I am going fishing." They all got in the boat and had a discouraging, unsuccessful night of fishing. Then Jesus showed up and performed a miracle: 153 fish in broad daylight caught in a net that should have ripped apart but didn't. What was Peter's reaction when John told him that the man on the shore was the Lord? _____

Because Peter believed that the Lord loved him and had forgiven him, he felt comfortable racing into His presence.

Jesus did not stop there—He restored Peter in the eyes of his fellow disciples. He knew that Peter and all the others had a great work ahead of them, and He wanted them to be unified. Read **John 21:15-19**. What did Jesus ask Peter? _____ _____ How many times? _____ How many times did Peter deny his Lord? _____ How many times did Jesus ask Peter to affirm his love for Him? _____ What does Jesus say would be a sign of Peter's love for Him?_____ How does Jesus end the conversation? (**19**) _____

Reader, you may feel like you have committed a sin that is so grievous that you wonder whether Jesus would forgive you. Perhaps you feel like you just can't stop doing a destructive habit and want to give up trying.

Peter's story is such good news. He denied his Lord after he arrogantly declared that he would go to his death defending Him. He cut off a man's ear and then cowardly ran away, leaving Jesus to deal with the mess—all this, even after repeated warnings and counsel from Jesus! Yet, Jesus had nothing but compassion for his wayward disciple who had hurt him. He extended immediate and complete forgiveness to him—and wanted him to know it, in

His look, in His word. Plus Jesus totally restored him in the eyes of his peers.

Reader, like Peter, you can jump out of that boat and run to Jesus. You can be at peace, knowing He has His arms open wide, wanting you to run to Him in every situation. He loves you and seeks to give you total healing and restoration.

Read **Luke 22:31-32**. What did Jesus tell Peter before He predicted his denial? Copy down His words. _____

_____

_____

_____

Jesus knows your past, your present, and your future. And He is praying for YOU, even now! Don't distance yourself from Him, but rather come running to Him right now. Thank Him for the love and compassion He has for you. Invite Him now to come into your heart, to forgive and heal you. _____

_____

Challenge
All day today, practice coming to Jesus as you are at every and any moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done! Be assured of His love and His salvation which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.

DAY 6
Discipleship and health go hand in hand. Jesus wants us to have clear minds and physically fit bodies to work for Him. In His infinite love, God is calling us back to His profoundly simple health principles so we can more fully understand His words of truth. Will you take time to seek His health desires for you?

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to impress upon your mind if there is anything in each of these simple principles that you need to improve upon or change.
2. Each day, as we cover the health principle, write what the Holy Spirit is asking you to change next to each principle.
3. Pray for the Holy Spirit's help to accomplish what He is asking of you.

Pray: *Lord, I come to You, seeking to learn Your ways of healthful living. Show me Your truths and give me the strength to apply them to my life, especially in the area of rest, for You promise in* ***Isaiah 40:29*** *that You "give power to the weak." In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Today, we will talk about rest and its importance in both our spiritual and physical lives.

Read **Matthew 11:28**. What do we find when we come to Jesus? _____
Read **Matthew 11:29**. What do we find for our souls when we work for Jesus? _____
Jesus longs to give us His rest. Come along with Jesus to find the rest He promises to give us.

Look up the word "rest" in the dictionary, and write down the definition(s):_____
_____
Proper rest relaxes, refreshes, and restores us physically and mentally.

Turn to **Genesis 2:1-3**, and let's see when rest is first mentioned in the Bible.
When did God rest? _____
Why did God rest? _____
What did God do to the seventh day? _____

After six days of working on creation, Jesus rested for a day. In His infinite wisdom, He knew we would need a day to cease from our gainful labors and spend a day relaxing, refreshing, and restoring our relationship with him.

Another form of rest occurs nightly (for most people). What do you think that might be? _____
Essential for your health, sleep recharges, repairs, and rebuilds your body.

Turn to **Genesis 28:10-22**, and let's visit a story of Jacob that shows us healthy sleep principles.
What was Jacob doing? _____ (**10**)

When did he stop for the night? _____(**11**)
What did he lay his head on? _____ (**11**)
When did Jacob rise? _____(**18**)
What did Jacob do when he got up? _____
_____ (**18, 20-22**)

Jacob was most likely physically and mentally tired when he arrived at Bethel. This prepared him for sleep. He ended his day soon after the sun went down, and laying his head on the stone (Jesus is our stone/rock; see **Psalm 62:6**), he found rest in sleep. Jacob woke up early and started his day in prayer and worship to Jesus, the ladder between heaven and earth. Applying the principles learned from the above Bible verses will give us the daily and weekly rest we need.

Testimony
For me, rest is the most critical lifestyle principle I follow because it affects all the others. I've learned that if I can get to bed a couple of hours before midnight, my next day goes so much smoother. I have more energy and strength to make better decisions and choices. I'm more motivated to drink water, eat right, and exercise. Being well rested, I look forward to getting up when God awakens me to spend time with Him. When I don't lie down to rest early, I tend to sleep later and feel my whole day is behind. My time with God feels more rushed; I'm not as productive, I have less energy, and my choices often suffer. A successful and joyous day actually starts the night before! (TS)

Your Turn
Are you coming to Jesus daily? _____
Do you have a weekly rest day? _____
Are you active during the day? _____
Generally, how many hours before midnight do you go to sleep? _____ Do you often struggle to fall asleep? _____
Generally, how many hours of sleep do you get a night? _____

Review the answers to the questions above, and ask the Holy Spirit what changes need to be made in the way you approach rest. Write down what He is impressing on your heart:

_____

Pray for the Holy Spirit's help to accomplish what He is asking of you.

Health Challenge – Get your rest. This coming week, implement the impressions of the Holy Spirit in the way you rest.

Tips for Improved Sleep

- Turn off all screen time early in the evening.[1]
- Choose easily digested foods for your last meal.
- Make your last meal 3 hours before you go to bed.[3]
- Leave stimulating foods, drinks, and substances alone.[2]
- Be active during the day.[1]
- Take a warm bath or do gentle stretching before bed.[1]
- Sleep in a well-ventilated room to give you oxygen and fresh air to breathe at night.[1]
- Pray before getting into bed, and give your stress to God.

DAY 7

Pray: *Lord, speak to me today through the following testimony. I, too, want to learn how to come to You so You can give me true rest! In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Testimony

When I was five years old, my family went through a traumatic event. When my father's business went on strike, my father kept working. People came to our house with baseball bats; they slashed our car tires and threatened to hurt us. I remember daily looking out the window, wondering if my dad would come home from work. My dad had an emotional breakdown, which created issues at home. I became shy and insecure and developed PTSD.

Everywhere I went, I was bullied. Kids made fun of my voice, asking me why I talked so slowly and what was wrong with me. I escaped every situation possible where I had to talk out loud. As an adult, I suffered the same treatment: "You stutter! Is there something neurologically wrong with you? Are you deaf?"

I didn't like meeting new people because I had to talk and explain myself. I felt so broken, rejected, and alone. I came to a point in my life where I felt like everything was piling up on me. I had so many health and family problems, and I suffered grief and loss. I finally asked God, *How do I thrive in this Christian walk and not just survive? What do I need to do differently?*

God started teaching me things: He taught me to surrender all my feelings of brokenness, anger, pain, and rejection to Him. He became my Great Physician and Counselor. He promised to do the mending, the healing, and the restoring in my life. Many times, I knelt on the floor, sobbing, giving my situations to God. He was faithful! He started changing my perspective and restoring me with His power so that I could walk in the wholeness and freedom that He died to give me.

God helped me to forgive my family and people that had spoken unkind words. He taught me how to pray the promises in the Bible and renewed my mind with His Word, so I could walk in His identity and not in what the world had been telling me my whole life. I decided to give Him all my weaknesses and face my fears with Him. Daily, I went on prayer walks, declaring victory over my fears. I would raise my hands in victory and say out loud:
"Fear and PTSD is far from me! I am a child of God, and I am full of peace! I am bold and courageous! I am not afraid because the Lord is with me! I am loved, chosen, and approved of. I am God's masterpiece! God has delivered me from all my fears, and He is holding me up with His victorious right hand! I am healthy and whole in Jesus' name. No weapon formed against me will prosper. Thank you, Jesus!"

One day, I decided to step out in faith and go to a Bible study. After several days of praying, speaking, writing, and declaring out loud the Bible verses I had studied, God took away my PTSD. For the first time ever, I read a Bible verse aloud in a small group without any symptoms of PTSD or a racing heart beat after 36 years of dealing with these issues. God had truly set me free from all my fears.

Since then, God has been growing me daily and weekly. For the past year, I have been the leader of a Bible study, something I

thought would never be possible. I go up to random strangers and pray with them whereas before, I wouldn't even pray with friends. He is using me to encourage other people through my testimony, and He keeps opening the doors for speaking opportunities.

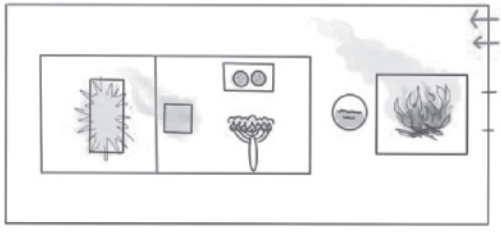


Reader, it doesn't matter where you have been or how long you have been stuck there. Without exception, we are weak human beings. But one thing I know is that with Jesus' help and His ability, I can do all things, and so can you! Nothing is impossible with God (**Luke 1:37**). The devil came to kill, steal, and destroy—but Jesus came to give us *abundant* life (**John 10:10**). Every day, come to Jesus just as you are—He will also give you the same abundant life He gave me! (MP)

Challenge
Discipleship Principle 1
All day today, practice coming to Jesus as you are at any and every moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done! Be assured of His love and His salvation which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.

Health Principle 1
Every day, get your rest.

Write **Matthew 11:28** on a card and memorize it this week.



GOD'S WAY TO *BE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 6
PRINCIPLE 2: HONOR JESUS AS LORD

Who is the man that fears the Lord?
Him shall He teach in the way He chooses.
He himself shall dwell in prosperity,
And his descendants shall inherit the earth.
Psalm 25:12,13

Have you been *daily* coming to the altar, the foot of the cross, without changing anything first? How about physical rest? Have you begun to implement the impressions of the Holy Spirit in the way you rest?

By His beautiful grace, Jesus always accepts you just as you are. He has put a royal robe on you and the ring of heirship. You have been immediately reclaimed as His beloved child! And He promises to give you rest from all your burdens. But God doesn't want you to stop there. He is calling you to follow Him one more step into His way in the sanctuary that He has cleared for you.

DAY 1

What is your favorite relationship with Jesus or the Father? (Examples: child, friend, Savior…) _____ You may consider Him your brother or father, but do you consider Him the LORD of your life?

What does it mean to have someone as *Master* or *Lord* of your life? (Look up dictionary definitions if necessary.) _____

_____

How does surrendering or submitting to someone else's way or plan sound? (gulp). Is this easy? Many times, it is hard for us to submit to authority of any kind. <u>But know that God does not ask us to do what He has not done FIRST!</u>

This week, we will explore what it means to honor Jesus as LORD of our life.

Pray: *My Father, please send the Holy Spirit who alone can*

teach me from Your Word what it means to honor Jesus as Lord of my life. In His name, Amen (**1 Corinthians 12:3**).

In the Jewish economy, the altar was the place of sacrifice. God gave Israel five types of sacrifices, all described in detail in Leviticus, and each one reveals a unique aspect of Christ's sacrifice for us. We will only look at the first one—the burnt offering. Leviticus opens with its description. Read **Leviticus 1:2-9** (preferably in the KJV or NKJV) and check the boxes that apply:

- ☐ A male, without blemish
- ☐ A female, without blemish
- ☐ Offered by priest
- ☐ Offered by member of congregation who brought the animal
- ☐ Priests sprinkle blood around the altar.
- ☐ Priests skin and cut up animal
- ☐ Oil is poured on sacrifice.
- ☐ Parts of animal are washed.
- ☐ Parts of animal are burned on the altar.
- ☐ Parts of animal burned outside the temple gates.
- ☐ Parts of animal are saved and eaten by priests.
- ☐ The whole animal is burned on the altar.

While all of the above apply to at least one of the five offerings (yes, even female animals were offered in some cases), the burnt offering, which was to atone for the people's sins, required a very specific protocol: Especially note that the *whole* animal was *completely* consumed by the fire. What could this represent regarding Christ's sacrifice? _____

_____

The altar was the one place where the members of the congregation of Israel had active participation. Imagine being the man of the household, bringing a little lamb without any defect into the gates of the sanctuary. In the presence of the priest, you place it on the altar, put your hand on its head, and slit its throat. You watch the priest take blood from its lifeless body to sprinkle around the sides of the altar. You watch him cut it up and prepare it to be burned. You wonder how you are going to explain to your young child that the reason why you weren't

bringing back this little lamb alive is because of your family's sin. Does this make you cringe a little?

Think of the Father in heaven who "gave His only Son," the innocent Lamb of God, to shed His blood for *you*, the guilty one, deserving of death. Think of the Son who voluntarily submitted to death to pay the price for *your* debt of sin!

However, did you know that Jesus not only surrendered Himself *in death*? *His life* was also one of total surrender!

Let's look at Jesus' relationship with His Father while He was here on earth.
Read **John 5:30**. How much did Jesus do by Himself? _____
Read **John 4:34**. Jesus said it was his food to_____
_____. If I were to say that my food is soccer, what would that mean? It would be my everything—what I think, talk, and dream about, what I watch and keep up with—in short, my passion. Jesus' passion, His every desire was to do every single thing God's way and not His own way!

Think about it: Jesus—the very Son of God who shared all eternity past as an equal with His Father—was totally surrendered to His Father every moment of every day of His life on earth! He climbed onto the altar in His life AND in His death!



Reader, meditate on **Luke 9:23** and **Romans 12:1,2**. Take time to thank Jesus for His great love for you, submitting Himself in life and in death. And if you desire to respond by climbing on the altar with Him, tell Him you surrender your life to Him now. _____

_____

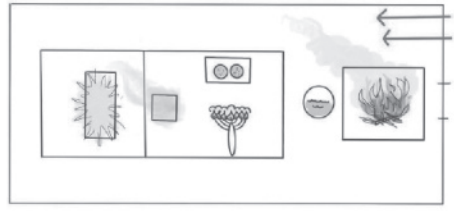
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Challenge
Write **Romans 12:1,2** on a card to carry around and meditate on it.



Moment by moment, surrender yourself to the One who surrendered all for you.

DAY 2

Think of someone in your life whom you respect a lot. What qualities does that person have that command that respect? How do these qualities relate to our relationship with Jesus? Often, people we highly respect have influence in our lives because we trust them. Their advice and counsel is often held in high esteem.

Today we will start looking at Jesus' relationship with His Father, particularly how He submitted to His will in specific ways every evening, every morning, and every moment of the day.

Pray: *My Father in Heaven, please send Your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, to teach me how to follow the way of Your Son who submitted Himself to You daily. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Mark 1:35**. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? List the details in this passage: _____

_____

Read **Isaiah 50:4**. Who is testifying in this verse? Isaiah the prophet or someone else? (Hint: See verse **6**.) _____
So who is waking Jesus up to "hear as the learned," according to the prophecy in verse **4**? _____
The Father! Can you grasp this? God awakened God to give Him a word in season for all the weary He would meet that day. In other words, the Father told Jesus what He would say and do each day!

Testimony
I am really a night person and not a morning person at all. Since I work third shift, I go to bed around midnight, but even then,

it's not unusual that I am still awake at 2 AM. I have always reserved my time with God in the morning for prayer before I begin my regular daily routine. When I learned about asking God to wake me up to spend time with Him in the Word, I resisted for over a week. While my heart thirsted for this experience, my flesh brought me back to my senses: *What if He wakes me up too early? I can't survive on such little sleep.*

I finally resolved to ask God to wake me up on His schedule. Generally, when I wake up before the usual time, I feel like I got up on the wrong side of the bed; I'm moody and very tired. The evening I first asked God to wake me up, He woke me up several hours before my usual waking time. I initially thought it was only for a bathroom stop, but to my surprise, I was completely awake, without any sleepiness or fatigue. I understood that God did that for me!

That morning, I had one of the best moments with Jesus that I have ever had. God revealed many things in His Word and about His character that I wanted to apply with the aid of the Holy Spirit. I felt close to Him and more willing to submit to Him. I had a growing desire to serve Him more faithfully with love and to do His will unconditionally. I realize that I am still far from that goal but He told me that it's "not by might nor by power," but by His Spirit, so I have confidence in Him and His Word.

I will confess that even now, I am still reluctant to ask Him to wake me up in the morning, but I have embarked on a spiritual journey through the sanctuary. I take more time in His Word and in prayer. The result is that I live with less stress, worry, and anxiety. I thank God for His blessing me with a closer walk with Him through surrendering my morning schedule to Him. (AP)

Think about it: If Jesus needed that time with His Father to get marching orders for His day, how much more do we need it? He knows what our day will be like. He knows best how much time we need with Him in the morning! It is the love of the Father that moves His heart to wake us up each morning (as He did for His own Son) to have *unrushed* time alone with Him.

Reader, does Jesus have control over your time? Are you willing

to surrender your alarm clock, asking God to wake you up when *He* feels it's best? If so, do the challenge tonight!



Challenge: *Every evening*, starting tonight, ask Him to wake you up to have unrushed time alone with Him.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, You know how busy I am, and all that has to be accomplished in my life daily. I really don't see how I could get up earlier than I do. But I know that Jesus was also a very busy man and had to deal with all the weaknesses and fatigue of being human. So, like Him, I want to ask You to be Lord of my life in this area. Please, wake me up when You want so we can meet together tomorrow morning. I can't wait to see what You have in store for me! I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3

Reader, did God wake you up to spend unrushed time with Him this morning? Did you respond and get up? If you didn't, know that our gracious Lord is infinitely patient! Just keep asking Him for His strength to submit in this area, and He will do it in you!

Today we will look at how Jesus surrendered to His Father during the day, starting from the moment He woke up.

Pray: *Dear Father, as I study about Jesus and how He surrendered to You, please send Your Holy Spirit to teach me how to "submit to God." In Jesus' powerful name, Amen* (**James 4:7**).

Read **Philippians 2:5-8** in several versions. What were the steps to Jesus' surrender? _____

_____

_____

_____

Jesus went beyond accepting our human body, or even coming as a poor man; He kept taking steps down until He submitted to the ultimate sacrifice.

Jesus' suffering at the end began in Gethsemane. Read

Mark 14:32-34. How is Jesus feeling? What does He tell His disciples? _____

_____

Look up **Luke 22:44**. How bad was Jesus' agony? _____

_____

Think of Jesus, sweating blood! He is overwhelmed with carrying the weight of every sin committed by every child, youth, and adult who has ever lived and ever will. He wanted His Father to give Him a way out. Notice what He prayed in **Mark 14:36**. Copy down His prayer: _____

_____

_____

Jesus even claimed a promise in His prayer: *Nothing is too hard for you, Abba, Father! You can take this away if You want!* Three times, He wrestled with what He wanted personally. Yet, He chose to give up His will to His Father. This same Jesus who wanted to live and not die, submitted to His Father's will, stretched out His hands, and died on the cross in your place! *Could there be anything too hard to give up for a Savior who gave up all for us?*

Did Jesus draw a line on surrender to His Father and say, "I will not go beyond this point!"? _____
Did He give all He was? _____
Did He give all He had? _____
Read **Hebrews 12:2**. With what attitude did He give all these things? _____

Reader, Jesus saw you as He went to the cross—you and all His people were the "joy set before Him" that helped Him to go through with the sacrifice, enduring the cross, despising the shame. Take time to read **Isaiah 53**. What is your response to His great love and sacrifice for you? He gave His all for you. Will you also give your all to Him? Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth. The question is, *does He have all authority in your life?* If this is your desire, **pray** the following:

Heavenly Father,
By Jesus who sacrificed all for me, whose power and authority lives in me, please give me the willingness and strength to

submit all to You—with Your joy! I surrender all that I am, all that I have, and even my attitude and electronics to You, the Lord of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge: Continue asking God every evening to wake you up in the morning for unrushed time alone with Him.



Every morning, surrender all that you are, all that you have, and your attitude and eletronics to Jesus as Lord.

DAY 4

Look at the lamp in the illustration. How can you make this lamp shine? Could you do it without plugging it into a power source? Nope, that would be impossible! It needs an outside power source. So how does this relate to our Christian walk? _____

_____

_____



Sometimes we are plugged into God in the morning, then we get up, unplug, and forget about Him the rest of the day. But Jesus was hooked up to His source of power *all day* long.

Today we will explore how Jesus was submitted to His Father moment by moment, all day long.

Pray: *Dear Lord, please send the Holy Spirit to teach me how to stay connected to You—all day long! In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **John 17:20-22**. How did Jesus describe His relationship with His Father? _____

_____

How did He pray for all believers? _____

_____

Read **John 15:4**. How does Jesus describe His relationship with us? _____

Our greatest work is not to bear fruit, but to abide. When the lamp is plugged into the power source, it automatically shines.

What is the relationship between the power and the lamp at this point? _____

_____



When we surrender ourselves to Jesus, we, like the lamp, are plugged into His great outside source of power. Then, He comes inside of us and makes us shine. The effort is getting plugged in—spending time in the presence of God—and then we will shine effortlessly throughout the day.

So how can we stop doing the things that we know are wrong? Read **Colossians 1:27,28**. The secret victory for the Christian is contained in two three-word phrases in this passage. What are they? _____,_____

Jesus lives in us, by His Holy Spirit, and He empowers our surrender! While our righteousness is nothing more than filthy rags, we are perfect, that is complete, in Christ (**Isaiah 64:6**).

Reader, when you give Him total authority as Lord over your life:

- Although you have no power to resist temptation, *Christ in you* is the same Jesus who had victory over every temptation and can give you victory.
- Though you have no strength to accomplish what you have been called to do, you can do all things *through Christ* who strengthens you!
- Though you struggle with an addiction or a spirit of unforgiveness, *Christ in you* exercises His authority to set you free from the power of addiction and unforgiving attitudes!

Reader, Christ is your strength to live each moment in honor to Him. When you are in Him, and He is in you, you will want to live for His honor and glory. *Jesus* is "the chief cornerstone, in whom you are also being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit," "for it is *God* who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure" (**Ephesians 2:22; Philippians 2:13**, emphasis added).

Meditate on **Ephesians 3:14-21**, asking God for what He promises to give you in those verses. Praise Him that you are

not left on your own to wrestle, worry, and strive to try to honor Jesus on your own! Praise Him for the promise that you can experience His fullness! _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Honor Jesus as Lord:
Every evening, ask God to awaken you in the morning to have unrushed time alone with Him.

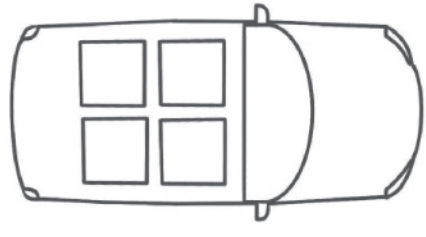
Every morning, surrender all you are, all you have, and your attitude and electronics to Him.



All day long, by the power of Jesus who lives within you by faith, follow His lead in all your choices.

DAY 5

Imagine that you and Jesus are going on a drive today. Take a look at the diagram of your car. In your life, you decide who goes where. Label where Jesus and you will sit in the car.



I'm assuming you put Jesus in the driver's seat. Did you put yourself in the passenger seat? If so, what happens when He goes in a direction you don't want to go? Could you reach the wheel to grab it out of His hands? And what if He isn't driving fast enough for you? Could you slide your leg from the passenger's side over to the gas pedal to speed things up?

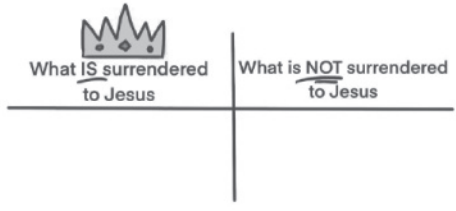
So, if Jesus is Lord of your life, where should you be sitting? Probably the back seat! We still have the freedom to tell Him "No" but we will be less tempted to lean over and brake or accelerate or wrench the wheel from His hand. We are sitting in simple faith, trusting that our Lord and Master will take us where He knows we should be and get us there on time!

Reader, is that where you want to be? In the back seat with Jesus driving? If so, **pray** the following before we begin the next exercise:

I want to submit to You, Jesus, as Driver and LORD of every area of my life, like You submitted to Your Father when You were here on earth. Now, show me specific areas where I am surrendered to You, but especially those areas where I am NOT. I want You to be Lord over every single part of my life. Amen.

PRACTICE

We often know Jesus as Savior and Friend, but do we know Him as Lord?



1. On a separate sheet of paper, copy the chart. Make sure you leave plenty of room in the columns below the headings.
2. In the left column, underneath the crown, list the things you know you have given to the Lordship of Jesus (what you *have* surrendered to Him).
3. In the right column, write down the things you are struggling to surrender.
4. After you write a few things down, pray and ask the Holy Spirit if there is anything you have forgotten. Remember that whatever is *not* surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus holds you captive.
5. Put this chart by your bed, and every day this week, surrender what is not yet surrendered.

Testimony

After moving from Italy to the United States, I became addicted to sugar, especially to chocolate. While in actuality I prefer savory to sweet foods, I started eating sweets as a coping mechanism for my loneliness and depression due to missing home. When I realized that it was getting out of control, I decided to try to restrain myself and eat sweets only on Sabbaths. I would eat sweets from breakfast all day until I went to bed, resulting in this most special day becoming the most

miserable one of the week. I felt heavy; my mind was foggy; my energy was low. I often looked forward to Sabbath just to fill my stomach with sweet foods and would end up panicking at midnight to think I couldn't have any more for a whole week.

After living in this misery for several years, I came to God with my mess. He showed me that rather than running to sugar to fill up the empty spots in my heart, I needed to surrender my life to Him completely, starting with giving up the very thing that I thought was helping me most! After my time with God one day, I took all the chocolate in my house, all the sugary cereals, all the sweets from Italy that I cherished and was keeping for a special occasion, all the candy bars—everything—and threw them in the trash! It was so liberating!

God did what I could not do on my own: He released me from this terrible addiction. My connection with God changed immediately. Now, on a physical and emotional level, I feel more energetic, my mind is clearer, and my motivation to eat healthier foods has been increasing. I have lost weight, and I haven't been sick once since then. I am about to celebrate my first whole year "chocolate free."

Once in a while, I'll admit that I think of chocolate, but I can honestly say that my craving for it is gone. I will still eat sweets once in a while on special occasions (and when I go home to Italy) but I'm no longer controlled by them. I have also learned to make healthier versions of cakes and baked goods. I praise God for the work He's been doing in me. I have learned to run to Him in order to cope with situations rather than to the kitchen cupboard! And I praise Him for the opportunities He's been giving me to share my journey with others. (DPL)

Reader, has this week been a difficult one for you? Are you struggling to surrender in some areas of your life? If so, **pray**: "Lord, make me willing to be willing to be willing to surrender!" You can add as many "willings" as you need to that prayer! Read **Ezekiel 36:26,27**. What is Jesus' promise? _____

_____

_____

_____

If you ask Him, He will do heart surgery on you. If God is calling you to have this heart surgery, kneel before the Lord if you are able, and have a private prayer to ask Jesus to cut out whatever is in your heart that should not be there: bitterness, hatred, lust, or love for anything or anyone that replaces the Lord.

Pray: *Dear Father in heaven, I thank You for loving me just as I am—but I also thank You for being willing to do a work of healing in my life! Thank You for Jesus, my Master Surgeon. I ask for Jesus to come, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and cut out my "heart of stone" and give me a new "heart of flesh." Please cut out my bitterness, my hurt, and my love for anything or anyone that has replaced Jesus as Lord. Give me a new heart and a new Spirit! In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Ezekiel 36:26**).

Challenge
Honor Jesus as Lord over your life. Continue praying over your chart tonight, surrendering it all to God, asking Him to continue cutting out everything in your heart that is not of Him.

DAY 6

Again, health and discipleship go hand in hand. As you go through this health nugget, remember to:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to impress upon your mind if there is anything in this health principle that you need to implement or improve upon.
2. Write what the Holy Spirit is asking you to do in the space provided.
3. Pray for the Holy Spirit's help to accomplish what He is asking of you.

Today, we will study the importance of exercising Holy Spirit self-control.

Pray: *Oh Lord, give me your Holy Spirit to help me apply self-control in my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

As we are learning this week, honoring Jesus as Lord means surrendering all that we are, all that we have, and even our attitudes and desires to Jesus.

Read **Galatians 5:22, 23**. What fruit of the Spirit helps us to surrender? _____
Take out your dictionary and look up the definition of self-control (or temperance). _____
_____

Exercising restraint of one's own desires, thoughts, actions, etc. is not easy. It does not come naturally to us. Paul states this in **Romans 7:14-24**. What battle of the flesh do we fight? _____
_____
Read **Romans 7:24-8:2**. How can SELF be overcome? _____
_____
_____

Spirit-filled self-control does not just happen. We need to pray for this fruit of the Spirit. This **testimony** will help to explain Spirit-filled self-control versus flesh self-control:

I have a very determined personality. If I tell myself I am going to do something, like get up at 5 am every morning for a week, I make it happen even if I am grumpy about it. I also have no problems sharing my opinion. These two traits can be a deadly combination if used wrongly. Recently, I have started to ask for the Holy Spirit to give me self-control and to show me when I need to ask for this character trait.

I happened to be at an afternoon lunch, and the conversation turned to very confrontational subjects. I felt impressed to pray, and so silently, I asked for the Holy Spirit and His fruit, especially self-control. It is a mystery how the Holy Spirit worked. All I know is I was able to remain calm and courteous in all my speech and to keep respect for everyone else in the room (even when they had different opinions). I left the gathering with peace in my heart and mind. This is the power of Holy Spirit-derived self-control versus self-generated self-control, which would have left me bitter or angry inside over opinions shared that day. (RS)

Your Turn
List a few things that require you to exercise self-control:
_____
_____

Read **James 1:13-15**. What is the progression of temptation according to these verses? _____

_____

How do we overcome temptations that come to us?
John 14:13,14 _____
2 Cor. 10:4,5 _____

_____

1 Corinthians 10:13 _____
Jeremiah 33:3 _____
Zechariah 4:6 _____

Health Challenge– Practice Spirit-filled self-control.
Do you have a habit, craving, addiction, or any harmful temptation that you need to control or eliminate from your life?

_____

Ask God to help you surrender this to Him and to give you self-control. Find a Bible promise to claim as you begin to exercise Holy Spirit-derived self-control in this area (example: Philippians 4:13 or ones listed above). _____
Pray this prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you be an overcomer in this area:

Pray: *Father in Heaven, I need Your help with* _____

_____

I am calling out to You now to help me overcome. Please send me Your Holy Spirit and fill me with self-control. Teach me to call on You whenever I am in temptation and to follow Your way of escape. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 7

Many of us know the story of Daniel in the lion's den. We will now look at an experience his friends had with another king several decades before. **Today, through the story of Daniel's friends, we will explore what happens when we surrender our difficult and challenging experiences to Jesus.**

Pray: *Dear Father, today as I study about the three Hebrew boys, please send the Holy Spirit to impress me with the lessons I need to learn from their experience. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.*

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon built a statue of pure gold and commanded everyone in his kingdom to come on a certain day to the plain of Dura and, at the sound of music, bow down to worship this image he had set up. On that day, everyone obeyed…everyone except three of Daniel's friends who also happened to be head administrators in the Babylonian government like Daniel. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were brought before the king, he gave them a second chance.

Read **Daniel 3:15-19**. What audacious statement did the king make to the three? _____
What was their response? _____
_____
_____

In his fury, the king commanded the fire to be heated seven times hotter than usual, so hot that it killed the men who threw them into the furnace!

Read verses **22-25**. What happened when he threw them in and who did King Nebuchadnezzar see in the furnace? _____
_____

Many Bible versions stick to the original Aramaic which records Nebuchadnezzar as saying: "The form of the fourth is like the *Son of God.*" Isn't the king's statement interesting? He used the very name of Jesus (**Luke 1:35; 4:41**). The king saw *Jesus* in the furnace with those men who refused to bow down to any other god!

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego's decision not to worship this image was not made on the spot or even in a week. The gold statue was 90 feet high and 9 feet thick—everyone knew what was coming and had plenty of time during its construction to think about their decision.

The three could have used many excuses for bowing to the image "just this once" as did perhaps many other Hebrews on the plain: "We really don't believe in worshiping this image over God; we won't bow in our hearts, just with our bodies…Surely God doesn't want us to lose our influence for good in the court!" No, their decision was unequivocal—they surrendered their lives

and put them in the hand of God: "*Whether or not* He saves us, we will not bow down."

Testimony

My little brother married a wonderful young lady whom the whole family loved. A little after their first wedding anniversary, they had a beautiful baby boy. During her whole pregnancy, my sister-in-law had been vomiting brownish stuff. The doctor suspected an ulcer, so before she went home after the birth, she had an endoscopy. The test actually found a tumor rather than an ulcer, and they did a biopsy to see if it was cancerous. Zambia doesn't have the technology to determine if a biopsy is cancerous, so it was sent to India. Two weeks later, we received the results: it was cancerous. Again, without proper equipment to determine what stage it was, the doctors did a CT scan and told us that it was local—the cancer had not spread.

We were so grateful to God that it was discovered early and that it was local. She did a few rounds of chemo which changed her life considerably. She lost hair and weight and needed lots of help with her newborn. The doctor scheduled an operation to remove the tumor and part of her stomach. However, during surgery, they discovered that the cancer had actually spread to other organs, including her liver. They closed her up without touching anything.

This was the worst day of my life. That day, I questioned God. Why had He abandoned us? Why would He allow that to happen to such a beautiful young lady with a newborn child and our family? That day, my neighbor, who knew nothing about the news or what had happened, came over spontaneously, and found me, distraught, trembling, and sobbing. She prayed with me, and I felt a bit better, but I still questioned God: *God I've dedicated my life to you. Here I am doing your work, but you let me and my family down like this. What is happening?*

The whole family was so sad and depressed. After the operation, she went back to the ward and spent many days in extreme pain, so bad she could not talk for three days. She had some seizures, and we thought at some point that we might lose her. When she started talking, she asked, "What did the

doctors say?" We were all scared to tell her that the cancer had spread. Then she told us that when she was in the operating room, though she knew she was totally unconscious, she heard someone say, "We are not going to go ahead with this surgery."

But the most amazing thing was her incredible faith in God that was out of this world. As her whole family was sad and blaming God, she never once shed a tear or spoke a word of complaint. She told us, "God is in control of my situation." And she was the one who was comforting us and encouraging us to pray! That day, she prayed a prayer of incredible faith in front of us.

How I thank God for this young lady and for her life of trust in God! It has been such an encouragement to all of us. It took the faith of this suffering patient to show us that God is still there, that He is still on the throne, and that nothing is impossible for Him. I pray that as Jesus died on the cross, this cancer will die forever, and as Jesus rose from the dead, that she would be cured and raised to newness of life. I have faith that He can heal her, but will not doubt His goodness and faithfulness toward our family, *no matter what happens*. And I want to mention that before all this was known, when their little boy was born, they named him Buumi, the word in our language for "Life." (HC)

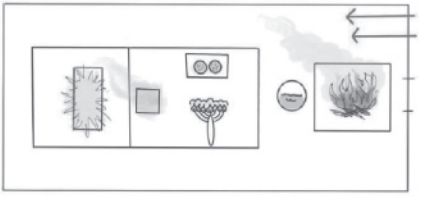


Reader, you may not be faced with a life and death situation right now, but Jesus may be building your faith for greater areas of surrender by calling you to submit to Him in what may seem like a very tiny area. Climbing on the altar may be painful. However, in our suffering, we can remember that Jesus has gone before us, so He understands our pain, and even better, He is also with us through those painful experiences. He promises to accompany us in the flames of testing and trial; we will not be consumed by the fire—but our sins will be. We can cling to Him; He will get us through!

Right now, take some special moments with Jesus. Read, meditate, and pray over **Isaiah 43:1-4**. Thank the Son of God

that He promises to be with you in flood and fire. Thank Him for His great love for you and giving Himself to pay the ransom for your life. And ask Him to help you climb on the altar with Him, and surrender what He is calling you to give up right now.

Challenge
Discipleship Principle 2



Honor Jesus as Lord:
Every evening, ask God to awaken you in the morning to have unrushed time alone with Him.

Every morning, surrender all you are, all you have, and your attitude and electronics to Him.

All day long, by the power of Jesus who lives within you by faith, follow His lead in all your choices.

Health Principle 2
Every day, practice Spirit-filled self-control.

Review and memorize **Galatians 2:20** this week.

GOD'S WAY TO *BE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 7
PRINCIPLE 3: RECEIVE A FRESH BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore He teaches sinners in the way.
The humble He guides in justice,
and the humble He teaches His way.
Psalm 25:8,9

Reader, have you been daily following Jesus in His way in the sanctuary? Using the sanctuary diagram on the previous page, review the two principles we have learned so far:

Fill in the blank:
1a. Discipleship Principle1 (DP1) - Daily, practice coming to ___ _____as you are at every and any moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done! Be assured of His love and His salvation which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.

1b. Health Principle1 (HP1) - Get your _____
Have you been coming to Him in your downs as well as your ups in your daily life? Remember, He is the great physician and He has a remedy for every issue!

Fill in the blank:
2a. DP2 - Honor Jesus as Lord:
Every evening, ask God to _____ you in the morning to have unrushed time alone with Him.
Every morning, _____ all you are, all you have, and your attitude and electronics to Him.
All day long, by the power of _____ who lives within you by faith. _____His lead in all your choices.

2b. HP2 - Practice Spirit-filled _____ .

Have you honored Jesus as Lord of your life? Maybe you feel like you have failed in some or all of these areas. Perhaps you know Jesus woke you up early, but you rolled over and fell

back to sleep, and woke up too late to have meaningful time with Him. (I still have days like that!) Whatever it may be, run to Jesus right now. He is not angry at you, but infinitely patient, as you learn to surrender all to Him. Right now, if you haven't yet, take time to surrender all you are, all you have, including your attitude and electronics.

DAY 1

Have you ever been out and about, then came home, and looked into the mirror and noticed dirt on your cheek or food between your teeth and realized that you had been out in public—maybe even among friends—and no one said anything? Perhaps you felt a moment of embarrassment? Have you ever been in a situation where you sinned against God or your fellow man and felt embarrassed? The good news is that Jesus has an immediate solution!

Today we will begin our exploration of God's ultimate solution for the "dirt on our faces" through the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, Like Elisha of old, I pray for a "double portion" of Your Holy Spirit today, so I can clearly understand and submit to the work of the Holy Spirit in my life. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**2 Kings 2:9**).



What is the next piece of furniture in God's way in the sanctuary? ___

_____

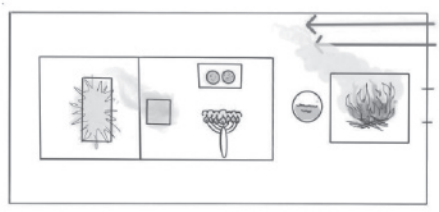
Review **Exodus 30:18** What was the laver filled with and what was its purpose? _____

_____

Before entering the next compartment, the priests had to be totally cleansed. Do you remember what the laver was made of? (**Exodus 38:8**) _____

Why mirrors? The sacrificial process was messy; mirrors exposed the blood and ash on the faces of the priests, so they could see it—but there was an immediate remedy for that

situation—an abundant amount of water for cleansing, right there in the laver.



Read **Romans 5:20-21**. What is the good news in this verse?

_____

_____

_____

Our God is so good to us. The law is like a mirror; it exposes our sin. But in the same place where the law is, He also has an immediate remedy—through Jesus' perfect righteousness, that is, His perfect life and character (**Matthew 5:17**),

Read **2 Corinthians 5:21**. What is the great exchange described in this verse? _____
Isn't that encouraging! It doesn't matter what sin we see reflected in the mirror of the law, there is none greater than the cleansing blood of our Savior.

Read **John 3:5**. What does Jesus say about what it means to be "born again"? _____
This week's study will unfold what that means, and how the Holy Spirit was manifested in Jesus' life, and how He wants to work in ours.

Read **John 7:37-39**. What is the very first criterion that Jesus says we need before receiving the Holy Spirit? _____
Reader, do you have that thirst? If not, pray for greater thirst for the abundant water of the Holy Spirit He is offering. _____

_____

Challenge
Ask the Father to totally immerse you in the Spirit today, so rivers of living water can flow out to your family and to all whom you meet today! Pray the following prayer:

Dear God in Heaven, please make me so thirsty that I will crave You more and more! I want to be totally immersed in the Spirit so that rivers of living water may flow out of me to my family

and friends and everyone else in my path today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 2

Have you ever been in a position where you could do absolutely nothing to help yourself, where someone had to step in to help you? _____

I have been at the side of a road in a broken-down car (without a phone) and had to wait for a passer-by to stop to take me somewhere for help. When we finally realize that we can do absolutely nothing, the Holy Spirit loves to come in and do what we can't do for ourselves. While on earth, Jesus also tapped into the resources provided by the Holy Spirit.

Today we will explore what the baptism of the Holy Spirit looked like in Jesus' life.

Pray: *Dear Father, please send the Holy Spirit to "open my eyes that I may see wonderful things" in Your word today. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen* (**Psalm 119:18**).

When Jesus stepped into the outer court, what event and representative piece of furniture marked the beginning of His ministry? _____ (**Luke 3:21,22**)

Read **Matthew 3:11**. What was the purpose of John's baptism? _____ What is Jesus' baptism, according to John the Baptist? _____

The laver is equated with baptism—of both water and the Holy Spirit (**John 3:5**).

Read **Matthew 3:14-15**. What does John say to Jesus when He comes to be baptized? _____

_____

How does Jesus respond? _____

_____

John makes it clear that Jesus does not need baptism. But as a man and our role model, He wanted to "fulfill all righteousness"—that is to do everything required of us. Read verse **16**. When Jesus was baptized of water, what else was He baptized with? _____

Look up the verses below, and write down how the Spirit was manifested in Jesus' life and ministry.

Luke 4:1 _____

Luke 4:14,15 _____

Luke 4:18,19 _____

_____

Luke 10:21 _____

John 3:34 _____

Acts 10:38 _____

Who, in essence, was the driving force behind Jesus' miracles and ministry? _____

Remember, last week we spoke of Jesus' statement that by Himself, He could do _____ (**John 5:19**).

If Jesus had used His own divine power to preach, do miracles, and resist temptation, what hope would there be for us to try to follow and model Him? Yet, as He claimed, He did not do anything by His own will or power; His works were done as a man totally submitted to His Father and daily baptized by the Holy Spirit, becoming our great example for how to operate on an everyday basis.

Reader, read **Zechariah 4:6**. Will you admit, like Jesus, that you can do absolutely nothing by your own might or power? Are you wanting to receive Holy Spirit power in your life? Ask your Heavenly Father for this beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit today!

_____

_____

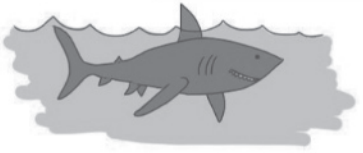
In **Matthew 21:22**. Jesus says that to receive anything, you have to _____ you have received it.

Challenge

Start praying every day for the gift of the Holy Spirit. You may not feel any different after praying—but you can *believe* you have received this gift because you asked for it! Follow His lead today.

DAY 3

Look at the three pictures below. Which one(s) show(s) total immersion? _____





Only one is *totally* immersed. As a believer, would you say you are *fully* immersed in the Holy Spirit?

Today we will explore what it means to ask for and receive the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Pray: *Dear Father in heaven, bring us a thirst for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Please send the Holy Spirit to teach us about this gift. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

What are the seven essentials to being daily baptized by the Holy Spirit?

John 7:37-39

Essential 1 _____

Essential 2 _____

Essential 3 _____

Acts 2:38

Essential 4 _____

Essential 5 _____

Acts 5:32

Essential 6 _____

Luke 11:13

Essential 7 _____

Remember that the Holy Spirit is received by faith and NOT by feeling. When we ask for Him, we can believe that we have received Him because GOD HAS PROMISED HIM.

Testimony

I had been baptized with water at age 10, but didn't really understand the power of the Holy Spirit in my life. I was basically a nominal Christian for 54 years, not learning till my later years that I could ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit every day and throughout the day. This was a life-changing gift for me!

As I started to regularly practice this truth, one morning after praying for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and receiving Him by faith, I went to work, serving as an IV nurse. I responded to a page on my beeper. Upon arrival to the room, the nurse took out her frustration of a bad and overwhelming day by verbally assaulting me in front of a patient. If this had been just a few days before, I would have leaned on my own nature and probably responded in like manner. However, since I was surrendered to Jesus and had received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit that morning, I responded with lovingkindness to her and the patient.

Upon completion of that task, I immediately received another call to the Intensive Care Unit to remove an IV line from a patient who had experienced a catastrophic brain injury which had resulted in brain death. I told the nurse who informed me that I understood and would talk with the patient's husband. I entered the dimly lit room of this young couple.

I introduced myself to the husband who was despondently leaning over the bed railing, holding the hand of his dying wife. The ventilator cycled as I leaned down to comfort him with a squeeze on the shoulder. I expressed my sorrow for their situation and his suffering. I explained to him that I was an RN tasked to remove the IV line from his wife's arm. I explained that it would not be painful, and I would need to hold pressure on the site for five minutes and then apply a pressure dressing. He said that it would be ok.

I removed the line, and as I applied pressure, I was strongly impressed by the Holy Spirit that I should pray with the husband. In my mind, I contended with the voice: *I can't pray with him—he may be angry!* As a nurse, I knew the stages

that families go through in the death-and-dying process. The husband had just been informed of the tragic prognosis of his wife, and I felt sure he would be angry, especially because of their short life together. Again, I was impressed to pray with him...

After I finished holding pressure, I assessed the site and applied a small pressure dressing. I walked to the other side of the bed, and again I squeezed him on the shoulder, leaned down, and quietly asked, "Brother, may I pray with you?"

He looked up at me and said "Would you pray with me?"

I said, "Yes, I would love to." My prayer went something like this: *Our Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son to live and experience pain on this earth. Upon His return to heaven, you sent the Holy Spirit—the Comforter—to be with us always. I pray that the Comforter will fill this man with sooo much love to overflowing, that he will feel the arms of our Heavenly Father around him today and always, and feel His comfort and peace. Amen.*

I arose to turn and leave the room, but he jumped up and gave me the biggest bear hug I have ever received! Two grown men stood there, embracing as tears flowed down our cheeks. He thanked me again for praying with him.

I left the room, thinking: Okay, *Lord, where do you want me to go now?* You see, by listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, I was able to share comfort and love. After I was used by the Holy Spirit, I was again filled with love to overflowing and eager to be used again and again throughout that day and the days to come.

It is my prayer that you will ask for and receive this precious gift of the Holy Spirit today and every day. What a difference it will make in your life! (DJ)

Reader, are you praying daily for the gift of the Holy Spirit? Pray again through the seven essentials to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Read **Psalm 139:7-12** and **23,24**. Isn't this

comforting? No matter where you are in spiritually, even in the deepest darkness, the Spirit is there with you! Ask God to search your heart and remove any roadblocks so that He can send the Holy Spirit to baptize you fully today. _____

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Continue to pray that God give you a greater hunger for the baptism of the Holy Spirit today and everyday. Accept Him by faith and not feeling and follow His lead.

DAY 4
Once, while measuring out ingredients for my homemade bread, my scale battery died, and I was left to guess the flour to water ratio. After the baking process, I realized that I had not added enough water—my loaf came out dense and dry! Similarly, without the hydration of the Holy Spirit, our hearts will become dense and dry, with little to nothing appetizing to offer others in our daily lives.

Today we will explore what the Holy Spirit loves to do in us when we receive Him.

Pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, this morning I am asking in Jesus' name that You fill me with the Holy Spirit to blot out my sins, so that "times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Please hydrate me! Amen* (**Acts 3:19**).

We learned the 7 essentials to receiving the Holy Spirit. What does the Holy Spirit do in us and through us when we receive Him? What are two major results of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

1. Galatians 5:22-23 _____

_____

2. Acts 1:8 _____

The Holy Spirit transforms us on the INSIDE to give us the character of Christ, and He transforms us on the OUTSIDE to make us witnesses for Christ in all we say and do. God the Father, the Giver of all good gifts, takes great joy in giving us the Gift of the Holy Spirit every day.

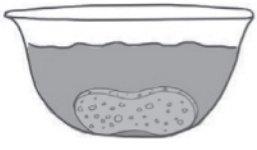


Take a look at the rock in the glass bowl. How much water will that rock absorb? How much water can be squeezed out of it?

_____ Read **Ezekiel 36:26**. What condition of the heart may hinder our receiving the Spirit? _____

What are some of the things that could make our heart "stony"? _____

_____



Now look at the drawing with the sponge. How much water can a sponge hold? _____ What happens when you squeeze a sponge saturated with water? _____

_____

Read **Ezekiel 36:26** and **27**. What does God want to do for us?

_____

He wants our hearts to be soft and flesh-like, as a sponge, so it can soak up the Holy Spirit who can then be easily squeezed out of our hearts all day long in our interaction with others. See **John 7:37-38**. How does Jesus describe this process? _____

_____

Look at the drawing of the empty glass, representing your life. Right now, before you read further, draw in the amount of water—that is, how filled you want your glass to be with the Holy Spirit today and everyday…



Did you draw a line across the top? Or better yet, was the water in your glass filled to overflowing? Go ahead. If that's your desire, draw lots of water flowing out of that glass!

Reader, how much of the Holy Spirit do you want in your life? Do you desire Him to totally transform you with His fruit daily? Do you desire to be a witness for Him in the way you speak, act, and treat others daily? Meditate on **John 7:37-39** and **Mark 9:23,24**. Is He saying anything in particular to you through those verses? _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Ask God now for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit and to make you a "river of living water" today. Believe that He has given you this gift by faith, not by feeling. Follow His lead today.

DAY 5
When we follow Jesus and ask for the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love, we may never know the extent of our influence for the cause of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Testimony
I loved my high school English and French teacher, Miss Easterbrook. Even though she had a physical disability, and we were not always well-behaved kids, she was always cheerful, sweet, and kind. As I was making my decision for a career when I was in college, I would often think of her example in my life, and I eventually also became a high school English and French teacher. When I wrote Miss Easterbrook a letter of thanks after graduation, she was surprised. She had no idea that she was in any way influencing me to follow in her footsteps. (LM)

Today we will explore the influence of a life filled with the Holy Spirit.

Pray: *Dear Father, please send the Holy Spirit to teach me and inspire me as I study your Word. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.*

Let's look at the example of the Holy Spirit's moving in the life of Stephen, the first Christian martyr.
Read **Acts 6:1-5**. Why was Stephen chosen and how is he described? _____

Read verses **8-10**. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, what did Stephen do? _____

Read verse **12**. How did the leaders of the synagogue react to Stephen? _____

Read verse **15**. As Stephen stood to speak, what did all the members of the council see? _____

Acts 7:1-53 is a record of Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking before the council. It must have been pin-drop quiet, for no one said a word until His last appeal. Read verses **51-53**. Who did Stephen say the leaders "always resisted"? _____

Read verses **54-60**. Contrast the actions of the council members with those of Stephen:

Stephen _____

Council members _____

Look back at their actions and reactions. How could Stephen say, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin" to those who acted like madmen toward him? _____

Here we see clearly the difference between being filled with the Holy Spirit and resisting His work in our lives. The Holy Spirit had transformed Stephen from the inside out and took control of his actions in a way that didn't make sense!

And did you notice who was standing on the sidelines, watching Stephen while he took care of the murderers' belongings?

(verse **58**) _____ Read **Acts 13:9**. What was Saul's Roman name, and who did He become? _____
Stephen had no idea how far reaching his influence was, as he breathed his last and "fell asleep" in death. Paul, who consented to Stephen's death, became a man filled with the Spirit, a powerful preacher, and a prolific writer of the gospel in the early Christian era!

Reader, when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, He will affect the way you act, even toward those who want to hurt you. He will use you to influence others—even your enemies—in ways that you may not be aware of. Take time to read carefully through **Acts 6 and 7** (or at least **7:48-60**), asking God to fill you with the Holy Spirit, as He did Stephen, so you can stand and be bold for Jesus in difficult times, always revealing the graces of the Spirit, no matter how others act toward you.

Challenge
As you pray for the Holy Spirit, also pray for an opportunity to shine like "the face of an angel" for Him today, even in the most difficult of circumstances.

DAY 6

When you are really thirsty, what do you crave to drink? _____ **Let's dive into today's study and learn how the Holy Spirit and water are connected and benefit our health.**

Pray: *My Father, come and baptize me with Your Holy Spirit as I look at the wonderful gifts You have given me in both the Holy Spirit and water. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Why is water so important to our health? Let's take a look.

Read **Exodus 15:22-25**. How many days did the children of Israel travel into the wilderness? _____ What problem came up? _____ What did God give them to drink? _____

When we lack water, we become thirsty. If this thirst is not quenched, we become dehydrated, which leads to thickening of

blood, sluggish circulation, electrolyte imbalance, muscle aches and pains, and fatigue. And if we allow dehydration to worsen, it will lead to death. Without drinking water, a human will die within 3-7 days (depending on circumstances).[1]

Let's look a little deeper into the benefits of water. Take this quiz. (Answers are under the Endnotes section.[3])

1. What percentage of our body is water?[1] _____
2. How many gallons of fluid do the adult kidneys filter each day?[1] _____
3. Drinking water can increase our energy level.[4] T F
4. Drinking water can help to flush out toxins from our body.[2] T F
5. Water can help regulate our body temperature.[2] T F
6. Drinking adequate amounts of water protects the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues.[2] T F
7. Water has zero calories.[2] T F

It is no wonder that water is essential for life and one of the most precious commodities on the planet! Just like we need water for our physical wellbeing, we also need the Holy Spirit for our spiritual wellbeing.

Take a few minutes to write down all the physical and spiritual parallels you can think of between water and the Holy Spirit. Here are two examples:

1. They both quench our thirst.
2. They both have power.
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Testimony

I used to have a weight problem, and one big part of the problem was my choice of beverages: I was consuming diet cokes, chocolate milk, orange juice, coffee, and tea on the regular…and hardly any water at all. I didn't have much motivation to reduce the intake of those beverages or food,

so I began by making a point to drink a glass of water before every meal. I noticed that I ate less. I began to drink water in the morning and to take bottles of water with me everywhere I went. Pretty soon, as I consumed more water, I began to lose the desire for other types of beverages.

God was subtly changing me, as I drank water before every meal and ditched the soft drinks I used to drink with my meals—He was rewiring my brain to a healthier way of life without me really noticing or even having to try too hard. I lost that weight, have never gained it back, and very rarely get sick.

I'm in my mid-seventies, still working full time, and active with my grandchildren and in prison ministry where I actually do a class on God's eight natural laws of health! I praise God for creating this natural (and free) beverage which has changed my life forever for the better. (CC)

So, how much water should we be drinking daily?

The following formula gives a minimum baseline for the amount of water we should drink daily. (Keep in mind that things like diet, exercise, outdoor temperature, medications, and so forth affect the amount of water needed.)

Formula: weight in pounds X 0.5 = amount of ounces of water needed per day
Metric Formula: 35 ml of water per kilogram of body weight every day

We need to ask for the Holy Spirit and drink water daily and even throughout the day. Here are a few suggestions regarding **when** to drink water:

- Drink 2 cups of water when you first get up. (Not in one gulp, but slowly as you spend your unrushed time with God.)

- Do not drink 30 minutes before a meal nor until 1 hour after a meal. Limit water/fluid intake at mealtime. (Drinking excess liquid with meals dilutes your stomach acid and makes digestion sluggish.)

- Drink 1-2 cups per hour between meals.

Lastly, just as we must immerse ourselves in the Holy Spirit, so should we bathe the outside of our bodies. This will help to wash away any dirt or waste from the skin pores. Ideally, we should bathe/shower daily, but if this is not feasible, at minimum once a week.

Your Turn
How much water do you drink a day? _____ If you are not meeting the minimum requirement of water for your body weight, work your way up to the required amount.
Ask the Holy Spirit how to incorporate more water inside and out.
Write down what He is impressing on your heart: _____

_____

Ask for the Holy Spirit to help you accomplish what He has asked you to do.

Health Challenge– Drink more water.
Daily drink at *minimum*: your weight in pounds X 0.5 = amount of ounces of water (35 ml of water per kilogram of body weight).

DAY 7

Have you ever worked with someone who is so in line with how you do and think about things that you don't even need language to communicate? You may begin a project, and the other person continues to work on the project exactly as you would have done, as though he or she could read your thoughts. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit as a helper to all His disciples, including you. We will see today how they work together like one person.

Today we will explore further how the Holy Spirit enhances the work of Christ in our lives.

Pray: *Father God, please fill me with the Holy Spirit to teach me about Jesus and what work You want to do in my life today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **John 15:26** and **16:8-14**. Make a list of all the things

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit will do in our lives:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now read **John 16:7**. WHEN did Jesus promise this Comforter? _____
Jesus even says that it would be to their advantage for Him to go away, to make way for the Holy Spirit to follow up His work!

Read **Romans 6:4,5**. What is water baptism symbolic of? ____
_____
Though the Holy Spirit was with Jesus since conception (**Matthew 1:20**), before He started His ministry, Jesus received a special anointing of the Holy Spirit at the "laver" of baptism (**Mark 1:9-11**).

After His short, three-year ministry and death (on the altar), He made a U-turn and started His journey back into the sanctuary. He was buried (symbolically in the watery grave of the laver) and resurrected to newness of life! And He continues to call us to follow Him and have the same experience!

Read **Acts 1:4,5**. Before He left, what did Jesus say the disciples should do to receive the "Promise of the Father"?

_____

Read **Acts 1:9-11**. Where did He go after His time with His disciples? _____

While the disciples waited for this promised baptism of the Holy Spirit, what did they do? (v.**14**) _____
_____
They followed Jesus' bidding to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit, knowing that their Heavenly Father wanted to give it to them so badly (**Luke 11:13**).

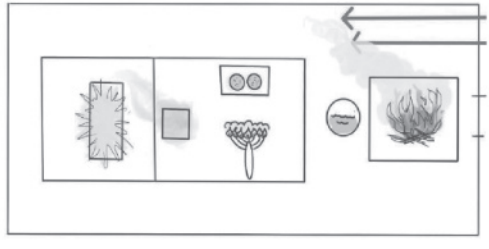
Read **Acts 2:1-4**. What happened ten days later? _____

John the Baptist's prediction of Jesus' baptism of fire and the Holy Spirit happened (**Matthew 3:11**). At this point, Jesus symbolically passed the torch to the Holy Spirit who became our personal Helper, Comforter, and Guide.



Reader, meditate on Jesus' words in **John 14:16-18**. Isn't it comforting to know that you are not left as an orphan! Though Jesus is in heaven, the Holy Spirit is representing Him here on earth. Right now, ask your Heavenly Father to baptize you with the Holy Spirit! And whether you feel it or not, believe that the Father has given Him to you, and thank Him for His wonderful gift. _____

Challenge
Discipleship Principle 3
Every day, ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. Practice receiving this gift by faith, not by feeling. Follow His lead, and keep asking for more—daily.



Health Principle 3
Every day, drink more water.

Week two's challenge was to memorize **Ez.36:26**. Add v. **27** to that card and memorize it.

GOD'S WAY TO *BE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 8
PRINCIPLE 4: DISCOVER JESUS IN HIS WORD AND IN PRAYER

As for God, His way is perfect;
The word of the Lord is proven;
He is a shield to all who trust in Him.
God is my strength and power,
and He makes my way perfect.
2 Samuel 22:31,33

Let's review the previous principles of discipleship. Before peeking at the list below, use the diagram on the previous page and see if you can remember the gist of discipleship and health principles 1 to 3 in order.

Now fill in the blanks:
DP1: All day today, practice coming to Jesus as you _____ at any and every moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done! Be _____ of His love and His salvation which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.
HP1: Get your _____

DP2: Honor Jesus as Lord:
Every evening, ask God to awaken you in the morning to have unrushed _____ alone with Him.
Every morning, surrender all you are, all you have, and your _____ and electronics to Him.
All day long, by the power of Jesus who lives within you by faith, follow His lead in all your _____
HP2: Practice Spirit-filled _____

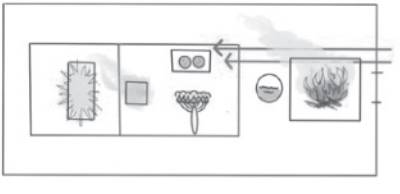
DP3: Every day, ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the _____. Practice receiving this gift by _____, not by feeling. Follow His lead!
HP3: Drink more _____

How are you doing? Are you following Jesus daily into His sanctuary? It is not too late to come to Jesus, and surrender everything to Him now. If you haven't yet, you can pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you in your study and in all you are called to accomplish today. Also, ask God to continue to help you practice both the discipleship and health principles, as He convicts you, every single day.

DAY 1

Once, on my way home from a short summer vacation, I stopped at a gas station to sleep for a few hours. I woke up refreshed and got on the highway to continue my trek home. Almost two hours later, I noticed that the landscape was looking awfully familiar. I looked at a road sign, and with horror, I realized that I was southbound when I should have been going north! If I had turned on my GPS, I could have avoided this very long detour. (LM)

As born-again Christians, are we traveling along the way without our GPS—Our God Positioning System? We may come to Jesus, surrender to Him as Lord of our lives, and ask for the Holy Spirit, but do we stop there, in the outer court? Reader, God wants so much more for you. As He moves into the Holy Place, He calls you to follow Him.



Today we will begin our exploration of following Jesus, our Way and Truth and Life, into the Holy Place.

Pray: *Dear Father, please baptize me anew this morning with Your Holy Spirit. Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me—that I may catch fresh glimpses of Jesus in Your Word and then reflect You to everyone today. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.*

Before going to the cross, Jesus prayed a beautiful prayer for His disciples, which, by the way, included you! What does Jesus ask His Father to do for us in **John 17:17**? _____

_____

Look up the word "sanctify" in the dictionary, and write down 2-3 synonyms _____

_____

In verse **16**, Jesus is telling His Father that His disciples are "not of the world"—they are "set apart" by truth. What is truth, according to verse **17**? _____
He wants to make us holy, set us apart by the truth of His Word!

Now read **John 1:14**. Jesus is called the _____, full of _____ and _____. In **John 14:6**, Jesus calls Himself not only the Way, but also the _____, and the Life. The Living Word of God—Jesus—is the Truth behind the whole written Word! As we spend time with Him in the written Word, the truth we learn about Jesus will make us holy and "set apart." Note that this transformation is *totally His work*—not ours. He has saved us in the outer court, but He also wants to sanctify us daily in the secret place. He calls us to follow Him—the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Word—into the Holy Place.



As we enter there, the first piece of furniture to our right is the table of shewbread with 12 loaves of unleavened bread divided into 2 piles. Every Sabbath, the priests put out new loaves and ate the old ones in the course of the next week. Read the following verses and record below what bread is related to in Scripture:

Matthew 4:4 _____
John 6:35 _____ The table of shewbread represents both the written Word and Jesus, the Word made flesh, the Way, the Truth, and the Bread of Life.

Read **Leviticus 24:5,6**. Was the bread on the table of shewbread of divine or human origin? _____
Man made and arranged it, but God set it apart for holy purposes and blessed it. The Word, the Bible, is also seen as a union of human and divine, for "men of God spoke as they were

moved by the Holy Spirit" (**2 Peter 1:20**). While all the truths revealed in the Bible are "given by inspiration of God," yet they are expressed through the personalities and words of men (**2 Timothy 3:16**).

The shewbread especially provides a beautiful picture of our Jesus who shared divinity with His Father and the Holy Spirit in heaven, and whose nature became a union of human and divine when He traversed the veil, being reduced to the form of an embryo in the womb of a human. (See Endnotes, Week 4, Footnote 1.)

Choose **five** (or more) passages from the list below and take some time to look up the verses (the Old Testament cross references are in parentheses in case you want to look those up as well), and write down when and how Jesus incorporated the written Word in His life and teachings:

Matthew 4:1-4, 7, 10 (Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:16; 6:13) _____

_____

Matthew 8:4 (Leviticus 14:2) _____

_____

Matthew 27:46 (Psalm 22:1) _____

_____

Mark 11:17 (Isaiah 56:7;Jeremiah 7:11) _____

_____

Mark 12:35,36 (Psalm 110:1) _____

_____

Luke 4:18,19 (Isaiah 61:1,2) _____

_____

Luke 7:22 (Isaiah 35:5-6) _____

_____

Luke 7:26,27 (Malachi 3:1) _____

_____

Luke 23:46 (Psalm 31:5) _____

_____

If Jesus, the very Word of God made flesh, felt the need to saturate His life and teachings in the Word of God, so He could

live victoriously moment by moment—how much more do we need time with Him in His written Word?

Reader, meditate on Jesus' prayer for you in **John 17:14-18**. Do you wish to commit to following Jesus all the way as your Way, your Truth, and your Bread and Word of Life? Do you desire to be sanctified by His truth in the written Word? If so, pray:

My Father, as I begin to study this week on how to incorporate the Word and prayer into my life, I ask that You send Your Holy Spirit to speak to my heart in such a compelling way that I will find myself hungering for more time in Your Word and in prayer! Oh Lord, I want to be sanctified, set apart for You. May Your Spirit of truth guide me into all truth! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge
Pick one verse from **John 17** that you are drawn to and write it on a card. Review it as often as you can today.

DAY 2
I can be hyper-focused sometimes, and particularly in texting on my phone, my mind may be so centered on what I need at the moment that I go straight to the point. My text might look like this: "Hey Joan, could you send me the document as soon as possible?" A little later, I'll get the response I want, but the person sends another text immediately after: "Good Morning, by the way…" That's when I'll realize I had totally bypassed the social protocols of preparing my friend for my request, making it sound quite abrupt, perhaps even demanding. (LM)

Do we sometimes do that with God? Do we go immediately into our supplications, our demands, our necessities? God certainly wants us to come to Him anytime with anything—He is there for us in every possible emergency. However, in our special time with Him in the morning, there are ways to prepare our own hearts to receive the Word He wants to give us that day!

Today we will begin our exploration of how to prepare our hearts to spend meaningful time with God.

Pray: *Dear Father in heaven,* ***Mark 1:35*** *tells us that Jesus got up "a long while before daylight...and departed to a soliary place" to pray to You. I ask that You send the Holy Spirit to teach me how to focus like He did. Prepare my heart to have meaningful time with You in Your Word and in prayer. I also ask that You give me a fresh awe and love of You and Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Psalm 46:10 & 1 Kings 19:11,12**. How does God want us to spend time with Him? _____
God is calling us out of all our distractions—away from our phones, while the house is still asleep, before we have to rush off to get ready for work or school—in the early morning when all is quiet, to be still and wait on Him. He knows that perfect time for us, so keep asking Him to wake you up in the morning for that wonderful, unrushed time with Him in the Word and prayer (**Isaiah 50:4**).

Read the following verses and note what each person did as they entered into the presence of God?

King David before the assembly: **1 Chronicles 29:10-12** _____
_____
The people of Israel at temple dedication: **2 Chronicles 5:13**
_____
Nehemiah: **Nehemiah 9:5b,6** _____
The Psalmists: First verse of **Psalms 144, 145, 146, 147**...
_____
Jesus: **Matthew 6:9** _____
How should we begin our time in prayer? Read **Psalm 100:4**. As we daily enter the gates into the courts of the sanctuary, what are we called to do? _____

Praise
God is the basis of worship, so we need to focus on Him in our worship time. Just think of heaven–we will no longer have to confess our sins, nor pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor raise up our voices in supplication for our lost loved ones... We will continually, spontaneously praise and thank God for eternity for "He is good, for His mercy endures forever!"

Reader, bow your head right now and praise God for who He is and for everything He has done. If this is new to you, you may feel as though you don't have much to say. Open up a psalm of worship (such as the ones mentioned above), and pray and meditate on the words of the psalmists to God! Incorporate music in your worship. Ask God to bring a song to your mind to end your prayer.

Confession
When we spend time in the presence of our "great and awesome God," praising and thanking Him, we often realize how we fall short of His perfect character. (See **Daniel 9:4,5; Isaiah 6:5; Exodus 3:5,6**.) What does God promise those who confess their sins? **1 John 1:9** _____

_____

Reader, take a moment to confess your specific sins to God right now. End with a song that comes to your mind. Note that once you confess, you can be assured that your sins are completely gone, whether you feel it or not. Read **Micah 7:18,19**. What does God do with your sins? _____

_____

Remember that! Do not go fishing out what God has buried in the dark depths of the sea!

Has this been a blessing for you? Remember that as soon as you wake up, after you surrender all to Jesus and ask for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to spend time worshiping your Lord—thanking and praising Him, and confessing your sin, allowing Him to prepare your heart to receive His Word.

Challenge
Tomorrow morning, use **Psalm 103** as your Psalm of worship. It begins with praise and thanksgiving and continues into confession (as of verse **8**).

Note:
- Struggling with constant distraction from digital devices and smartphones? See tips in Appendix A.
- See Appendix B for Scriptures to get you started on this journey of spending time in worship to God each morning.

- See Appendix C for Song Suggestions for Worship.

DAY 3

Did you begin the day with yesterday's challenge? If not, go back, and do it now.

How well do you know your best friend or your spouse? Could you name their least favorite food and what they enjoy as a hobby? Do you know their deepest aspirations? Why do you know all these things about this special person in your life? Chances are you have spent a lot of time together—focusing on listening and speaking to each other as well as doing things together.

How about Jesus? Do you really *know* Him or just a lot *about* Him? He invites you to get to know Him on a personal level and to share your days with Him.

Today we will explore how to develop a closer relationship with God through His Word.

Pray: *Dear Father in heaven, I ask that You send the Holy Spirit to teach me what my focus should be in Your Word and in prayer. I also ask that You give me a fresh awe and love of You and Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

How can we have meaningful time with God in His Word?
If I told you that God has a special message for you today, would you be excited? Today, would you like to get a word *directly* from the Lord? Well, take a look at your Bible—God has a special word for you in there every day. This is the way He loves to communicate with you.

What does Jesus say is the focus of all His word? **John 5:39**. _____To whom was Jesus speaking? (see v.**16** and **18**). _____

It is interesting that Jesus is talking to the leaders of the people, all of whom knew *by memory* at least the first five books of the Bible (the books of Moses). It is sad to think that we can know the Word of God and say it by heart and yet still not know WHO

it is talking about. The Jewish leaders were even planning ways of killing Jesus, the one who was the focus of their beloved Scriptures! So, our first priority is to *look for Jesus* in the scriptural passage we are reading.

Read **Matthew 7:24** & **James 1:22**. Once we find Jesus in the Word, what is our priority? _____
The word must be *practiced*, not merely heard or read.

To summarize, in order to have meaningful and focused time in God's Word, ask Him for the Holy Spirit to show you two things:

1. A *fresh* picture of Jesus in the verse/passage.
2. How to apply it to your life *today*.

Practice: Spend some time alone with God right now, practicing what you have just learned:

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal a fresh picture of Jesus in God's Word.
2. Read and meditate on **Mark 1:21-28**, asking God for a fresh picture of Jesus.
3. Read the passage again and ask God how He wants you to apply it.
4. Write down your discoveries. _____

_____

_____

_____



Did the Holy Spirit show you something fresh about Jesus? Did He speak to you about how to apply that Word to your life today? Is it your desire to know what personal message God has for you in His Word every day? If so, send up a prayer, asking the Lord to give you greater desire for and increased understanding of His Word. Pray **Isaiah 11:2**. _____

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Every day, after you prepare your heart in worship, look for a fresh picture of Jesus in the written Word of God. Pray and apply what you have discovered to the way you live and how you worship Him.

DAY 4

As a child, did you ever want something so badly that you constantly bugged your parents about it until you got it? Or maybe you have been on the other end, where your child has begged you for something to the point of irritation. The good news for us as followers of Jesus is that He *loves* for us to continually pray about anything and everything. He is never annoyed at our constant pursuit of Him in prayer. "Just keep asking," He coaxes us, "I will answer at the right moment—and when You are also ready to receive the answer."

Today we will explore in more depth how to have meaningful time in prayer and supplication.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, Thank You for the privilege of prayer. Thank You for being available day and night to hear my cries to You. Thank You for an outpouring of Your Holy Spirit on me today, so I can understand better how to have meaningful time with You in prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Supplication
What is "supplication" specifically? (See dictionary if necessary.) _____
It differs from prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and confession. Supplication is basically making petitions or requests to God.

Paul exhorts all Christians to put on "the whole armor of God" daily, so they "may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil" (**Ephesians 6:11**).

Read **Ephesians 6:17,18**. After the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," what is the next "part" of the armor? _____ He calls us to gird not only our bodies, but our frame of mind! He calls us as soldiers to go into battle with an attitude of prayer!

In **Philippians 4:6**, what does he say we should do instead of being anxious? _____

_____

What will be the result according to verse **7**? _____

_____



What is the next piece of furniture in the Holy Place, the piece between the table of shewbread and the lampstand? (p.64) _____

_____

Read **Revelation 5:8**. What does incense represent? ___ Twice daily, morning and evening, the priests went in to tend to the incense, to make sure it was *continually* burning (**Exodus 30:8**). The curtain to the Most Holy Place did not reach the ceiling, so the smoke from the incense went up and over the curtain before the mercy seat of the ark. This incense rising from the altar of incense was the only connection between the Holy and Most Holy Place.

Read the short parable in **Luke 11:5-8**. How is Jesus calling us to pray? _____
Note the language Jesus uses in verses **9,10**: He wants us to _____ and _____ and _____. He is calling us to pray continually—with *confidence* and *endurance* (See **Hebrews 10:35,36**).

Jesus wants to hear our requests for ourselves as well as our intercessions for others, and He wants us to pray to the point that we think we are being obnoxious. (See the story of the persistent widow in **Luke 18:1-8**.) Jesus will not tell us to stop; He loves it when we pray to Him "without ceasing" (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**). He says in **Jeremiah 33:3**: "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you do not know!"

How else should we pray? **John 14:14** and **1 John 5:14**. In His _____ and according to His _____ .

There is a lot of talk today about "hearing" God's voice. How can we tell God's voice from any of the others, including our own? We must remember that the Bible says our hearts are naturally deceitful, that not one person is "righteous,"—in fact, even our goodness is likened to "filthy rags" (**Jeremiah 17:9**; **Romans 3:10**; **Isaiah 64:6**).

Thus, we cannot trust our random thoughts or feelings to steer us correctly. We can only trust the One who knows all and sees all. Only He can steer us in the right direction. Read **Psalm 32:8**. What is God's promise to you? _____

_____

God has not left us without direction. Read **Psalm 119:105**. What gift has He given humanity down through the ages as the primary way God loves to communicate with us? _____ Read **Amos 3:7** and **2 Peter 1:21**. How does God choose to reveal Himself to us? _____

God has taken great pains to speak through His prophets and preserve their writings in His Word, the Bible. Read **2 Timothy 3:16,17**. Write down all the ways the inspired Scripture of God is "profitable": _____

_____

Notice Timothy qualifies that *ALL Scripture* is profitable! The written Word of God is His primary way of speaking to us. In order to interpret His voice in the Word correctly, we must pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance as we read and meditate on passages of Scripture, presenting to God our requests.

Sometimes God does speak to us through the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit, but how do we know if it's His voice and not our own or that of the enemy? Read **Isaiah 8:20**. What does the Word tell us to do with our impressions? _____

_____

We need to check every*thing, yes, EVERYTHING* we hear to the *WRITTEN WORD of GOD.* He will not contradict Himself! In **Malachi 3:6**, He says, "I am God; I do not _____." **Hebrews 13:8** says, "Jesus Christ is the _____ yesterday, today, and forever"!

Read **John 10:4,5**. When we "hear His voice" through the Spirit and the Word, what should we do? _____
When we *obey immediately*, we will hear His voice more and more *clearly*! (See Appendix J, Knowing God's Will for Your Life.)

Testimony

A friend of mine was in dire straits; she asked for help and after praying about it, I felt impressed to help her. I had a large savings at that time and knew that she was very poor and in desperate need of something to keep her child in Christian education. She, of course, promised to pay me as soon as she got caught up.

Close to a year passed and needing some extra money, I thought to ask if she could at least start making small payments back to me. For the first time ever, I had depleted my savings, and I was feeling very foolish, regretting having lent her money. Yet, at the same time, I had a deep impression in my heart to let the debt go. That was totally against my original plan (and certainly against any logic in my head), and I started to go back and forth, arguing with myself. I kept praying for peace, but I had no rest.

Finally, one day, the thought came: *Call her and tell her you want her to keep the money, so she won't be concerned about paying you back.* I thought I was going crazy! After a long mental battle, I stopped in the middle of what I was doing, looked up, and said out loud: "Ok, God! I'll do it! I will *not* ask her for one cent back!" At that very moment, I heard the ding of my phone, alerting me to an incoming text. It was from one of my son's friends, and it read: "I was young and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his descendants begging bread" (**Psalm 37:25**). *Wow, God! I thought, You are giving me assurance about the step of faith You are calling me to make!*

But it gets better! My son's friend also happened to be my friend's son. (Note that neither my son nor hers knew about the loan!) I immediately texted him back to ask why he sent me that text. He said that he was on his way out the door to go to work when *my son* had sent him a Bible text, which he

took as a direct call from the Lord to spend more time with him before leaving the house. As he went by his mother's room, he saw her Bible on her bed. He jumped on the bed and opened it directly to this text and felt something telling him in his heart to send it to me.

Tears welled up in my eyes (as they are now as I write this experience down). *Who am I, God, that You would go through so much trouble to let me know that what You called me to do was totally within Your will? You even sent me confirmation in the Word from her own personal Bible through her son via a text message that came the second after I spoke my final decision out loud!*

That was the first of many financial adventures that God has taken me on. He knew I needed massive confirmation that time, as He started me on this journey of letting go when it makes no fiscal or logical sense—not to save money at all anymore and at times spend it when I don't have it yet—namely to use my "unrighteous mammon" for the work of the Lord. And I could write a book of experiences, leaps of faith after which He provided over and over again. In fact, He has often provided to the point of luxury!

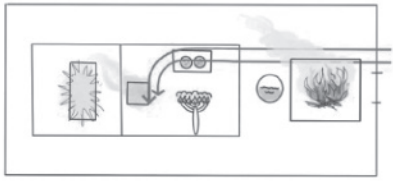
One of my go-to texts every time He calls me to make a major investment is **Philippians 4:19**. Truly, I can attest that "my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." And if you ask, He will bend over backwards to clearly confirm in His Word His desire for you in every situation. (Anonymous)

Reader, wherever you are in your spiritual experience, remember **John 6:37**. When you come to Jesus, He will never _____. *Never*! If you are hungering and thirsting for more of Him, no matter your condition or circumstances, He will welcome you with open arms. He just says, "COME!"

Would you like David's experience described in **Psalm 27:4**, to have that one desire to seek Him alone, to behold His beauty and inquire in His temple? Do you desire (to desire) more

meaningful, unrushed time in the Word and in prayer with your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? He wants that time with you too! Pray this prayer right now:

Dear Father in Heaven, I come in Jesus' name, asking that you increase my desire to sit in Your presence, in Your Word and prayer every day. Like the Psalmist, I want to "seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face forevermore"! As I dig into Your Word for valuable buried treasure, give me the Holy Spirit, so I can see a fresh picture of Jesus and what You are calling me to do. Help me, Lord, to obey You without hesitation.
I thank You that I can come to You, no matter my condition or how I feel, and present my supplications to You. May Your will be done in my life. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayers, Amen (**Psalm 105:4**).



Challenge
Every day, after spending time in worship to the Lord, discover Jesus in His Word and in prayer.

DAY 5 - Health, part 1
As we have learned this week, the Word of God is our spiritual nourishment. **Today we will look at how we can use food to sustain our physical and mental health.**

Pray: *Gracious Father, open my eyes to see, my ears to hear, and my mind to understand the lessons You would like to teach me today about Your Word and my health. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Where does the human body get energy to function? The food we eat is digested in the stomach and intestines to usable fuel for our body. Therefore, **what** we eat, **when** we eat and the **quantity** of food we eat is important.

What to eat
Read **Genesis 1:29**. What types of foods does God give us to eat? _____

Simply put, fruits, vegetables, legumes (beans), whole grains, nuts, and seeds are what God originally gave Adam and Eve to eat. These foods provide the needed protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals our bodies need to maintain health.

List your favorite....
Fruit _____ Vegetable _____
Bean _____ Whole grain _____
Nut _____ Seed _____
Studies show that a whole food, plant-based diet improves heart health, decreases blood sugar, helps improve mental health, decreases inflammation, and helps with weight control.[1, 2]

Testimony
While in college, I was plagued by illness after illness, and vivid nightmares of suffocation due to issues with my lungs. I was overwhelmed by deep, aching exhaustion, no matter how many hours I slept. When I met my husband, he looked past my weakness and chronic illness and fought beside me to find answers. We tried everything my doctors suggested for years, without relief.

When I was at my weakest, after much prayer, I decided to give a new lung doctor a chance. Within one month, she identified a genetic condition with a simple cheek swab and started a new treatment plan designed to control symptoms. This time the treatment plan started helping! God is so good: I now breathe easily with very few lung issues. However, though I was out of immediate danger, I was told that my condition was long-term terminal. I knew I needed to make myself as healthy as possible to have the best chance at a longer, more functional life.

While researching on how to get some degree of physical restoration, I found **1 Corinthians 10:31**: "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." For so long I had struggled with food and beverage choices and yet had never seen it as a spiritual concern, only that it was unhealthy. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** says, "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies." The more that

I recognized my body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, the more I began to see my sickly self as a spiritual resting place for God. I realized that His love and desire for me encompassed not only good spiritual health, but physical as well.

Throughout my life, I kept God at a distance, trying to protect myself from being disappointed by Him. I began to realize how, all along, He was the One who was completely open armed, risking everything for me, giving me total freedom to ultimately accept Him or not. **John 10:10** gave me a clear contrast between Satan's true motive and God's perfect plan for me: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." I began to see that God lovingly provides advice in His Word so I can have abundant health and life!

It was a long and prayerful process, but eventually, I got on track with biblical, healthy living. As I followed God's health plan, I was overwhelmed with peace and a powerful knowledge that with His help, I really could be more than just a dying person, physically and spiritually. He had a plan to prosper me, not to harm me, plans to give me hope and a future (**Jeremiah 29:11**). With my whole heart (and stomach), I have dedicated my life to God. I now seek to honor Him with my whole body and the breath of life He has given me. (PS)

When to eat

(The following is recommended for older children and adults. Newborn and infants need to have more meals if available).
1 Kings 17:6. How many times did the ravens bring food each day? _____ Two to three meals a day is best for our bodies.[2] Giving your stomach 4-5 hours between meals during the day allows it to rest and prepare for the next meal. This means we should refrain from snacking between meals. Also, your last meal of the day is best eaten several hours before bedtime.[3]

How much to eat

Read **Proverbs 23:2,3,20-21**. What do these verses tell us about quantities of food? _____

Make a fist. This is approximately the size of your stomach. When you eat, the stomach stretches to accommodate what you put into it. Most adult stomachs can hold about a quart (4 cups) of food. If too much is eaten at one sitting, the stomach is burdened and digestion weakened. This leads to poor health.

Your Turn
What types of food does the main part of your diet consist of?

_____

How many meals do you eat a day? _____
When is your last meal of the day? _____
How much do you eat at one sitting? _____
Read **1 Corinthians 10:31**. Ask God to show you if you need to make any changes in your nutrition. List them below. _____

_____

_____

If He shows you what to do, ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to help you make those changes. He wants you to succeed in all things and to do all things for His honor and glory. He wants to give you an abundant life! (**John 10:10**)

Health Challenge– Practice healthy, balanced eating habits.

DAY 6 - Health, part 2

Take in a deep breath, and time how long you can hold it. How long did you hold your breath? _____ We can't live without fresh air for long—most of us can't hold our breath past 2 minutes! **Today we are going to look at how fresh air is vital for our physical health and life.**

Pray: *Holy Father, breathe into me your Holy Spirit as I study about the air I breathe and why it is important for my health. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Genesis 2:7**. How did man become a living being? _____

_____

Read **Psalm 3:5**. Who sustains us? _____
Read **1 Thessalonians 5:16-19**. What should we do without ceasing? _____
God gave us our first breath, and He continues to sustain us through reflexive (automatic) breathing. He also calls us to

continually connect with Him in prayer as we go throughout our days—until we automatically turn to Him *first* in every situation. Prayer is as vital to our spiritual life and well-being as breathing fresh air is to our physical life and well-being.

Fun Facts about Fresh Air

Fresh air is made up of a variety of gases. Three of these are nitrogen (78%), oxygen (21%) and carbon dioxide (< 0.1%).[4] We take in nitrogen and oxygen from the air we inhale, and we breathe out carbon dioxide and nitrogen. This breathing cycle repeats on average 12-15 times a minute, and we don't even think about it.

Fresh air:

- soothes the nerves and elevates one's mood, thus reducing depression.[5]
- stimulates our appetite and aids in digestion.[5]
- induces sound, refreshing sleep.[5]

Studies show that oxygen saturation and sense of breath control can be improved with singing.[7] It is interesting to note that the word *sing* appears over 400 times in Scripture and at least 50 of those times are commands to sing! God told us to sing before science discovered its benefits, and how beautiful that He gave us such a pleasurable form of improving our fresh air intake.

Testimony

When I have been sick in the past, I have mainly stayed indoors, not feeling like going outside at all, particularly if the weather was cool. I heard about how important fresh air was for preventing and healing disease, so the next time I was sick, I forced myself daily to go outside to take a small stroll, breathe in the fresh air, and soak in the sunlight. What a difference it made! I had a lot more energy during the day, and my symptoms were not as bad as when I stayed inside. I now take in fresh air and do breathing exercises regularly, which have also helped me mentally, relieving anxiety and stress. (DDM)

Your Turn

How often do you breathe in fresh air, that is air from the outdoors? _____

How often do you open your windows or doors to let fresh air come into your living space? _____
Pause and read the breathing techniques listed below. Have you ever tried a breathing technique before? _____
Read **Psalm 100:2**. How are we to come into God's presence?

_____

How often do you sing praises to God? _____
Ask the Holy Spirit how to incorporate more correct and deeper breathing. Write down what He is asking of you to do: _____

_____

Ask for the Holy Spirit to help you accomplish what He has asked you to do.

Health Challenge– Daily sing a praise song to God, and go outside to get some fresh air.

Breathing Technique 1:

1. Put your hand on your abdomen (lower stomach area).
2. Breathe in through the nose for a count of 4, letting your abdomen push your hand outward. Your shoulders should not move.
3. Hold your breath for a count of 5.
4. Exhale through your nose or mouth over a count of 6. Your hand should feel your abdomen move inward.
5. Do this 4-6 times in a row and work up to 5-6 times a day.

Breathing Technique 2:

Breathing deeply and slowly helps improve mood. For example:

1. Move to a green space and take 3 deep breaths over a minute.
2. Repeat this once every hour to keep your mood elevated.

DAY 7

On day 1 of this week, we discovered that Jesus was steeped in the Word of God. There He found his marching orders. He referred to stories and people in the Old Testament. He knew much of it by heart, quoting it to reveal a truth about Himself. He took it as the Word of His Father to Him personally—using it to guide Him daily and to resist the tempter's snares. He commanded those whom He healed to follow the scriptural guidelines and take their thank gifts to the priests. He quoted

scripture in His greatest extremity on the cross, when perhaps He had no words of His own. In short, Jesus recognized the authority of *all* Scripture— and said they were *all* about Him! They were His reality!

Reader, how do you esteem the Word in your life? Are you as saturated in the Word as Jesus was?

Today we will continue to explore Jesus' emphasis on His written Word.

Pray: *Dear Father, as I open Your Word, please send the Holy Spirit to teach me, enlighten me, and empower me to live by it. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Luke 24:13-18**. Two of Jesus' disciples are traveling to a small village seven miles from Jerusalem. They had plenty of time to talk. Who joins them? _____
Did Cleopas and his friend recognize Jesus? _____

Pause for a moment. If you were Jesus, how would you choose to reveal yourself to your disciples? _____
Most of us would probably make it obvious that we were Him, showing them the wounds in our hands, feet, and side. That would be the easiest and most convincing way, right? Let's look at what Jesus does.

In verses **19-24**, He just listens to them. They mournfully summarize all the experiences of the past couple days. Then Jesus responds. Read verses **25-27**. What does He say? How did Jesus convince them that He—the man they were talking about—was indeed the Christ? _____

_____

Take note that He used the *written* Word to explain Himself, though He was the Word made flesh! How was that a better, more convincing argument? _____

_____

They had stronger proof that He was the Savior, the Messiah revealed in the whole Old Testament. He was not just Jesus, the man, but He was Jesus, the Lord God of hosts, the

fulfillment of all Scripture, and the long-promised Savior of the world.

However, they still didn't recognize Him. As they were getting close to the village, the two asked Him to come and stay with them. Read verses **30-35**. When were their eyes opened?

_____

How beautifully symbolic of Jesus' seven-mile walk and talk with them. He had just blessed and broken down the Bread of Life, the Word of God, and opened their eyes to how all Scripture testifies of Him (**John 5:39**). What was their comment about their conversation with Jesus in the Word? (**Luke 24:32**)

_____

_____

Their hearts, bursting with joy, and their weariness gone, they left the broken bread uneaten and made their way back to Jerusalem. Hurrying as much as they dared in the dark, climbing over steep places, stumbling, losing their way but finding it again, they did not know that Jesus was right next to them the whole time.

Can you imagine their conversation? They probably went over and over again all the truth Jesus had revealed about Himself in the Old Testament:
—Did you get that? He was the rock smitten by Moses; the water that gushed out was His blood shed for us!
—And the serpent on the pole: that was Him lifted up so we could look at Him to be saved and healed!
They couldn't wait to tell the disciples the greatest news ever given to mankind: JESUS IS RISEN! And He is alive forevermore!

Reader, did you notice to *whom* Jesus chose to reveal Himself through His Word? These are two unknown disciples—they are not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture—in fact, one remains unnamed.

Sometimes, as laity, we often feel like we need a pastor or Bible teacher to explain to us the Word of God. Many of us go to them wanting answers to our questions. However, Jesus

showed us very clearly that we don't have to be a religious leader or a Peter or John to understand the Bible. Remember that our Helper and Guide, the Holy Spirit, has accompanied us into the Holy Place. In **Psalm 25:8,9,12**. Who does David say the Lord will teach? _____

_____

Testimony

The opportunity to buy the duplex I was renting came up in what seemed like a providential way. I had been gone four months, supporting my aging parents and when things stabilized, was able to take a break and return home for a couple of weeks. That's when I learned that the owners would be listing the place for sale in ten days. What were the chances of this happening just now when I returned for a visit? Then my sister told me over the phone: "We're doing fine here. Why don't you just stay there for a while?" So began two months of intense and time-consuming learning curves.

I went ahead and put down earnest money before the house went on the market. In spite of what seemed to me as "providential" circumstances, there were some points of concern. The loan application process got complicated, and closing got pushed out to give me more time. Then consulting "a multitude of counselors" helped me see how the loan which I was about to sign was not good for me, and so I changed companies. I started to think about the amount of debt I would be taking on...Now what? Had God not been leading me in this process? With this new information, do I proceed with the purchase or bail and lose my earnest money and all the time I had invested?

In light of all this, a friend suggested that I fast and pray for God's answer. She also shared her testimony of a job decision where circumstances flowed toward a certain option, which was confirmed by the opinion of many prayer partners and friends. Late in the process, one of her friends dared to ask her: "Did you get confirmation for this job in the Word?" When she took the time to ask God, the answer He gave her in the Word went against the position she had just accepted. She resigned two weeks after signing the contract and to this day, knows it

was the best decision and is so grateful for that one friend who dared challenge her to look to the Word.

Waking up early on my fast and prayer day and reviewing how I understood God was directing, I felt led to trust and continue this faith-building home ownership journey with Him. Later that day, my friend again challenged me: "Did you find confirmation in the Word?" No, I had not. Just impressions. I spent a second, then a third day, fasting and praying about the situation, and God prepared me for His answer, which He gave me through an unexpected and miraculous set of circumstances.

As I was praying on that second day, my housemate was in her room, praying for me as well as some of her own concerns. At that time, one of her friends sent her a YouTube sermon, and she moved outside to the back porch to listen to it. During the sermon, the pastor quoted something in Habakkuk that seemed to apply to my circumstances. She thought, Is this for my housemate? Should I say something or not? She just decided to pray that I would come down to her while she was listening if she should say anything. She knew this would be highly unlikely: everyone in the house knew that she preferred to be undisturbed while she was in her "God time."

However, as I was praying, I felt impressed to go see her. When I went downstairs and could see that she was outside on the porch listening to a sermon, I hesitated. But the urge was so strong that I went out to see her. She looked surprised but paused the recording to tell me about this sermon based on Habakkuk and that I should read the book. I went back and read through it, but I didn't see anything that seemed to apply to my situation.

God, I prayed again the next day, I'm desperate. You promise to instruct and teach me in the way I ought to go, to guide me with Your eye...please, show me in the Word the way I ought to go regarding this house! A little later, a friend called to pray and share her family devotional. The text she quoted was **Matthew 7:7**: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." God was calling me to continue persevering in prayer. He would answer; I had to

have faith that He would. With this command to ask, I asked for several key concessions. The answer was always no, even when the second appraisal surprisingly came back lower than contract price!

By the third day of fasting, and the day before closing, I still had no answer in the Word. As I reviewed how I got to this point, and remembered all the congratulations for securing the contract for this well-located duplex, my realtor called to let me know that the sellers won't accept anything less than the contract price: they have another buyer ready to pay even more to secure this contract. "I think it's a miracle that you got this house, but the title company has to know by noon in order to prepare for closing tomorrow. What is your decision?" The good news was that the unexpected lower appraisal value meant that if I declined, I'd get my earnest money back. The bad news was that there were only 50 minutes left for God to get me His answer, confirmed in His written word.

I tried calling my dad. No answer. Now, how am I supposed to find my answer in the Bible with so few minutes left? Then I remembered how unusual the circumstances surrounding the sermon link on the obscure book of Habakkuk. I was impressed to read through Habakkuk again. At 11:50 AM, 10 minutes before I had to make a decision, the words of **Habakkuk 2:7** jolted my brain:

"Will not your creditors rise up suddenly?
Will they not awaken who oppress you?
And you will become their booty."

Such clarity, and just in the nick of time! God made it perfectly clear to me in His Word what He had been trying to tell me all along: that I should not buy this house! Once I cancelled the closing, my decision was validated immediately in conversations with my realtor, the supervisor of my loan officer, my father who called back later, and again three days later when my realtor called to say that the sellers were offering the house back to me because their new buyer had backed out.

Once the closing fell through, my parents invited me to come

live with them. How grateful I am not to be responsible for a house with renters across the country! At one point, I wondered why God was talking to everyone else but me. I realized that I had been asking for what He wanted from human beings. He was saying, *Why not ask Me, the One who knows what is best for you and who can give you your heart's desires?*

This trying yet memorable experience, which required my persevering in prayer and asking for His answer in the Word, has taught me a valuable lesson for all my days. God gave us prayer and His Word as a means of direct communication with Him. He loves to hear our cries for help. He also loves to respond to us through His timeless Word.

Another odd occurrence regarding the French sermon totally confirmed His response to me in His Word: When my friend went back to the text to listen to it again, the link went to a totally different sermon. She spoke with the person who had sent it to her. He confirmed that the sermon that now appeared on her screen was the one he intended to send her. He had not heard of the other sermon on Habakkuk (by the same pastor). She relayed the experience, and they both searched through all his recorded sermons on his site and YouTube and never found that sermon on Habakkuk! Thank you, God, for bending over backwards to get that message to me! (RR)

Reader, is the Lord convicting you to go beyond the outer court, into the Holy Place, the secret place with God, to discover more beautiful truths about Jesus, to pray to Him for guidance in your daily life, to receive counsel for important decisions in your life, to be taught more of His way to holiness—to acquire a character like Jesus, graced with the fruit of the Spirit?

This IS within your reach! Jesus is calling you now to follow Him further and deeper into His way in the sanctuary. If this is your desire, pray David's prayer from **Psalm 25:4,5**:

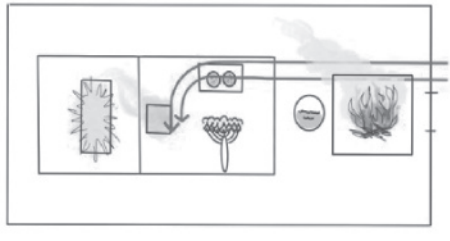
Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I will wait all the day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge
Discipleship Principle 4
Every day, look for a fresh picture of Jesus in the written Word of God. Pray and apply what you have discovered to the way you live and how you worship Him.

Health Principle 4
Every day, practice healthy, balanced eating habits.

Heath Principle 5
Every day, sing a praise song to God and go outside to get some fresh air.

Note: Looking for fresh and meaningful ways on how to read and study God's Word? Read Appendix D, Keys to Experiencing God's Word.



I will worship toward Your holy temple,
and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth;
for You have magnified Your word above all Your name.
In the day when I cried out, You answered me,
and made me bold with strength in my soul.
-Psalm 138:2,3

GOD'S WAY TO *MAKE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 9
PRINCIPLE 5: LOVE YOUR FAMILY SACRIFICIALLY

Through the tender mercy of our God,
with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;
to give light to those who sit in darkness…
to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Luke 1:78,79

Use the sanctuary diagram on the previous page to prompt your memory. What were the previous four discipleship and five health principles i*n your own words?*

DP1: _____
HP1: _____

DP2: _____
HP2: _____

DP3: _____
HP3: _____

DP4: _____
HP4: _____
HP5: _____

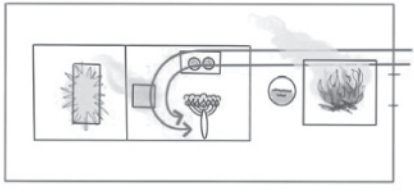
Did you ask God to wake you up to spend unrushed time with Him this morning? Did you surrender to Him as Lord of Your life and ask for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit? How was your time with Him in worship, the Word, and prayer?

Remember not to beat yourself up if you didn't follow some or even any of these principles. He lived in our body and understands the weaknesses of humanity. Keep asking Him to help you follow these principles, and He will help you incorporate them into your routine!

Remember every day, before you open your Bible, to surrender all you are, all you have, and your attitude to Him.

Also, ask your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, to help you understand the Word clearly. **1 Corinthians 2:9-13** says that God wants to reveal to you *today* through the Holy Spirit what your eye has not seen, nor your ear heard, nor your mind has ever imagined! You can claim this amazing promise from God right now. The Holy Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, wants to reveal them to you,

Reader. Do you desire to have that type of experience today? Pause again, and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the deep things about God in His Word.



We have spent four weeks studying how God wants to nurture and grow our walk with Him. As of today, we will follow Jesus to another step in our relationship with Him.

What does Jesus call Himself and us in **John 8:12** and **Matthew 5:14**? _____

Let's follow Jesus to the lampstand and be "lights" to others, beginning with those closest to us—our families!

DAY 1

Today we will explore what it means to be a light in our world, in particular in our families.



Pray: *Dear Father, Jesus said He was "the light of the world" and also calls us to be "the light of the world." Help me to understand what it means to be a light to my world today. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**John 8:12; Matt.5:14**).

Of John the Baptist, Jesus said: "He was the *burning* and *shining* light and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light" (**John 5:35**, emphasis supplied).

Why did Jesus make this distinction between *burning and shining*?

To make a fire burn, what does one have to do? _____
What is wood or fuel in spiritual terms? (See **John 6:35**; **Matthew 4:4**) _____
How does one make a fire shine? Think about that—we can't do anything to make fire shine. If it is burning, it will shine automatically.

So Jesus distinguishes between the effort we put into making our lights burn and shine: we cannot in any way *make* our light shine; we have to *let* it shine, as we continually feed the fire that Jesus has started burning in our hearts by sending time with Him in His Word and in prayer, powered by the Holy Spirit.

Before his birth, the angel told Zacharias that John would "go as a forerunner before Him [Christ] in the spirit and power of Elijah, '*to turn the hearts of fathers back to their children*,' and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (**Luke 1:17**).

What did the angel say would be the first major work of John as a forerunner of Christ? _____

_____

Luke quotes from the last verse in the Old Testament. Look up **Malachi 4:6**. What is the other layer of that same prophecy about "turning hearts" that is not in the Luke passage? _____

_____

A major role of John the Baptist's mission to call for revival and to "prepare the way of the Lord" was to bring parents and children, that is families, back together.

Testimony
"Where are you going, Daddy?" my children asked me, as I gathered my papers together in my bag. I was a pastor, and on this cold winter night in Michigan, I had to attend an important meeting to talk about building a bigger church.

"I am going to a meeting," I replied factually.

"Daddy, stay home tonight!" they pleaded. "You are always gone! Daddy, you never play with us anymore!"

I leaned over to give my son and daughter quick hugs and kisses. Their little arms wrapped around me tightly. When I tried to stand up, they would not let me go! They clung to me with desperation. They were trying to keep their over-committed daddy home. As I gently pried their arms off my neck, they started crying. "Daddy, just tonight! Please stay home!"

I backed out of the house and closed the door. As I trudged through the snow to my church meeting, the picture of my children crying and reaching out to me lingered heavily, and God spoke to my heart. He called me by name. I stopped in my tracks. On that night, as the snow silently fell around me, God called me back to my children. He spoke through the cries and the love of my children: "Daddy, stay home!"

That was a very difficult call for me. I was often out seven nights a week, helping others while neglecting my own children. It was a painful call but a call of mercy that led to healing between me, Jason, and Julie. From that day forward, I began to say no to many requests so I could say yes to my family. It was not easy! God helped me to begin safeguarding time with each child, just as my wife, April, and I had prioritized our time together.

At first, my children were not interested in spending time with me. I had said no to their requests to play too many times. Often, I felt like a failure as I struggled at times to make a connection with them. But, praise God, the call of Elijah comes with the healing power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord helped my children to forgive me. He literally turned my heart to them and their little hearts back to me. (DM)

Reader, up to this point, we have concentrated on our own personal relationship with the Lord. We now see the importance of continually being fed by the fuel of the Holy Spirit who illuminates Jesus through the written Word and prayer, so we can burn *and shine* as bright lights to our world for Him, starting with our families.

Ask your Lord now to help you continue to practice the first four principles *daily*, to add fuel to the fire He has begun in your heart, so you can minister to your family members. Ask God to give you fresh eyes to see the needs of your family members.

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Pray that God shows you today and this week how to love and serve each member of your family intentionally and sacrificially.

DAY 2
What is a recurring event or practice that you participated in as a child or saw in your parents that has in some way formed you into the person you are today? _____

_____

My sister and I took turns doing dishes. If we didn't clean out the sink of food debris at the end, our mother would always call us back to clean it up. I remember hating to do that job and often left it undone, secretly hoping she would do it for me (which she sometimes graciously did). But what I once hated, I now do every single time I do the dishes. I can even hear her voice in my head, saying: "The dishes aren't done 'till the drain is clean." (LM) For the good or bad, even the subtlest influences in family can shape our habits and our person.

Jesus, too, started His life as we do, as a baby, growing up in a family of many personalities and influences.

Today we will begin to explore how Jesus loved His family sacrificially starting in His younger years.

Pray: *Dear Father, please send the Holy Spirit to teach me about Jesus and how He loved and lived with His family. I pray this prayer in His name, Amen.*

We know little about Jesus as a child; His young years are summed up in **Luke 2:52**. How did Jesus "increase" according to that verse? _____
Not only in favor with God, but also with people. He let His light

shine before He entered His official ministry at age 30, right there in His own town, in His own home.

The first major event we read about in Jesus' young life occurred on one of His trips with His parents to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem when He was 12 years old. Read **Luke 2:41-51**. Once they found Jesus in the temple, what did His mother say to Him?

_____

What was His response? _____

_____

Doesn't it seem like Jesus disobeyed His parents? However, what did Jesus do in the end? (v. **51**) _____

_____

His parents did not understand His statement, but at 12 years old, Jesus had His own personal relationship with His Father in heaven who was already unfolding His mission to Him. Through this statement, Jesus was setting boundaries—He made it clear that His Heavenly Father's will and way came before His earthly father's will and way.

In the light of this story, what do you think Jesus meant in **Luke 14:26**? _____

_____

Jesus didn't mean for us to literally "hate" our family (any more than He meant for us to hate our own lives), but He is telling us to set *priorities*. As Jesus told His parents, our heavenly Father's business must be *first and foremost*.

However, as Jesus went back home with His parents and was obedient to them, we also need to love and respect our family members. Jesus remained in His home for another 18 years, yet at 12, He made it clear to His parents that He had weaned Himself from depending on them and was totally dependent on His Heavenly Father.

Part of our jobs as parents is to wean our children so that they become less and less dependent on us. However, do we have them shift their dependence from us to their Heavenly Father… or to themselves?

Reader, do you desire to surrender your independent spirit to your Heavenly Father, like Jesus did? Tell Him you want to follow His will and way, and if you have children, ask Him to help you teach your children to depend on Jesus, not themselves, for everything, and to be a good example to them.

Challenge
Pray for your family members whether they are living in the same house as you or not. Ask God how you can serve each one individually and sacrificially.

DAY 3

You may have heard the expression: "Familiarity breeds contempt" that is, sometimes, the more we know someone, the less we respect them. Is there someone in your family who avoids you or is quick-tempered toward you? Is there someone in your family whose very way of being irritates you a lot? Jesus understood family dynamics; He lived at home for 30 years before moving out into full-time ministry.

Today we will continue to explore how Jesus loved His family sacrificially.

Pray: *Dear Lord, speak to my heart through the Holy Spirit that I may know how to love my family more sacrificially. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Just before beginning His ministry, Jesus was baptized and was driven by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for 40 days (**Luke 3:21; 4:1-2**).

After that, at the beginning of His ministry, what was one of His first tasks? Read about this in **Luke 4:16-30**. Where did Jesus go? _____
What did He read out loud in the synagogue on Sabbath? _____
_____
_____
_____
Who did Jesus say fulfilled this prophecy? _____
How did His town react to this exclamation? _____
_____

What did they want to do to Him? _____
On another occasion in "His own country," what statement did He make about "a prophet…in his own house"? (See **Matthew 13:57**) _____
In **Matthew 13:58**, what reason did Jesus give for His not doing mighty works among them? _____
What does it say about His brothers in **John 7:5**?

_____

It is sad that His "own country" and most of His own family did not accept Him. Yet, Jesus did not avoid Nazareth after He left at 30. Though saddened by their unbelief, He reached out to them just the same.

At another time, He and His disciples accepted an invitation to a wedding feast.[1] Through His very first miracle there, Jesus sanctioned marriage, the creation of a new family. Read about it in **John 2:1-11**. What happened during the feast, and what did His mother say to Him? _____

_____

What was His initial response? _____

_____

(Note that "Woman" was a respectful title for one's mother in the ancient world.) Jesus here rebukes His mother's subtle encouragement to promote Himself, knowing that this could hasten the "hour" of His death. However, what did He do?

_____

Jesus' first miracle was not to alleviate physical suffering, heal, or relieve someone of hunger, but rather, to save a couple from embarrassment and provide something pleasurable for the guests, even though they had already had their fill. Jesus created families as well as the idea of this covenant relationship between a man and woman—and in His first miracle, He celebrated their union.

Finally, we see Jesus' care for family, even in His greatest extremity on the cross. Read **John 19:26,27**. Who did He ask to take care of His mother? _____
What an example for us! How beautiful that, though in utmost pain, carrying the sins of the world, Jesus showed care and concern for His mother.

Jesus created families and loves them—but He also understands family dynamics! He spent 30 years at home in a blended family of many brothers and sisters (**Matthew 13:55**). He and His family did not always see eye-to-eye, but Jesus loved and cared for them.

Reader, what is your family situation? God has given them to you, and He wants you to turn your heart to your parents and your children, your sisters and brothers, maybe to someone among them who has been estranged from you for many years. Maybe you don't feel ready to forgive or talk to certain people in your family. Reader, Jesus understands. Take time now to surrender each family member to God.

Challenge
Ask Him to take over, to love your family through you. Ask God, "What is my next step toward showing love to my family?" Write down what He is impressing you with. _____

_____

_____

DAY 4

What is your favorite family memory and why? _____

_____

What ingredients make up a good family memory? _____

_____

What would God love to do with your family before Jesus returns to take us all home? (Hint: **Malachi 4:6**)_____

_____

This week, we will explore how to love our family sacrificially.

Pray: *Dear Father God, thank You for my family. Sometimes the greatest love and the greatest hate is found within families. But You say in* ***Psalm 147:3*** *that You "heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds." Thank You for being the Healer of every hurt. Open my heart to receive what the Holy Spirit wants to teach me through Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

How to Love Your Family Sacrificially

Read **Romans 13:8**. What kind of debt does God ask us to keep? _____

Read **Ephesians 4:29–32**. What filter should we use for all our conversations? _____

_____

What should we do with resentment and bitterness? _____

_____

To what level should we forgive each other? _____

_____

Read **Matthew 5:23,24**. How should we apply this passage to our time of personal or family worship? _____

_____

If we have spoken harshly to our spouse or children or if we have done something that has wounded them, the hearts of our family members will not be with us in worship. However, if we have apologized and sought to right any wrongs before starting worship, their hearts will be softened toward us, and most likely, they will be much more receptive to our leading.

Read **Ephesians 6:12**. Who are we really fighting against when we have conflict in our home and family? _____
We need to remember that when we choose God, we and our family members are *all on the same team.* What a difference this realization will make in helping us forgive and work through conflict!

Picture in your mind Jesus, looking down from the cross, and think of everything He is experiencing at that moment:

All His disciples have deserted Him; one betrayed Him; another in His close circle of three swore he did not know Him; His priestly representatives on earth are mocking His earthly parentage and His claims to being God's Son. He sees the derision, even of some who were healed at His hand. And worst of all, He no longer feels the approval of His Father. He is bearing the weight of sin for the whole human race, those who are now staring at His naked body, sneering at Him, spitting on Him…He is looking

down at it all, and He also knows that at any time, He could call it quits. But He gazes across the jeering crowd and the Roman soldiers rolling dice for His clothing, and He says the unthinkable:

Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing!

Reader, is it sometimes difficult to love your family? Do you feel like you cannot forgive someone? Read **Ezekiel 36:26, 27**. What is God promising to do for you? _____

_____

How many promises does God give you in this passage? _____

Ask God now to do heart surgery on you to remove your bitterness toward your family member, to completely free you from resentment, and to give you a new heart of love and forgiveness, filled with the Holy Spirit. God always has enough love to pour out through us to family members who are tough to love or forgive. God is our forgiveness to the unforgivable people in our lives. God is our healing to restore our marriages and family relationships. After you ask, *believe* He has done it because He has promised!

Challenge

Take that next step with your family that God has impressed you with. Maybe it's a phone call, handwritten note, or personal visit. Know that He is also working in the hearts of your family, to turn them towards you too.

DAY 5

What is your passion (outside of work)? Do you have a favorite hobby you like to do in your free time? Do you spend time playing a musical instrument or practicing a sport? _____
Do your family and friends know that it's your passion? _____
How do they know? _____
Chances are you talk about it and participate in it a lot, maybe even inviting them to take part in it. Maybe several have caught your enthusiasm and have made it their passion as well!

How about Jesus? Is He your passion? Do your kids, your spouse, your friends, and coworkers know that you love Him with all your heart and soul?

Today we will explore Jesus' model for marriage, children, and families.

Pray: *Oh Father, give me such a passion for Jesus that my family, my friends, and everyone I meet will know that He is my Friend, my Savior, and my Lord. Teach me, Holy Spirit! I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Ephesians 5:21–33**. How is verse **21** the key to a Christlike marriage? _____
This counsel gives context for the rest of the counsel. If followed, all desire for supremacy over one another would be surrendered to Christ!
In verses **22-24**, what counsel does God give to wives?

_____
How does verse **33** summarize the role of the wife?

_____
In verses **25-29**, what counsel does God give to husbands?

_____
How does verse **25** summarize the role of the husband?

_____

Read **Malachi 4:5,6**. On day 1, we saw that Luke applies this prophecy to John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. What other time period does this apply to? _____

Part of God's plan for these last days is for family relationships to be restored. He calls us to humble ourselves before God so that He can mend our hearts toward our children and our parents. He wants to prepare us to "build the old waste places" in our families, to "raise up the foundations of many generations." He calls us to be the "Repairer of the Breach" (**Isaiah 58:12**).

The next passage, the Shemah, considered one of the most sacred and important prayers in Judaism, is typically recited twice a day in Jewish homes, at morning and evening worship. How does **Deuteronomy 6:4–6** call us to a revival with God?

_____
What do we call something we love with all our heart, soul, and strength? _____

And if this passion for God is revived in our hearts—the next part will be easy and automatic like sharing any other passion we have!

Read **Deuteronomy 6:7**. Who is to teach our children? _____ _____ Mentioned are four specific ways parents are to disciple their children. After reading the passage, answer the questions below:

God says, *Diligently teach My words to your children, and talk of them when you:*

- *Sit at home.* When do parents and children sit together? *In the car, at church, eating a meal, watching a video, doing school homework... Add your own:* _____

- *Walk by the way.* When do parents and children walk together? _____ _____

- *Lie down.* What conversations for Christ could you have with your children before they sleep? _____ _____

- *Rise up.* What conversations for Christ could you have when your children start their day? _____ _____

How could you make family worship more engaging and interactive? _____ _____

Look for ways to model to your children the discipleship principles you have been learning (since week 5). And *don't forget to pray a blessing over your children before they leave the house each day!*

(See Appendix E for ideas on how to create family worships.)

Finally, read **Deuteronomy 6:8,9**. Ask God what these practices mean in your family:

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. _____

_____

They shall be frontals on your forehead. _____

_____

Hands are often symbolic of what we do and foreheads, what we think. God is asking us to make sure our actions and our thoughts and attitudes are true to His word. For example, does our love for God show in what we do, in our time with God, in what we watch on television or the internet? This is our best witness to those who live with us in our homes and those who visit our homes from the outside.

God takes it a step further:
You shall write them on the doorposts of your house. _____

_____

You shall write them...on your gates. _____

_____

He wants us to make God's Word into a "welcome and witness" to all who enter the door to our home and even those who just enter the gates of our property![2] (Examples in Endnotes.)

Reader, do you desire to follow the Ephesians and Deuteronomy models in your home? Would you like Jesus to be your passion, so that it will be the most natural thing in the world for you to talk about Him to your spouse and children when you sit and walk, before you go to bed, and as soon as you awake, basically *all* the time? Jesus wants this too—it's His dream for *your* family! If this is your desire, earnestly pray the following:

Pray: *Oh Father, I earnestly pray that today—and every day—I will seek to live so close to You that nothing will come between us. I earnestly desire to live with You eternally, and I pray that those whom I love will also have that same desire. In the loving name of Jesus I pray, Amen.*

Challenge
Today ask God to show you how to love and serve your family sacrificially and practically, in your actions and attitudes, in how you treat each one, including the "stranger in your gate."
What is the one change He is asking you to make?_____

Day 6

In the dark of the night, don't we often look forward to the sunrise? The sun was created by God to help sustain life, give us warmth, and bring cheery light to our day.

Today we will look at the benefits of this wonderful star.

Pray: *Lord,* ***Malachi 4:2*** *calls You "the Sun of Righteousness" who has "healing in His wings." Teach me by Your Spirit the healing benefits of sunlight in my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

According to **Proverbs 17:22**, what is good medicine? _____ For most of us, the mention of sunshine brings warm thoughts and a cheerful spirit or heart. The sun is just one of the wonderful gifts our Heavenly Father has given to us, His children. Why is the sun healthy and good medicine?

Sunlight converts cholesterol in our skin into Vitamin D, which is needed for multiple processes in our body.[3]
Sunlight creates nitric oxide in our skin that helps to lower blood pressure.[3]
Sunlight kills germs.[3]
Sunlight decreases depression.[3]
Sunlight improves our immune system.[3]
Sunlight helps to stabilize blood sugar.[3]
Watching a sunrise or sunset helps to improve mood and decrease inflammation.[4]

Testimony

All my life I've struggled with sleep, particularly falling asleep, and the issue was getting progressively worse with the years. It was becoming a repeated scenario to go to bed around 10 or 10:30 PM and then lie there wide awake until 4, 5, even 6 AM. With a busy life and regular job, this eventually became entirely unsustainable, taking a toll on my physical and spiritual well being, not to mention my mood. I had tried everything my wife and I could think of in order to improve my sleep schedule. We

got rid of all screens after a certain time each evening, changed our diet, took supplements, tried melatonin, and so on, all to little or no effect, at least not toward any lasting change.

One day, my wife listened to a lecture on the effect light has on our brains and how it plays a key role in regulating our sleep/wake patterns. She suggested that I try light therapy as a way of resetting my body clock, which I immediately dismissed as a waste of time. However, her suggestion worked on me. It's true that, since we live in the far northern part of the United States, we get very little sunlight in a day, especially in the winter months. She finally convinced me to start with a small 10k lux light that I put by the bed near my face, which I simply turned on at the same time every morning.

After only a week of this form of light therapy, to my utter amazement, my sleep schedule entirely reset to reflect appropriate sleep/wake hours. After two weeks, I no longer needed it as my body adjusted to a relatively normalized schedule. My energy, clarity of mind, ability to focus, spiritual life, and mood have all vastly improved as a result of using light as a simple natural means of resetting my body clock. (LL)

Your Turn

How much sunshine do you get a day? _____

How often do you watch a morning sunrise or sunset? _____

What kinds of thoughts do you have when you think about sunshine? _____

Read **Malachi 4:2**. What is God called in this verse and what does He promise? _____

_____

In the same chapter, just a few verses later, God promises to turn the hearts of families toward each other! As the sun has physical healing properties, so our Great Sun of Righteousness—Jesus—has healing in His wings for those who fear His name, for all of our families!

Ask the Holy Spirit how to incorporate more sunshine in your life. Write down what He is asking you to do personally and in your family: _____

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you do what He is asking you to do.

Health Challenge– Daily expose your skin to the sunshine.
Note: Depending on your skin type, you should spend 10 to 20 minutes a day in the sun. If you have dark-colored skin, you may need up to 30 minutes.

Day 7

Pray: *Heavenly Father, may You use the testimony I am about to read to convict me of areas where I need to learn to love my family more sacrificially, as You love them. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Testimony

I was born in a Christian home; my father was a loved and highly respected pastor in our church; and all thought we were a normal, happy family. No one knew the sadness and pain that existed in our home. I was awakened at a very young age to what sounded like fighting in my parent's bedroom, and what I saw was something no child should ever see--the abuse of my mother and the raging temper of my father.

We moved a lot, and in my child's mind, I didn't understand why. I would settle in and make friends, then we would move again, changing schools every few years. As I grew into middle school, I became aware of why we moved so often: My father was having affairs with the women in our church. As I grew into my teen years, I lost my connection with my Lord. How could I relate to a Father of unconditional love, a God who heard and answered prayers, when I had only experienced the anger and abuse of my earthly father? Rumors of my dad started to spread, and I was humiliated and rejected.

Thankfully, even though I was letting go of my Heavenly Father's hand, He never let go of mine. He had a plan for me. He knew what lay ahead for my family and that I would need someone's hand to hold. During my senior year in academy, He brought me a young man who has become the love of my life for 45 years now. He would be the hand I would hold to give me the strength to face what was to come.

Finally, after many broken hearts and broken lives, the Lord said it was enough, and my father was told he would have to leave the ministry. My parents divorced, and the Lord gave my mother the strength to walk away from the abuse and shame. It was then that I swore I would never have anything to do with my father. For 35 years, this bitterness and hatred grew in my heart. I felt I had every right to make him suffer for what he had done to our family.

However, my loving Heavenly Father had a different plan. In February 2019, a pastor did a revival at our church. One night, he read **Ezekiel 36:26-27**: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." He said that if we wanted to be used by the Lord, we needed to search our hearts and empty them of any bitterness and hatred so that the Holy Spirit could dwell in them.

I knew the Holy Spirit was speaking to me that night. I had that heart of stone. I knew what I had to do. The 35 years of bitterness and hatred in my heart were turning me into someone I didn't like. So after the meeting, my husband and I met with the pastor, and he prayed with us. For days, my husband and I prayed that the Lord would give me a new heart, but the bitterness, pain, and hatred were too deep. I couldn't fully surrender it to the Lord, but He was still there and waiting for me to totally surrender it to Him.

One morning as we knelt in prayer together, we prayed for God to heal my stony heart. I got up from my knees, feeling no different. I had not slept well for days, and I was exhausted. I decided to try to get some sleep. I knelt by our bed once again and poured my heart out to the Lord. I pleaded with Him to remove my stony heart full of bitterness and hatred and to change me. I didn't want to carry this burden any longer, and after 35 years, I finally surrendered it to Him and laid it at His feet. I asked Him to do His heart surgery on my heart.

I crawled into bed, but I tossed and turned. And then a peace came over me like I have never felt before or have felt since. It

was as if my loving Savior reached His nail-scarred hands into my chest, removed my stony heart, and gave me a heart of flesh filled with His peace. I felt Him saying, "You have carried it long enough, my child. Now you have surrendered it to Me; it is no longer yours to carry."

I went and told my husband what the Lord had done and what my next step was. I needed to go see my father. I was warmly welcomed at my father's house. I knelt by his side, took his hand, and said, "Daddy, God has done a wonderful thing for me, and I am here to ask your forgiveness for all the hatred and bitterness I have held in my heart for you for 35 years." He graciously forgave me, and so did his wife. We prayed together, and as we started to leave, my dad said, "There is just one thing I would love to be able to do before I leave this world: ask your mother for forgiveness for what I have put her through." They had not seen or spoken to each other since their divorce 35 years before.

The Lord had also sent the Holy Spirit to work on my father's heart. God made that moment happen. He spoke to my sweet husband's heart to bring my parents together. My father was given the opportunity to ask my mother's forgiveness, and she was able to forgive. God brought healing to a hurting and broken family.

My friends, our precious Savior forgave as He hung, dying on the cross and cried out, "Father, forgive them." How can we not also forgive those who have hurt us and caused us pain? He truly is the Master Heart Surgeon, the Healer and Restorer of bitter and hurting hearts. Are you shackled with bitterness or unforgiveness for someone that has hurt you, and you long to be free?



Claim the promise of **Ezekiel 36:26-27**, surrender it, and let the Master Surgeon give you a new heart filled with His peace. (CJ)

The healing of the family is a pivotal part of revival: Revival must be the daily heartbeat of our homes. Worship at the altar as a family must be the heartbeat of our homes. As our families experience a daily revival with Jesus through worship, time in His written Word, and prayer, the Spirit of God prepares us to meet Jesus soon!

Reader, pray and ask God to impress you with answers for the next three questions:

1. What specific thing does each person in my immediate family need from me to know that I love him or her? List each person in your family and their needs below.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Who in my family needs to be forgiven or needs my apology? _____

   _____

   _____

3. What is my next step? _____

   _____

   _____

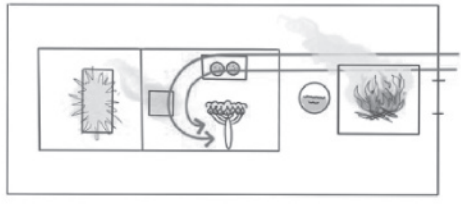
Now hear and believe what God promises you:

"Ah Lord God! Behold, You Yourself have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You" (**Jeremiah 32:17**).

"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings…" (**Malachi 4:2**).

"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (**Philippians 4:19**).

Pray: *Dear Father God, when You think of my family, You remind me that nothing is too difficult for You! You tell me in Your Word that You will supply all my needs according to Your riches, not mine. I surrender my fears and worries as well as my deepest wounds to you — trusting myself and my family to Your healing light and love. Give me Your love so that I may love each member of my family as You love them. Thank You for hearing my prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



Challenge
Take your next step this week, trusting God to help you do what He has convicted you to do to love your family sacrificially.

Discipleship Principle 5
Every day, love your family sacrificially.

Health Principle 6
Every day, expose your skin to the sunshine.

This week, memorize all or a portion of **Deuteronomy 6:4-6**.

GOD'S WAY TO *MAKE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 10
PRINCIPLE 6: DISCIPLE OTHERS TO JESUS

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.
Psalm 67:1,2 ESV

DAY 1

Use the sanctuary diagram on the previous page to prompt your memory. What were the previous principles of discipleship and health in sanctuary order? Write below a summary of each discipleship and health principle. Can you reduce the health principles to a few words? (Check your answers on the inside back cover.)

DAILY:
DP1: _____
HP1: _____

DP2: _____
HP2: _____

DP3: _____
HP3: _____

DP4: _____
HP4: _____
HP5: _____

DP5: _____
HP6: _____

How are you doing? Remember that this is a process. Do not be too hard on yourself if you fail to practice any of these. He is patient with you, so you can be patient with yourself too.
Did you make your first step toward loving your family sacrificially? If not, respond to His call today to do that first step He has called you to do. Remember, for what God has called

you to do, He has already prepared your way *and* the heart of anyone else involved. He promises in **Isaiah 58:8** that "your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard."

Who is that light and healing and righteousness that goes before you? Christ! He is going before and covering you behind through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to prepare the hearts of your family to receive what God is calling you to do. You can move ahead with confidence that "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (**1 Thessalonians 5:24**).

DAY 2

If you were to train someone to take your position at work (or at home), what main qualification would they need to do your job right? _____

When Jesus gave Peter his commission to be a disciple-maker for the heavenly Kingdom, He asked him one question three times: Do you love Me? (**John 21:15**). The Bible tells us, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Upon these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets" (**Matt. 22:37–40** NASB).

The foundation of being a true disciple-maker for Jesus and His Kingdom is **LOVE**! We love Him and others because He first loved us.

Today we will explore our response to Jesus' love and His call to disciple others for Him.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, as I begin to study this discipleship principle, please give me the love and humility I need to sacrificially serve and disciple others to Jesus. In* ***Luke 15:4****, You say that Jesus would have given up everything to come to die on the cross for just one to be in the Kingdom. Lord, give me this same passion that You have for the salvation of others. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **Luke 4:38,39**. After Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, what did she immediately do? _____
Read **Mark 5:18-20**. Immediately after being healed, what did the demoniac want to do? _____
What did Jesus tell the man to do? _____

What do these stories have in common? _____

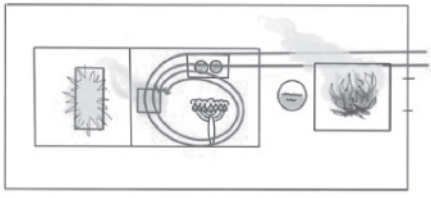
When we see God's great love and compassion for us, when He heals our relationship with Him, our automatic response is to get up and serve Him; we want to spend time in His presence, but we also want to talk about Him to others. We have a testimony to share about the great things God has done for us.

And this is where we start in our witness—with our testimony. Someone may argue with us about points of doctrine or other Bible teachings, but no one can gainsay our personal testimony—the great things that the Lord has done for us and how He has had compassion on us!
(See Appendix F for ideas on how to formulate and share a testimony.)

Last week, we arrived at the lampstand in the sanctuary. We have become little lights, teaching the way to the Great Light to those closest to us, our families. But we want to extend our witness to friends, coworkers, acquaintances, and even strangers. Is that a little daunting for you? Read **Psalm 119:105** and **Ephesians 6:17-19**. What way did Jesus provide for us to teach and help others find His way? _____

Take note: In order to continue burning and shining for Jesus, we must keep fueling up! We need to spend unrushed time with Jesus in the Word and prayer *daily*. There are no chairs at the table of shewbread. We are not to stop there, eating of His abundance and not sharing what He has given us with others He has put in our lives. That would be spiritual gluttony.

The daily, Christian walk incorporates *all three pieces* of furniture in the Holy Place, also fittingly called the Daily. At the



table, we are fed by the Word of God; at the altar of incense, we breathe out our prayers and take in what He is calling us to do; and at the lampstand, we take the opportunities He gives us daily to disciple others for Him. We are on a track—and we need to exercise on this track daily, or the old adage will apply: *If you don't use it, you lose it.* The furniture in the Daily is like a three-legged stool. If we take one leg away from that stool, what happens? _____

Reader, God has opened up a way to provide you pardon through the blood of the Lamb on the altar in the outer court. Because He resurrected from the dead, He promises you through the baptism of the Holy Spirit to daily help you die to self and resurrect you to the newness of a transformed life. You entered the Daily, and from this point on, Christ works through the power of the Holy Spirit to give you all you need to live and witness for Him. He is transforming you into the person He calls you to be, not only through the Word and Prayer but *also* through your witness for Him.



Read **John 14:17-18,23**. Who dwells in us according to these verses? _____ Reader, you are not an orphan. You are *never alone*! The whole Godhead dwells in you! How gracious and loving God is! What is your response to His great love for you? Pray now, asking God to help you daily exercise on the "Holy Place track," following the Holy Spirit's lead in your time with Him and working with Him and for Him. _____

_____

_____

Challenge

Ask the Holy Spirit for the needed fuel in the Word and prayer to be a burning and shining witness for Him today!

DAY 3

Michael can start a fire from scratch without even so much as a match. He told me that his older brother Jeremiah taught him that skill—spending hours showing him how to do it and giving him opportunities to try it himself, over and over again. Once Jeremiah spent an *entire* eight-hour day with him, allowing him to practice it over and over. By the end of that day, Michael got it, and he never forgot it.

Can you think of a skill you know well and how you learned it? Chances are you had repeated lessons in some way—with a parent or teacher, at home or school or in the car. It's hard to catch and keep something we have only been shown once.

One day, Jeremiah came into town for a weekend visit. When I told him how fascinated I was with the whole process, he spent some time showing me how to make a fire with a stick, a stone, and tinder. He left me with the materials, telling me to practice, but frankly, without my teacher, I lost motivation, and have even forgotten the order of the steps…so it's no surprise that I still use matches to light fires! (LM)

What does this have to do with our walk with Jesus and our witness for Him? Often, we like to learn some "cool information" and then tuck it away somewhere in our minds, never putting it into practice. Similarly, we often "toss" information to people and move on, hoping they will catch it and run with it.

Yes, God, who is ultimately responsible for everyone's salvation, definitely sets up and works through one-time encounters, such as at airports or stores. However, the people with whom we have daily contact need to see that light consistently and intentionally in order to "catch on fire."

Today we will begin to explore how to follow Jesus' disciple-making methods.

Pray: *Eternal Father, Your Son Jesus calls us to make disciples all around the world. You are asking, "Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?" I want to respond like Isaiah: "Here am I!*

Send me!" Please send the Holy Spirit to help me be faithful to my calling. In Jesus' name, Amen (**Isaiah 6:8**).

What is God's command in **Matthew 28:18-20**? _____

_____

_____

Simply put, **disciples are disciple-makers**: The two must be one. What good news in verse **18** and the last line of verse **20** give us much courage as we face this daunting task? _____

_____

_____

We can face our commission with confidence, knowing that we are co-laborers with Jesus who has all authority in heaven and earth. So, in order to become disciple-makers, we must follow the ways of Jesus, the master Disciple-Maker.
How did Jesus make disciples?

1. Read **Luke 6:12–16**. Before choosing His disciples, what did Jesus do? _____
   How could you follow in your Master's footsteps? _____
   _____
   Take a *night (or a day) in prayer* to ask God *who* He wants you to disciple and mentor. Note that God may ask you to disciple several people, even a small group, or He may ask you to disciple just one.
   (Wondering how to spend a night or day of prayer? See Appendix G.)

2. Read **Matthew 4:18–20**. What steps did Jesus take to invite His disciples to follow Him?
   a. (v.**18**) _____
   b. (v.**19**) _____
   c. (v.**19**) _____
   Visit your potential disciples where they live/work and *invite* them to follow Jesus, to work with you as you work for Jesus, and to engage with you in ministry as you serve Jesus, basically *training* your mentees to become fishers of men.

3. Read **Matthew 4:23** & **Mark 3:14**. If your disciples accept the call, what is your next step? _____

Inviting your disciples to be with you provides time and opportunities through all different types of daily life and ministry activities to interact with them so they can observe how you follow Jesus, how you study God's Word and pray, how you lean on Jesus when you are tired, and when things don't go your way.

Your time together could encompass getting together to study the Bible and/or doing ministry once or twice a week; communicating on zoom or on the phone part of the time; going on a mission trip together, being there to listen and process difficulties in their lives, and so forth.

Reader, your Father God discipled Jesus morning by morning while He was on earth (see **Isaiah 50:4**). Your Father God and the Holy Spirit are just as interested and invested in discipling you to be a disciple-maker as Jesus is Himself. While you process this request, read **Luke 15:4-7**. What is Jesus' joy?

Reader, do you want to share in Jesus' joy? If so, pray the following:

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, You know how I struggle in this area, and yet You also know that my desire is to share my love for You with my family and friends, so they too can join me in Your kingdom. Lord, I totally surrender this part of my life to You, asking You to allay my fears and my hesitancies. Help me to be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus. Help me schedule this special time of prayer so that You can speak to me about who and how I am to disciple. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Challenge
Choose to be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus. Schedule a "night" or special time of prayer to ask God *who* He wants you to disciple and how.

DAY 4

Imagine you are learning to drive. You get in the car behind the wheel for the first time, teacher by your side, drive around the block, and then come out an expert. Is that how it happens? If

you have learned this skill, you know it took repeated practice, much trial and error, and the patience of your good teacher! Learning spiritual principles takes the same type of effort under the guidance of a good, patient teacher.

Today we will continue to explore how to follow Jesus' disciple-making method.

Pray: *Dear Father in Heaven, please teach me by Your Holy Spirit how to follow the disciple-making method of Jesus. I pray in His name, Amen.*

Yesterday, we looked at three steps to becoming a disciple-maker. Today, we will look at three more.

4. Read **John 6:5-9**. How did Jesus incorporate His disciples in His ministry? _____

   _____

   Notice that in the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus gave His disciples opportunities to exercise their faith. To Jesus' question, both Philip and Andrew showed some doubt, but Jesus did not reprimand them. If your disciples have faltering moments of doubt or uncertainty or a lack of confidence to move forward in faith, do like Jesus, and make it an opportunity for them to learn to depend on God.

   Read **Mark 8:1-6**. What did Jesus tell His disciples He wanted to do, and how did the disciples respond? _____

   _____

   _____

   Jesus repeated the lesson, but they were still full of doubt, even though just weeks before, He had fed more people with less bread!

   Can you think of other times the disciples did not get it the first time Jesus instructed them? Read **Mark 10:32-34**. What did Jesus inform His disciples? _____

   _____

   This was the third time Jesus told His disciples of His upcoming death and resurrection (first two times: **Mark 8:31-33** and **9:30-32**).

Read **Mark 16:12,13.** Even though He had told them He would rise again, how did the disciples react after His death—even in the face of eye-witness reports about His resurrection? _____

_____

This is why we need to *spend time with our disciples, to give them repeated practice*. The human heart and mind do not always "get it" the first (or even the second or fourth or sixth) time.

Let's go back to the feeding of the 5,000. According to **Matthew 14:19**, how did Jesus distribute the bread and fish? _____

Each of the four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, mention this same detail in the same order. Jesus blesses and breaks the bread—the Word of God—and gives it to us to pass on to others. Though the disciples were struggling in their faith, He still involved them in His ministry. He does the same for us, and He wants us to engage our disciples in the same way.

5. Read **Luke 9:1,2**. With what did Jesus vest His disciples before sending them out on their own? _____

_____

Of course, we cannot of ourselves give anyone heavenly power or authority—we must call them to ask God to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. What are some of the things the Holy Spirit will help us do as a witness for Him?

Acts 1:8 _____

Luke 9:2 _____

Galatians 5:22,23 _____

You can instruct your disciples that God will:

- make them witnesses to people who may not be of their own cultural, racial, religious, or social background;
- give them authority over all evil spirits and powers of darkness;
- give them all the wisdom, strength, and everything they need for every situation they encounter;
- give them all the fruit of the Spirit—a kind, tender heart and the winsomeness to speak and act in love.

Read James 5:14-16. What else should we do and teach them to do? _____
Aside from praying for the sick, we must teach them healthy lifestyle education and natural treatments for the healing of disease, as we have been discussing on day 6 (of weeks 5-11; days 5 and 6 of week 8).

6. Then we can send them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and bring healing to sin-sick hearts and souls through the power of God's Word. Read **Luke 10:1**. How did Jesus send out His disciples? _____

   Though Jesus emphasized our individual relationship with Him, He also highlighted the importance of church community. He Himself bonded with 12 men and more closely with 3 of those 12. He sent His disciples out two by two so they could bond with each other in ministry.

   This is a beautiful gift—to work with another like-minded person. When discouragement comes to one, the other is there to encourage. When at a crossroads, two in counsel can make a wiser decision than one by him or herself. They can pray with and for each other as they labor together for Jesus. This is not to say that we will never work without a human companion (yes, God is always with us), but having another can be a blessing, especially at the beginning.

Also, note that due to the bonding that occurs between people when they pray and work closely together, pair two of the same gender together except, of course, if they are a married couple or immediate family members.

By the way, if you do have children, they are automatically your God-given disciples—see **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**. Even the smallest child can be encouraged to witness for Jesus.

Reader, isn't it encouraging to know that Jesus did not leave us without instruction? An even greater encouragement is that He has promised to always be present with us as we labor for Him. He knows who you should disciple and how to do it. Would you like to ask Him who He wants you to disciple and how? If

so, tell Him so now. _____

_____

Challenge
Choose to be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus. Schedule a "night" or special time of prayer to ask God *who* He wants you to disciple and *how*. (See Appendix G.)

DAY 5

Were you ever asked to do something that you felt was totally beyond your ability? That was my student teaching experience. Facing a classroom of high school students for the first time, I had no idea what my next step should be. My problem was that I had had zero practice in the field, so the whole experience seemed absolutely daunting. (LM) Jesus also wants us to have "field" experience—but He doesn't wait until we have had hours of theoretical training before He sends us out.

Today we will continue to explore what it means to disciple as Jesus did.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, please send me Your Holy Spirit to teach me how to disciple as Jesus did. I pray in His name, Amen.*

Read over the six steps to discipling as Jesus did (days 3 and 4) and write down the six main steps to discipling someone to Christ in a few sentences:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

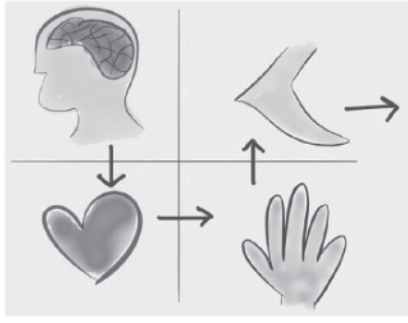
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6. _____

_____

Over time, you should see that the discipleship principles you are teaching your disciple go:

- from head
- to heart
- to hand
- to feet



That is:

- from understanding the principles,
- to a desire to follow them out of a love for Christ,
- to actually practice them, and finally,
- to move forward to disciple others

Let's look again at the story of the healed demoniac. Read **Mark 5:15-20**. What did the people demand of Jesus after the incident with the swine? _____
What did Jesus ask the healed man to do? _____

_____

According to verse **20**, what did the man do? _____

_____

Now read **Mark 6:53-56**. When Jesus went back to that territory, what had changed? _____

_____

A region hostile to Jesus opened up via the testimony of one healed man! Jesus knew that this man's testimony would be more effective than anything He could personally do to convince those people that He loved and cared for them.

Oh, the humility of God! Though we are sinful and wretched, He sees how our lives can impact others for His kingdom—and He works with us and through us to bring others to Him, especially through our personal testimony (see Appendix F). So, be prepared for your disciple to go further than you—to be able to reach those whom you cannot.

Testimony
My six-year-old grandson Ezra was getting ready to go with his family to meet some friends for dinner. Their friends have a one-year-old daughter whom Ezra has known and loved since she was born. He was excited to get to see her, and so he ran to his room and grabbed a stuffed owl which, at the press of a button, would tell Bible stories. He showed it to me as they were getting ready to go and said, "I'm going to show this to baby Annie and let her play with it." I said to him, "That's a great idea, Ezra!"

Later, my daughter and son-in-law shared that Ezra and Annie played with the owl on the floor next to their table. Annie listened intently to the stories, and then carried the owl around for the rest of the evening. When it was time to go to the car, Annie was still holding the owl. Ezra said, "That's OK. She can take it home with her." But when they got to the car, Annie handed it back to him, content with the experience she just had learning about Jesus. (SP)

This little boy was not worried about what he knew or how he would look in front of people at the restaurant or even what his friend would think. He had had an experience with Jesus through the Bible-story owl and wanted to share it. God chose Ezra to share the gospel with Annie, knowing that he could reach her more effectively than any adult present!

God did this for six-year-old Ezra. Do you believe He can do it for you? According to **Ephesians 2:10**, He has already prepared your good works, and *HE* will accomplish them in you! He wants to be partners with you in ministry: He says to come to Him and take His yoke because it is easy and light—because He is carrying the weight of the load (**Matthew 11:28-30**). He says not to worry if you don't feel equipped or strong or articulate enough because it is "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts" (**Zechariah 4:6**).

Reader, will you say yes to Jesus as He asks you to follow Him around the Holy Place track, asking God to help you intentionally disciple another to Him? Tell Him now! _____

Challenge
Be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus. If you haven't yet, set a date to do a "night" or special time of prayer to ask God who He wants you to disciple and how.

DAY 6

We have been learning how to exercise spiritually this week—*daily* making our rounds in the Holy Place, reading the Word, praying, and taking the witnessing opportunities God gives us. Our bodies also need *daily* exercise.

Today, we will walk through some Bible verses about exercise and then look at how physical exercise helps to keep our bodies healthy.

Pray: *Dear Lord, teach me by Your Spirit how to incorporate phsical exercise in my lifestyle. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Exercise can be defined as any physical activity of the body.
Read **Genesis 2:15**. What form of exercise did God give Adam and Eve to do in the garden of Eden? _____
Read **1 Corinthians 9:24,25**. What metaphor did Paul use for seeking the Kingdom of God? _____
Read **1 Kings 19:8**. How did Elijah get to Horeb? _____

_____

Read **1 Kings 19:19**. What was Elisha doing? _____
Read **Psalm 149:3**. What form of exercise can we do while praising God? _____
Read **John 21:7,8**. How did Peter get to shore? _____

Simply put, God created our bodies to be in motion. Prolonged sitting or inactivity (aside from your nightly sleep time) is not good. Exercise is vital to your health, and here are just a few reasons why.

- Exercise improves **muscle tone**.[1]
- Exercise improves **digestion**. Walking after meals also helps to quicken the circulation, moving the digested nutrients to their needed place.[2]
- Exercise decreases **insulin resistance** after just 10 minutes of aerobic exercise.[1]

- Exercise improves **mental health**. Exercise can decrease anxiety, depression, and stress states.[3]
- Exercise helps in **body-weight control**. Moving your body for at least 150 minutes per week will help to maintain weight; increasing the intensity and duration will help to decrease weight.[4]
- Exercise improves the **immune system**.[5]

Testimony

"You need to start taking medication to lower your cholesterol," the doctor told me. I walked out of the doctor's office and pondered what I had just heard. I can either change my lifestyle or start taking medication, but I have to do something, I told myself.

Six months earlier, my brother had invited me to go for a one-mile run. I didn't want to go but went anyway. He led the way while I trailed behind, breathing hard in the cold Illinois air. After just one mile, I was utterly exhausted and thought, *This is the last time I do this!*

However, after facing a decision about going on cholesterol medication, I decided to try running, the thing I hadn't ever wanted to do. This time it was different. I ran again...and again and again! Though I often returned feeling out of breath and worn out, God helped me to keep going. I often ran outside and sometimes on a treadmill, and I built up stamina so I was able to run longer without feeling so exhausted.

Twelve months later, I lost nearly 30 pounds and was "freed" from taking medicine to lower my cholesterol. I haven't stopped—workouts have become a regular part of my life. As I press forward, I praise God for this wonderful natural remedy that changed my life: I'm off medication; my cholesterol and weight are at normal levels, and best of all, I feel great! (TC)

Your Turn

What is your favorite form of exercise? _____
How often do you exercise a week? _____
Do you take a stroll after each meal? _____

Read **Deuteronomy 10:12,13**. What does God call us to do in this verse? _____

_____

Walking in His ways, showing our love to Him, and serving Him also means walking in the laws of health He has provided for us (**Exodus 15:26**). Ask the Holy Spirit how to incorporate exercise on a regular basis in your life, even if you start with 10 minutes after your heavy meal each day! Write down what He is asking of you to do personally:

_____

Ask God for Holy Spirit help to step out and do what He is asking you to do—starting today!

Pray: *Dear God in heaven, thank You for this reminder to exercise more. Please help me in my resolve to do what You are calling me to do, specifically to* _____

_____

I pray this in the powerful name of Jesus, Amen.

Health Challenge– Exercise throughout the day by staying active. Every move counts. Aim for multiple 10-minute periods of activity at the beginning, moving up as is possible to 20 and 30-minute periods.

DAY 7

Remember the driving lesson scenario on day 4? Now, put yourself in the teacher's shoes. What if you were called to teach someone to drive, but you did not know how? What if you knew all the ins and outs from memorizing a manual but had never actually been in the driver's seat yourself, ever? What kind of confidence would you have teaching your pupil? This transfers into our spiritual life. How can we pass on what we don't have ourselves?

Today we will explore what it looks like to disciple someone intentionally for Jesus.

Pray: *Dear Lord, please show me how to disciple someone for Jesus—step by step. Teach me, Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

You have probably heard the old adage: What you don't use, you lose. That applies to our physical lives: if we don't exercise, our muscles could eventually atrophy. But it applies to our spiritual lives as well: Jesus calls us to make disciples for a reason—to enrich and grow and strengthen our spiritual muscles! Read **Ephesians 6:15**. What does God call us to put on daily? _____

Witnessing is part of our protective armor! There are many ways to disciple others for Jesus; here is the testimony of one man.

Testimony
I met Pastor Marcus when I went to his country to do some meetings. He had a hunger to know God personally, to call his community of faith to revival, and to grow as a disciple and disciple-maker. He asked me lots of questions; sometimes, I had to request some more time so I could pray for wisdom. He asked me what I did in certain situations and why I did what I did. As I prayed for Marcus, God impressed me to disciple him. I called and asked him what I could do for him.

He took some time to answer. Later, he called me, from his country. "I have a big request. Could I come and stay at your home for four or five days and be a part of what you do and see how you live?" April and I said, "Yes! Come and visit us!" We had never had someone request to come and stay with us for the purpose of joining us in how we live day by day. We live pretty simple lives. We were concerned that Marcus might leave disappointed.

Marcus came to our home. He ate with us at our table. He joined us for family worship. He joined April and me for our daily walks. He stayed by my side as I visited people and prayed with them and took students and their teacher out to serve the people of their city. He shadowed me as I mentored leaders.

One morning, he saw me leaving the house early, flashlight and Bible in hand. "Where are you going?" he asked.

"Going out to meet with God!" I answered.

"Can I come with you?"

"Yes, come!" I invited him. Marcus and I trudged out under the stars to pray. We praised God for His magnificence, thanked Him for how He was blessing each of us that week, confessed our sins, and prayed for and received by faith the fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit for a new day. We looked for Jesus in Scripture and waited on God for His marching orders for the day. Every morning, we started the day the same way.

When he was about to leave a week later, Marcus told me that he did not get what he came looking for. He came looking for discipling techniques but was leaving with something absolutely life-changing...a lesson that God helped him learn that week that he would remember every day of his life. In his words: "The lesson written on my heart this week was this: Who you are in Christ is more important in discipling others than your discipling skills."

Back home, Marcus started meeting with God early each morning. He asked for and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit day by day. He spent unrushed time daily in the Scriptures and in prayer. He found a living experience with God! People in his church began to want what he had with God.

One day, I realized I could not make an important training session in the Far East. My hosts for the event were very disappointed when I said that I would send my disciple Marcus in my place. I said he walked with God and came with all my support. Marcus went in my place and was delighted to learn that his audience was a special group of immigrants from his own country. The Holy Spirit spoke through him with power, moving the hearts of the people by his testimony. The hosts of the event were thrilled and testified to the Hand of God on Marcus. (DM)

Reader, do you want to be more intentional in discipling others? Are you willing to do a night or day of prayer to ask God who

He wants you to disciple? If you want to take this challenge, as far as possible, kneel in humility before our Lord Jesus, and pray for strength to do what He is calling us to do.

Pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, I want to follow my Savior's command to go and make disciples for You. I may have given others information about Jesus, but have made few disciples for Him.*

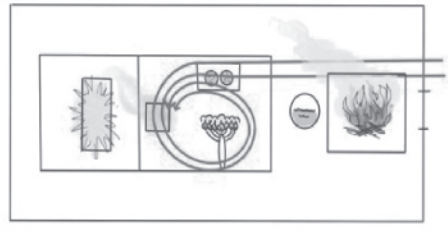
Forgive me for not being willing to pay the price that disciple-making costs. Help me to follow Your call in ***Luke 9:23****, to deny myself, pick up my cross* daily, *and follow You.*

To make a disciple costs my time when I have too much to do. It costs my comfort when I am weary. It costs my reputation when the Holy Spirit sends me to someone I do not want to see. It cost Jesus everything, even His life when He came to disciple me.

Send me the Holy Spirit to empower me to make disciples of Jesus who walk with Him, talk with Him, and share Him with heart-pounding power. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge
Be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus. Do a "night" or special time of prayer to ask God who He wants you to disciple and how. Spread it out before the Lord. Pray, and go share it with that person.

Discipleship Principle 6
Every day, be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus.



Health Principle 7
Every day, exercise throughout the day by staying active.

Write **Matthew 4:10** on a card, and memorize it this week. Ask God to make you a fisher of people.

GOD'S WAY TO *MAKE* A DISCIPLE
WEEK 11
PRINCIPLE 7: LIVE YOUR GOD-GIVEN MISSION

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight!
Luke 3:4 CSB

DAY 1
Let's review all the discipleship and health principles that help connect us *daily* to Jesus and others in our lives.

Pray: *Dear Father in Heaven, please send me Your Holy Spirit as I review these principles and seek to better implement them in my life today. Help me to remember that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." In Jesus' powerful name, Amen* (**Philippians 4:13**).

Using the sanctuary diagram on the previous page to help you remember, write out the first six principles of discipleship and 7 principles of healthy living in your own words:

- ☐ DP1: _____
- ☐ HP1: _____
- ☐ DP2: _____
- ☐ HP2: _____
- ☐ DP3: _____
- ☐ HP3: _____

☐ DP4: _____

_____

_____

☐ HP4: _____

_____

_____

☐ HP5: _____

_____

_____

☐ DP5: _____

_____

_____

☐ HP6: _____

_____

_____

☐ DP6: _____

_____

_____

☐ HP7: _____

_____

_____

Now put a check mark in the box by the ones that you are comfortable and consistently practicing. How is this process coming along? Hopefully, these principles are becoming deep rooted in your daily life. Our prayer is that through this personal study, God will firmly establish these principles in your life.

While you want to entrench these good habits in your life, you also want your time with Jesus to be *ever fresh* with new discoveries of His beautiful character and of His desire for you in your daily journey with Him. He wants your relationship to be vibrant and exciting!

Also remember that the Christian walk is a walk. None of us has arrived at the destination where we want to be spiritually, but we are all in process, getting ever closer to Jesus and His ultimate plan for our lives. Above all, we hope you are much encouraged in your journey with Jesus! *He* is for you. *He* will provide all you need. And *He* is ever with you!

Reader, take a moment of prayerful reflection on the above principles.

- In which specific discipleship and health principle is God calling you to step out further in faith? _____
  _____
- What discipleship and health principles are most challenging for you? _____
  _____
- Which does He especially want you to concentrate on?
  _____
- Who in your life also needs the next step that God is calling you to? _____
  _____

Pray about what God is impressing you, and ask Him to help you be faithful, to give you resolve and strength to continue practicing all the principles so they become automatic in your life. Claim **Philippians 4:13** in your prayer: "I can do _____ things through Christ who strengthens me."

Challenge
Continue asking God to help you practice all of the discipleship and health principles.

Day 2
When you were a child, what did you dream of becoming when you grew up? _____
Stop and think for a moment about your childhood dreams. Did any of those dreams come true in your life? _____
Just as God gave you precious dreams as a child, *He* has precious dreams for your life today. No matter where you've been, where you live, or what you've done, no matter your age, your gender, your education or qualifications or lack thereof, if you are willing, God *will* use you.

Today we will explore God's unique and special calling for our lives. There is a reason why He chose us to live and serve Him *now*.

Pray: *Dear Creator God, You created the heavens and the earth with limitless beauty. You created us as Your children, each one*

unique and special. Awaken us to the dreams and plans You have for our lives. Please, Father, do not let us miss the holy purpose for which You brought us into this world. Show us how to live and serve You now — today! Show us how our lives can be used for Your Kingdom and give You glory and honor. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Read **Psalm 139:1-6** and **13-18**. List what God knows about you: _____

_____

_____

_____

In which way does He know you that is particularly meaningful to you? _____

_____

Read **Ephesians 2:10**. What does God call you? _____ The New Living Translation says God calls you His *masterpiece*. How beautiful! According to **Eph. 2:10** and **Psalm 139:16**, what did God prepare for you beforehand? _____

Read **Matthew 25:14**. What has Christ committed to us? _____ These "goods" or "talents" are to be put to use for Him. Yes, Jesus has a special mission for each one of us. How do we view that special work He has for us? _____

Read **Luke 19:10**. What was Jesus' sole mission? _____ _____ Read **Hebrews 12:2**. What was His attitude toward His mission, even in the most extreme of circumstances? _____

Reader, are you willing to follow Jesus into a mission to "seek and save the lost" with His same attitude? Famous missionary to Africa, David Livingstone, once said, "If a commission by an earthly king is considered an honor, why is a commission by the Heavenly King considered a sacrifice?" If this is your desire, tell Him now that you would be honored to be commissioned by Him to show others His way.

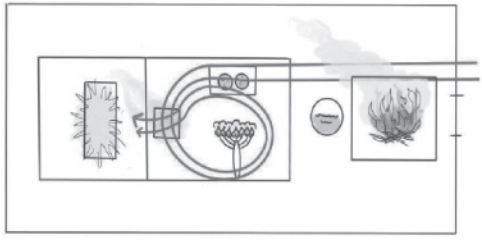
Challenge
Ask God for names of three people you know who don't know Jesus or have fallen away from Him. Write down their names, and begin to pray for them. _____

_____

Day 3
Has anyone been a mediator for you, someone who stood up for you when you couldn't stand up for yourself? Once when alone at customs in a foreign country where I could not speak the language, as I desperately tried to understand what the officer was saying to me, someone stepped up and spoke in my place, explaining my situation. What a relief to be understood! (DJ) Did you know that we have a mediator in heaven who knows and understands us and is continually standing in a gap that we cannot fill ourselves?

Today we will see what Jesus is doing now in heaven.

Pray: *Dear Father God, Your "work is perfect and all [Your] ways are justice." Please teach me by Your Spirit about Jesus and His perfect work in heaven for me and all humanity. In His name I pray, Amen* (**Deuteronomy 32:4**).



We know about Christ's mission on earth, but have you ever wondered what Jesus is *specifically* doing *right now* in heaven? Read **Romans 8:34**. Where is Jesus and what is He doing? ____

_____

According to **Ephesians 2:4-6** (NKJV), in God's great mercy and love, He has made us alive together with Christ and has raised us up and made us _____ together in the _____places with Him (v.6). Jesus' work for us did not stop at the cross. He is now our High Priest in heaven who "always lives to make intercession" for us! (**Hebrews**

7:25) To have the total sanctuary experience, we need to follow Jesus right into the Most Holy Place, to sit in heavenly places with Him and join Him as co-laborers in His work of "intercession."

What does intercession or to intercede for someone mean? Use a dictionary as well as a Bible dictionary and write down the definitions and synonyms of *intercession* or *intercede*. _____

_____

_____

To understand this topic of intercession, let's first look at a very simplified explanation of the priests' ministry in the sanctuary.

Twice a day, every day of the year, priests offered sacrifices on the altar and went into the Holy Place to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the curtain (or veil) that hung between the two holy places behind the altar of incense (**Exodus 29:38-37**). With the incense, their prayers rose up over the veil into the Most Holy Place where God's presence dwelt. Through this daily sprinkling of blood, the people's sins were figuratively removed from the people and transferred to the sanctuary.

Priests could enter the Holy Place, but only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place, representing the throne room of God. Read **Leviticus 16:2,29,30,34**. How many times and on what occasion did the high priest enter the Most Holy Place?

_____

On this Day of Atonement, as the people spent their time soul searching and confessing their sins to God, the high priest made a sacrifice for himself and the people. He entered the Most Holy and interceded for them by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy seat of the ark and praying that God would forgive his sin and that of the people.

Afterward, the high priest sprinkled blood on the altar of incense in the Holy Place and the remaining blood on the altar of burnt offering in the outer court, symbolizing the cleansing of the sanctuary and the atonement of sins.

Look up the following verses and write in the blanks what Jesus is doing now as our High Priest.

Hebrews 4:15,16 _____

_____

Hebrews 7:24,25 _____

_____

(See also **Hebrews 9:15** and **Isaiah 59:14-16**.) ONLY Christ who bore our sins qualifies to be our High Priest and can cleanse our sanctuaries through His intercession!

However, the people of God are also called priests (**Revelation 5:9,10**; **1 Peter 2:9**). Read the following verses and write in the blanks what our role is as priests.

Joel 2:17,18 _____

_____

Isaiah 62:6,7 _____

_____

Lamentations 2:19 _____

_____

Remember that at the cross, the Father's own hand tore the veil of separation between the Holy and Most Holy, giving us direct access to the throne room where we can kneel in the presence of God. Our prayers must be sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb through which they become totally and entirely acceptable to God. (See **Hebrews 4:14-16**).

Because of God's great love for us, Jesus, the slain Lamb of God, "made intercession for the transgressors" through His sacrifice on the cross (**Isaiah 53:12**). His sprinkled blood gave Him the right to become our High Priest in heaven, to whom we can boldly come for forgiveness and cleansing.

Today, His intercession continues, as He pleads with us, draws us to Him, forgiving and cleansing our confessed sin by the power of His shed blood, and working on removing it from our hearts completely.

We, as priests, join Him in His work of intercession, by our prayers and pleadings for the salvation of our loved ones and friends, churches, neighborhoods, and beyond.

And bear in mind, Reader, God is for you, not against you! (**Romans 8:31-34**) For a beautiful picture of God's judgment in your favor, read the story of Jesus and the accuser before Joshua the high priest in **Zechariah 3**.

Reflect on **Jeremiah 31:33**. What is God's wish for you? _____

_____

Day by day, as you are discipled by Him, He is working on writing His law of love in your heart through His intercession in Heaven. He wants to go way beyond forgiving you—He wants you to come to a point where you no longer desire to sin, where the tempter has lost His power over your life. Surrender your heart to Him anew, and give Him permission to do this work in your heart today.

Challenge
Continue interceding for the three individuals whose names you have set aside. Also pray that if it is God's will and purpose to use you to connect personally with one or all three of those people.

Day 4
A very serious question for you to ponder: Would you choose to be cut out of a possible promotion at work or a great scholarship at school for someone who doesn't deserve it, who maybe even talks badly about you behind your back? How many of us would be that crazy? However, there is a man in the Bible who was willing to give up more than that for a people who didn't respect him and who really didn't deserve anything but punishment. His actions put the love of God on full display.

Today we will explore more specifically how we follow Jesus into the ministry of intercession that He is doing right now.

Pray: *Dear Lord, speak to my heart this morning. Teach me by Your Spirit how to follow You more closely. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

One of the most poignant stories of intercession in Scripture is that of Moses pleading for the people of Israel. (**Exodus 32**&**33**). Though Israel had seen, over and over again, the miracles of

God on their behalf, they continually fell into the sin of unbelief at every trial that came their way, however small it was. While Moses was with God in the mountain for 40 days and nights, the people went astray and with the help of Aaron, built a golden calf and worshiped it. Imagine! After everything God had done for them, Aaron said of the molded calf: "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" (**Exodus 32:4**)

While on the mountain, God informed Moses about what the people were doing in the camp. Read **Exodus 32:9-10**. What was the offer God made Moses? _____

_____

Moses had dealt with these "stiff-necked" people, so this may have been a tempting proposition. Read verses **11-13**. What was Moses' response? _____

_____

_____

Moses had the love of a shepherd for his wayward sheep. Read v. **14**. What did God do? _____

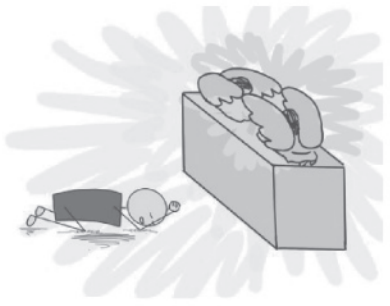
_____

Note, Reader, that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (**Hebrews 13:8**). When God "relents," He does not change His character or His motives, but the threatened course of events change due to a changed attitude of the person/ people involved.

While the people of Israel were doing abominable things, Moses stood in the gap for His people and pleaded for them. Later, He completely destroyed the golden image and called the people to consecrate themselves before he went before God once again "to make atonement for [their] sin." (v. **30**) Read v. **32**. How far did Moses go in pleading for Israel? _____ Read v. **33**. What was God's response? _____

_____

Moses was willing to have his name "blotted out of the book" for those hard-hearted Israelites, though the people often wanted to do him harm. He, pleading for the people of Israel, was a type (representation) of Jesus.



Centuries later, hanging from the cross Jesus pleaded for the sinful people who put Him on that tree: "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." Though He could have gone home to heaven anytime, He didn't. Though not one of us deserved it, He endured the cross "for the joy set before Him," that is the knowledge that we could have the chance to answer His prayer by accepting His free gift of salvation one day.

Look up **1 Peter 2:5 & 9**. What are we called in both of those verses? _____ _____ And what are we called to do? _____ _____

Psalm 99 is a beautiful song of praise. Three times it declares, *He is holy!* Embedded in that Psalm is a beautiful truth. Read verses **6-9**. Moses, Aaron, and Samuel were all _____. What did they do as priests? (v. **6**) _____

What did God do for Israel in response to their prayers? (v. **8**) _____ _____

The NKJV makes this phrase into an actual name for God: *You were to them God-Who-Forgives*. What does He do to our misdeeds? _____

Read **Romans 5:6-9**. How does God "punish" or "take vengeance" on our bad deeds? _____ Praise Jesus! Even while we were still in rebellion, He took the "wrath" of God against our sins on Himself so we could walk away from death row as though we had never sinned!

In our priestly role, we are in close partnership with Jesus. We make spiritual sacrifices as we plead for Jesus to cover the lives of our lost ones with His blood. As we pray, God works on their hearts, answering our prayers.

Reader, is God calling you to a step further in your relationship with Him? If you have not yet made the step, He calls you to offer spiritual sacrifices. God's friends will stand in the gap, like Jesus, and pray for the people they know and love, though they may not deserve it. What is your response to your Lord and Savior, who loved you and gave His life for you, as undeserving as you are?

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Continue praying for your three people, also asking God for opportunities to connect with one or all three of those people in His timing.

Day 5
Where do you go to fix your car when it breaks down? To a mechanic or a plumber? And if you have a broken pipe in your house, you will not call an electrician. Have you ever wondered where God wants to send you so you would have the maximum impact for Him?

Today we will explore who God created us to be and learn how we may serve Him in our own unique way now.

Pray: *Dear Father, According to* ***Psalm 139****, You created me, and You know everything about me, even my thoughts and words before I think or say them! All my days were written in Your book before I was even born! And You understand where I can serve best. So please, teach me by Your Word and Your Holy Spirit where I can serve most effectively. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.*

Discover Your God-Given Mission

ACTIVITY: Please answer the following four questions on a separate sheet of paper or a word document. You will be asked to share this with five people. Humbly pray before you begin. Surrender your life to Jesus Christ, asking God to send His Holy Spirit to guide you in this process.

1. What are my spiritual gifts? Look up the following passages and list all that you think you have. Circle your top 3–5 spiritual gifts.
   - **1 Corinthians 12:4–11,28**
   - **Romans 12:6–8,13**
   - **Ephesians 4:11,12**
   - **1 Peter 4:9–11**
   - **Exodus 31:1–5**

2. When do I feel the most:
   - Free—to be who God made me to be?
   - Flow — to serve people I love, to help and tackle issues I care about in a way that utilizes my natural gifts?
   - Joy?
   - Used of God?
   - Positive feedback from people who responded to my service by moving toward God?

   Briefly share three times in your life when those five things were present for you.

3. Who do I like to help?
   List all the types/categories of people you have a heart to help. Circle the top 3–5.

4. What issues do I care about?
   List issues that are being neglected in your world that make you angry. Or list issues you have a passion to address.

5. What do others see in me?
   Send your answers to the last four questions to five people who have the following criteria:
   - They know you well.
   - They care about you.
   - They walk with God.
   - They have discernment.
   - They will spend three days praying and reflecting on your answers and will respond to this question:
     In what specific ways do you think I could best serve God with my gifts, with a focus on people and on issues I care about?

Pray about the feedback these five people give you. Seek God's wisdom from **James 1:5–8**. Take steps of faith to serve God in the way He is calling you! Though God may send you into an area that you know nothing about or ask you to serve Him in a place that is totally out of your comfort zone—and He certainly will stretch you—He also calls you through your passions and gifts. Sometimes those areas of "stretch" become places of passion!

Challenge
Complete the "Discover Your God-Given Mission" questions, ask for feedback from five friends and family, pray over the results for God's direction, and serve where He leads you! Don't forget to pray for the three names as well as for any opportunity God opens up for you to connect with one or all of those three.

(To study further how to find your God-given mission and know God's will for your life, see Appendices H & J.)

Day 6
Let's take a moment to review the past six health and discipleship principles.

1. C__ __ __ to Jesus as you are, and find R__ __ __.
2. H__ __ __ __ Jesus as Lord, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the fruit of S__ __ __ - C__ __ __ __ __ __.
3. Receive a fresh B__ __ __ __ __ __ of the Holy Spirit, and drink and bathe with W__ __ __ __.
4. Discover Jesus in His W__ __ __ and in P__ __ __ __ __ ; be wise about your N__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __, and breathe F__ __ __ __ A__ __.
5. Love your F__ __ __ __ __ intentionally, and get out in the S__ __ __ __ __ __ __.
6. Disciple O__ __ __ __ __ to Jesus, and E__ __ __ __ __ __ __.

This week we have been discovering your God-given mission.

Today we will look at the health principle of TRUST and how it binds all the health and discipleship principles together.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, You ask me to "trust in the Lord forever, for in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength." Teach me to trust You in all circumstances. In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Isaiah 26:4**).

Read **Jeremiah 17:7-8**. Who is blessed? _____ _____ What will the person who trusts in the Lord be like? _____ _____ _____

The wisest man to walk this earth told us to TRUST God. Let's explore what King Solomon admonishes us to do.
Read **Proverbs 3:5-8**. How should we trust the Lord? _____ _____
How should we acknowledge Him? _____
What are we to turn away from? _____
What two promises does God give (see verse **6** and **8**)? _____ _____ _____ In other words, trusting God will give us optimum spiritual, mental, *and* physical health. Do we believe that God is the sole provider of rest, water, healthy food, fresh air, and sunshine.

Write your name in every blank below; then read it out loud: God uses these principles of health to grow _____ into a healthy person. In turn, God wants _____ to exercise his/her body and use the special talents He has given _____. He wants _____ to bear His character traits (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) in all circumstances of life (good or bad, easy or hard), trusting that He will complete the good work He has started in _____.
(**Galatians 5:22,23** & **Philippians 1:6**)

Testimony
I was 12 weeks pregnant and at the doctor's office for our ultrasound. My husband and I were so excited to see our baby for the first time. The doctor slowly moved the doppler over my tummy, listening for the baby's heartbeat. On the screen, I saw the tiny toes and perfect-looking body of our precious baby.

For what seemed like an eternity, the doctor searched for the heartbeat. Then he sadly told us that he couldn't find one. My heart broke into a million pieces. I wouldn't be able to hold and love our special baby.

The grief consumed me, and I cried myself to sleep every night. I didn't know what to do with all the pain, anger, and tears. One night when I couldn't sleep, I decided to get up and look up verses that would help with grief.

- *Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens and I will give you rest* (**Mathew 11:28**).
- *The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed* (**Psalms 34:18**).
- *He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds* (**Ps. 147:3**).
- *God will give you beauty for ashes* (**Isaiah 61:3**).
- *Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning* (**Psalm 30:5**).

Those verses gave me much relief from the grief, and God gave me peace so I was able to sleep! I started to meditate on those scriptures daily. God's word was the only thing that helped ease my pain. As I trusted in His Word, God comforted and started to heal my broken heart.

God also nudged my heart to share those verses with other people who had gone through loss, so I started writing online. He comforted my heart so I could help comfort and encourage others (**2 Corinthians1:4**). We know that God causes everything to *work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose* (**Romans 8:28**). My prayers were not answered the way I wanted them to be, but God brought something incredibly good out of something so hard. After losing two babies, we decided to adopt children! He has blessed me with five beautiful children, bringing beauty from my ashes and joy to my life. (MP)

Your Turn

Do you trust God daily, coming to Him at every moment, in good or bad situations? _____

Do you acknowledge His will and way over yours in every area

of your life? _____
Ask the Holy Spirit to show you an area where you do not trust Him. _____
Ask God for Holy Spirit help to trust Him in this area today!

Health Challenge– Trust your Heavenly Father. Turn your eyes upward to Him, open your ears to His voice of direction, grasp His hand that is reaching out to you, and walk beside Him in the way He is making for you. **Remember that TRUST in God is a health law!**

Day 7

Think of something you did with all your might? Maybe you were on a baseball team, and you practiced throwing the baseball with all your might. Perhaps you spent hours memorizing Chemistry formulas so you could ace the final exam. Have you ever thought that God would like you to be totally "unleashed" so *HE* could use *you* with *all His might*?

Today we will explore how to live the Lord-of-the-Harvest prayer.

Pray: *Dear Father, today speak to me, I pray, as I seek to better live for You—the Lord of the Harvest. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Reflect on **Matthew 9:35–38**. When Jesus saw the multitudes, how was He moved? _____
What three things did Jesus do together in His ministry? (35)
_____ _____ _____
In view of the plentiful harvest, what is the first thing He called His disciples to do? _____
The words "send out," from the Greek word *ekballo*, mean *to hurl out*. He wants us to pray *aggressively* for the Lord to *catapult* workers into the harvest.

In ministry, as well as in all that we endeavor to do, we need to PRAY FIRST. We need to intercede for the people we will be serving. Only God knows the true needs of the people; only God can move and convict hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit; God alone can change circumstances, take down strongholds, and build up and restore ruins. God alone! We need to support *His* work in prayer.

Read **Joel 2:15-17**. What is God calling the people to do?

_____

_____

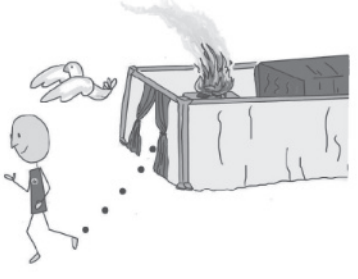
What is He asking the priests to do, in particular in verse **17**? _ "Between the porch and the altar" is sanctuary language. God is calling His priests to pray and intercede in the outer court on behalf of the people. He is calling them to weep, to persevere in prayer, to pray the blood of Jesus on His people, asking God to spare them. Read verses **18-21**. What is the result of those prayers? _____

_____

There are rules of engagement in this war between God and the enemy. God is not a God of force, and He will not work in people's lives uninvited. However, when we stand in the gap for them, God is allowed to work in their lives in greater ways. How? According to Scripture, we are standing as a second or third witness with Jesus on their behalf. In other words, as we express our desire for God to work in their lives, God can honor our free will and move in greater ways than had we not prayed it. Doesn't that make you want to pray more for your friends, loved ones…and enemies? (See **Deuteronomy 19:15**; **Matthew 18:19,20**).

Do you remember how Jesus intercedes? His prayers and pleadings were coupled with ACTION. He interceded as no man could: He died for us. And now He lives to make intercession for us, daily covering our confessed sins with His blood!

Read **Matthew 10:5-8**. Aside from praying, what does He ask us to do? _____



He calls us to ACTION as well! He sends us out; He says, GO! He may ask us to be an answer to our own prayers! The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give us all good gifts and send us all out to be fearless and faithful in His mission, wherever He "hurls" us!

Testimony
When my husband passed away in 2015, I left Hawaii, where we had moved upon his retirement, and returned to Tennessee, thinking my active service for the Lord was finished. (I was 78 years of age.) However, I soon discovered that there is work to be done—even by older people.

Initially, a dear friend from childhood encouraged me to join her in volunteer work at a local church-run thrift store each Wednesday. We sorted donated food items. Then, a college friend asked me to join her in collating Bible studies for a local ministry called *It Is Written*. Also, because I enjoyed sewing, I joined a church ministry which provided dresses and hygiene kits for girls in Africa. I really enjoyed the camaraderie as we bonded over conversation and prayer.

Later, I was asked to be a group leader for a high school week of prayer. Because I had been out of the classroom for many years, I was doubtful that I could connect with young people anymore. However, after the training meeting, I was surprised when a couple of girls asked me for my phone number so we could keep in touch.

Since that experience, I have been privileged to be a small group leader for several training sessions, including international groups. God has blessed me with many new friends with whom I enjoy keeping in touch and praying. Several call me grandma!

Through this ongoing adventure of growing older, one of the most important lessons I have learned is that prayer is very important and makes a huge difference in one's life. No matter where we are or how old we are, we can PRAY. God invites us to pray continually—to intercede for the younger generations—as God "hurls" them into the harvest to reap what we, the older generation, have sown! (BW)

Reader, Jesus wants to hurl you into the mission that He has dreamed for you. He wants you to follow Him in His work of intercession: pleading at the throne of grace for souls AND actively seeking to save the lost! Will you follow Him all the way into His sanctuary?

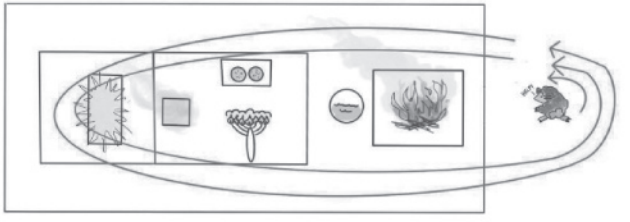
- Take a piece of paper, and write down an out-of-your-comfort-zone mission that God is nudging you to take. It could be witnessing to a neighbor down the street, making friends with the bully at school, or something much more daring like quitting a job and going to a faraway place to make disciples.
- After writing something down, take your paper outside to an open area (or to the end of your longest room).
- Wad it up into a tight ball.
- Pray, asking God to hurl you into this harvest as you throw the paper ball as far away as you can.
- Now go to where your piece of paper fell, and take five minutes to surrender to Jesus privately, asking Him to throw you out into the mission He has dreamed and planned for you before you were born! Write down your thoughts. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____



Pray: *Dear Father in heaven, thank You for calling me to follow Your Son as His disciple! I surrender to Jesus as my Lord and ask that He will hurl me out into His harvest anywhere He wants to send me. Give me courage to obey immediately when He calls me on His gospel mission. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Notice that the sanctuary is one large track. Jesus calls us to follow Him daily from the altar in the outer court right to the ark in the Most Holy Place. Then, with our permission, He "hurls" us out, to seek to save His lost sheep.

His personal commission to all His disciples who follow Him is found in **Matthew 28:18-20**. He says that since He has all authority in heaven and earth, we can GO to make disciples.

What is the best news about this call? (v. **20**) _____

_____

You will never go it alone! He is ever with you! Amen? And remember:

Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,
says the Lord of Hosts
Zechariah 4:6

Challenge
Pray over the results of your survey for God's direction, and serve where He leads you!
Continue praying for your three people, and see how God opens up doors for you to minister to them.

Discipleship Principle 7
Every day, ask God to hurl you into the harvest to fulfill your God-given dream.

Health Principle 8
Every day, trust your Heavenly Father.

Add **Matthew 9:37 & 38** to your memory cards. Ask the Lord of the Harvest to hurl you out in your area of influence.

SO SEND I YOU
By Tim Maddocks

Before the foundation of the world, Jesus made a commitment to you and me that He would go anywhere and do anything, for any length of time, at any cost, for anyone.

Go anywhere. Jesus knew that if He had to GO, it would be to this fallen earth, the one suburb in His Kingdom where He would be treated as an alien, hunted and persecuted by the very ones He desired to save.

Do anything meant to become incarnationally as one of us: poor, wretched, blind, and naked.

- Poor because He would have to strip Himself of His power and become a baby.
- Wretched because from His very arrival on this earth, He would be hunted as an animal for slaughter.
- Blind because He would have to transform from One who knows all to One who knows nothing.
- Naked because He would have to leave His robe of light worn in heaven and be born naked into the poverty of this fallen world.

For any length of time because He knew that while His sojourn on this earth would be 33 years, the very commitment to come would result in being eternally confined to a physical body, restricted forever to one place at one time.

At any cost meant the risk of failure, the risk of eternal death, a risk that He did not have to take, but out of love for fallen humanity, a risk He would accept if it meant having you and me beside Him for all eternity.

For anyone because He left the "99" unfallen worlds–a universe that loved and adored and praised Him–to seek and save our lost world, and He would have done it for just one, even the least of these.

My brothers and sisters, having Gone, having Done what was required for my salvation and yours, knowing the eternal nature of the mission and the cost to His own life, Jesus says to you and me, through His disciples, ***So Send I You.***

GOD'S WAY IN A MAN
"WITH A NATURE LIKE OURS"
WEEK 12
LIVE LIKE ELIJAH

Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness
because of My enemies;
Make Your way straight before my face.
Psalm 5:8

DAY 1 - Stand Before God

What creature, activity, or object in nature has left you in awe? Why? _____

All nature is full of the awesome wonder of the Creator God. How much of it do we notice? Why? _____

_____

Let's open the Word of God, the Holy Bible, and explore the life of a man who faced crisis, hardship, and turmoil with fearlessness because he stood in awe of God alone.

Pray: *Dear Father, please speak to me through Your Word as I study about Elijah. Help me also to live by every "thus says the Lord God." In Jesus' name, Amen* (**1 Kings 17:14**).

Sometimes we look at the "greats" in the Bible—people like Moses, Caleb, Elijah, John, and Paul, and we groan inside, thinking: *Oh, to have <u>their</u> experience with the Lord!* However, read **James 5:17**. What is written about Elijah that is such a comfort to us?_____

Elijah (as well as all the other "greats") were human, just like us.

Reader, Elijah, whom we will study about this week, is just like you in nature: He was a sinful human being. He had no special powers except that he was plugged into the source of ultimate power and strength: Jesus! As we learned these past weeks, Christ is "in you, your hope of glory" and He has a special plan for you just as much as He had for Elijah.

Israel is in major apostasy due to the sinful influence of King Ahab (1 Kings 16:29-34). But one man, Elijah, obeys the Word of God in his life, and takes on an unpopular mission for God, to bring revival to the people. Read **1 Kings 17:1**. Let's focus on Elijah's one-sentence message to Ahab:

1. How does Elijah describe God? Who is He? _____

   _____

   Read **Hebrews 13:8**. What does Paul say of Jesus Christ?

   _____

   Elijah and Paul both declare that God is *not* stuck in history, but that He is still alive and working today!

2. Where is Elijah according to **1 Kings 17:1**?_____

   _____

   Elijah is able to stand before Ahab undaunted because he stands in the presence of the living God.

3. What is Elijah's announcement to King Ahab in **1 Kings 17:1**? _____

   How popular do you think that message is with the king? _

   _____

   How is Elijah able to be so bold? _____

Testimony

Though speaking in front of children has not been a problem, I have never enjoyed nor wanted to get up to speak in front of adults, whether at church or in smaller meetings. However, in 2022, I found out that I had two kinds of cancer. My world turned upside down in a moment. I realized that without God's intervention, I was in trouble. With gratefulness, I can say that God brought me through that dark time, and I am now in remission. I have a new lease on life! Every day I live, I take as a precious gift! With this new lease on life, God has taken away my fear of sharing. I now realize that while I am able, He calls me to share my testimony and be a blessing to others around me. (AM)

Reader, when you stand in God's presence, you will *be* who God calls you to be, *say* what God calls you to say, and *do* what God calls you to do. When you are in awe of God, you are in

awe of no one else! Your fears of what man may *think* of you have no more power over you nor are you intimidated by what man may *do* to you. Right now, surrender your fear to God, and choose to stand in God's Presence and to be in awe of Him alone. _____

_____

Challenge:
Read **Isaiah 43:1-3**.

- Take a piece of paper and turn it lengthwise. Draw a horizontal line across the middle of the page. Label the line with your birthdate on the far left and today's date on the right, with the years in between in 1, 5, or 10-year increments, depending on your age. (See sample below.)
- Think over your life with its happy and sad times. Place a dot near the years of your life to match milestones and victories, and write a short note *above* the line about how God provided for you.
- Then put a dot near the years you had challenges. Write a short note *below* the line, sharing specific ways God was there for you.
- Where was God present in your life? Can you see how He was there for you equally in the good and bad times? Praise Him for that.
- Sample Timeline:



DAY 2 - Live God's Word

Think of who had the voice of authority in your home when you were a child. Was it a parent or grandparent, or maybe an older (or younger) sibling? Can you think of one statement you would hear them say often? Maybe it was your grandmother telling people to take their shoes off at the door. Maybe it was your dad telling you to put things back in the garage where you found them. Who has the voice of authority in our lives often shifts over our lifetime.

Open the Holy Bible as we explore how to live by the authority of God's Word. Elijah did, and we may too.

Pray: *Dear Lord, as I open Your Word, please help me through Your Holy Spirit to live by "every word that proceeds" from Your mouth today—and every day! In Jesus' name, Amen* (**Matthew 4:4**).

Read **1 Kings 17:2-4**. Who is speaking in this passage? _____
God still speaks!

- He speaks when we are strong or weak.
- He speaks when we have all we want or are standing in need.
- He speaks when we face temptation, when we have victory over it, and when we fall.

But do we hear God when He speaks? Or are we so absorbed with all that is happening in our little world that we fail to hear the still, small voice of God?

What did Elijah do when he heard the Word of the Lord in each scenario below?

17:5 _____

_____

17:8-10 _____

_____

18:1-2 _____

Think of some of the questions Elijah could have asked: *Why ravens? They are scavengers, Lord. What kind of meat will they bring me? ... Zarapheth? They're a bunch of heathens who don't eat or worship like me? ... Go to see who? Ahab has sent men all over Israel to capture me!* Elijah didn't question God; he obeyed even when it didn't make sense.

God is looking for children, youth, and adults today who will live by His Word. He calls them:

- To depend on His Word as though it were their flashlight or torch in pitch darkness. Copy out **Psalm 119:105**: _____

  _____

- to find victory in their darkest temptation by His Word, as Christ did when Satan tempted him in the wilderness. Copy out Jesus' words in **Matthew 4:4** _____

_____

- to make daily decisions---about their marriage, their children, their finances, their schooling, their job, their ministry, their treatment of those who have less, the way they love the unlovable---by *the Word of the Lord*. Read **Matthew 7:24-27**. Copy out verse **24**. _____

_____

_____

Testimony
I met Erika and her young friends in a country hostile to Jesus Christ. During the week we had together, she joyfully received Jesus as her Savior, surrendered to Him as her Lord, and learned how to enjoy unrushed time alone with Him in His written Word and in prayer. With wonder she began daily asking for and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

On the final evening, I challenged her and her brothers and sisters in Christ to live the prayer of Jesus in **Luke 10:2,3** where Jesus called His disciples to be sent out as workers in His harvest. "Go…I send you out as lambs among wolves." They prayed in pairs that the Lord of the harvest would "hurl" them out together and individually into His harvest at any cost.

After a few moments, I heard someone crying. I looked up; it was Erika. Her crying turned into weeping; even as our little group came back together, she could not stop crying. "Do you want to share with us why you are crying?" I gently asked her in front of her new family.

Between sobs, she blurted out, "I am scared of what may happen to me if I pray this prayer. I have worked several years in this country in a large business without anyone knowing I am a follower of Jesus. If I asked Jesus to hurl me into the harvest, I know He would want me to share Him with my boss and my coworkers…and that is illegal in this country. To share my faith would result in my losing my job." She started sobbing again. "And they could throw me in prison, torture me, or take my life.

I am so afraid of praying this prayer, but I want to honor Jesus. I know the Holy Spirit will show me what to say."

I asked the little group, "How many of you, like Erika, are also afraid of praying and living this prayer?" Everyone raised their hands. "If the Holy Spirit is convicting you to surrender your fears to Jesus so that He can send you into His harvest, please join me on your knees." Everyone quietly knelt on the floor, including Erika. Every one of us in that room surrendered our fears to Jesus.

I flew home to my land of liberty. A few days later, Erika found a way to send me this short message: "I am praying the prayer of the harvest every day. The Holy Spirit sent me today to share Jesus with my boss and to pray with her. I do not know what will happen next...but I know I have gone where my Savior sent me. Pray for me!" That was the last message I ever received from her. (DM)

Reader, your "harvest" may not be as dangerous as Erika's, but when your brook dries up, will you go to the Zarephath where God sends you, even if it is not the place you would have chosen? Will you live by your word (or someone else's) or by the Word of the Lord? Will your attitudes and actions be defined by what you want, what you wish, and what you fear...or by the Word of the Lord? Choose to live by the Word of the Lord, and tell Him it is your desire to do so. Surrender your desires and your fears to him right now!

Challenge
Practice living by the Word of the Lord in your attitudes and actions over the next 24 hours. Find the peace and joy and guidance of walking in the way of the Lord.

DAY 3 - Find Heart Healing: Come and Worship
Think of something that consumes a lot of your time. _____

_____

What time-consuming distractions prevent people from worshiping God in their homes? Why? _____

_____

Let's search the Word of the Lord to explore Elijah's steps to call God's people back to true worship. It is time for every home to be a place where Jesus Christ is worshiped as Lord.

Pray: *Dear Lord, speak to my heart today. Convict me. Give me Your Holy Spirit as I open Your Word. In Jesus' powerful name I pray, Amen.*

Read **Malachi 4:5,6**, verses we talked about in the context of family (week 8, DP 5). Before Jesus returns, what Elijah message will God send to young and old? _____

_____

God doesn't say that He *might* restore…but that "He *will* restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers…" (NASB) Part of the restoration process in our homes is restoring family worship of the true God. Reader, does that seem daunting, like an impossibility in your home? Maybe you feel you face walls that can't be breached, such as schedules…and especially attitudes.

Elijah also faced walls against the true worship of the living God.

1. Read **1 Kings 18:21**. How did Elijah challenge God's people? _____

   _____

   How did the people respond? _____
   Elijah faced a **Wall of Silence.** You may also face silence when calling your family to worship. Silence can be disinterest or even hostility.

2. Read **1 Kings 18:22**. What did Elijah declare to the people? _____

   _____

   Here He faced the **Wall of the Majority**. Perhaps the majority of your family members may not want to worship with you.

3. Read **1 Kings 18:30**. What did Elijah ask the people to do? _____

What did he do when they came near? _____

_____

Finally, Elijah encountered the **Wall of Broken Altars**. The altar to the true God had not been destroyed by natural means, such as lightning, wind, or rain: God's people had purposefully torn it down. Is your family altar broken down? Would you like to have it repaired?

Read **1 Kings 18:31,32**. What did Elijah use to build up what had been purposefully torn down? _____
Read **Joshua 4:8,9**. What did the 12 stones represent? _____

_____

Elijah built the altar in the way that would remind them of their history with the true God.

1 Kings 18:32 states that Elijah built the altar "**in**_____ _____." Elijah did not build the altar in his own name, or in the name of the king to flatter him, but rather, in the name of the Lord.

The worship of the Lord Jesus is often confined to public places of worship. The worship of the living God, Jesus Christ, must return to our hearts and to our homes. Here are some ideas to make that happen in your home:

1. Every day, pray for each person in your family that God will call them to love, worship, and serve Jesus Christ.

2. Clear an area in your home of any distractions for true worship.

3. Gather your family in a *loving* way for a *short* time to worship Jesus Christ together.
   - Pray for God to bless His Word.
   - Do a quick, fun activity together as a family that prepares the hearts for the topic of God's Word.
   - Read a short story or passage in God's Word with the focus of searching for what it says about Jesus.
   - Discuss together how to practice what you have read in God's Word.
   - Pray for God's blessings on each family member.

Testimony
In our home, practicing family worship was a totally foreign idea. When I was first given this challenge, my immediate thought was that neither my husband nor teenage daughter were going to be interested in it. I decided to first pray about the situation, asking God to make them desire it as well. To my surprise, when I asked them if they would like to start family worship, they were both willing!

Our family has no time to prepare elaborate worships, so we keep it short and simple. We always incorporate the Word of God, reading a passage, looking for what it says about God, and asking how the story or message can be related to our lives. We end by asking how we can pray for each other, and then each of us prays for the other. Very powerful!

Bringing family worship into our home has provided an avenue for us to care for each other when many times, we have difficulty connecting. It has become one SURE way we CAN connect and show our love for one another. I pray family worship will become this kind of blessing to your family as you grow not only in your relationship with Christ but also in your relationship with your loved ones through Christ! (SP)

Reader, is God calling you to repair the broken-down altar of worship in your family? Ask yourself, *What can I do to make my home a place to worship Jesus Christ?* Rededicate your heart to calling your family to worship the Lord Jesus every day!

Challenge
Pray for the next 24 hours, asking God to prepare the heart of each member of your family to worship the Lord together. Also pray that He will help you call them to worship in a way that will call young and old to Jesus through His written Word. If you have a spouse, pray together. Clear a distraction-free environment in your home, and prepare a short worship, using the ideas in the above bullet list.

DAY 4 - Call for Revival
Traveling during COVID was challenging to say the least, but this situation seemed impossible. Unable to get our negative test results on our phones, we were held back from checking

in for our flight to Zambia on a mission trip. Then miraculously, a supervisor bypassed the person holding us up and called us to her counter. She neither asked to see our COVID tests nor charged us for the extra checked-in bags. We all got our COVID tests in our email by the next flight, except for one of us. God got her through all the checkpoints, including the final destination, without ever having to show proof of negative results. (DJ) God has a solution for every impossible situation—even those within our families, despite the dynamics.

Let's open the Word of the Lord and read about Elijah's call for true revival among the family of Israel. Today God is also asking us to call for revival in our families.

Pray: *Dear Lord, today as I come to You, I ask that Your sweet Spirit would teach me how I can call my family to revival. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.*

Elijah gathered the people on Mount Carmel, and in his call for revival, he incorporated the seven principles of discipleship that we have been studying over these past weeks. Read **1 Kings 18:19,20**. What is the first thing Elijah called Ahab to do?

_____

He calls them to come, to come just as they are.

Read **1 Kings 18:21**. What did Elijah ask the people to do?

_____

_____

Here we see Elijah calling the people to stop bouncing between God and Baal and to make a decision to follow God alone. Unfortunately, the people were not ready to make the decision to "climb on the altar" and allow God to be Lord of their lives. According to **Romans 2:4**, what alone can lead people to repentance? _____

Sometimes in revival, people are not ready to follow Jesus all the way—they need time, patience, and demonstration of His goodness—and as we will see, God is so gracious and willing to give us what we need, though we don't deserve it.

Read **1 Kings 18:30**. After the false prophets had their time

pleading with their gods to answer by fire, what does Elijah ask of the people before His turn? _____
This reminds us of the sanctuary model; we are called to draw near to the altar to find true rest. He calls the people to come, just as they are: bored, indecisive, unbelieving.

Read verses **30-32**. What does Elijah do? _____
Here Elijah uses _____ stones to rebuild the altar of the Lord, representing the _____ of Jacob. This is so significant! He is in essence rebuilding Jacob's family—the twelve tribes that have sprung from Jacob's twelve sons—as he builds the altar of the Lord. As we once again repair and rebuild our family altars, we are also bringing restoration to our families.

Read verses **33-35**. What crazy thing did Elijah call the people to do? _____
Not once or twice, but three times was the altar with its sacrifice doused with water, rendering it *impossible* to burn. What does the water represent in the sanctuary model? _____
_____ Our family altar must be saturated with the Holy Spirit. This is God's promise: The Spirit who baptizes with water will also baptize our families with fire, in the most impossible of circumstances.

Read verses **36-37**. Look at everything that is packed in this short and simple prayer, which shows Elijah's heart for the revival of God's people. This was his appeal to the God of their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel:

- Open the people's eyes to see that there is only _____ God in Israel.
- Let it be known that I am your _____ and I have done all these things at YOUR _____ .
- Hear me!
- Show the people that _____ are God alone and that YOU have _____

Figuratively speaking, in this prayer, we see Elijah standing in the Holy and Most Holy Places. He appealed to God on the basis of HIS Word. He interceded on behalf of the family of Israel to have their eyes opened, to see the light. He *boldly* prayed for fire.

See **1 Kings 18:39**. What was the people's reaction when God sent down fire? _____

_____

(compare John's words about Jesus in **Matthew 3:11**).

Elijah's intercession did not stop with prayer for fire. Read verses **42-44**. What else did he pray for? _____

In revival, we need both fire and rain. Holy Spirit fire consumes all our stuff: our self-glory, our cleverness, our opinions and willful actions, our self-love. Then, the Holy Spirit rain fills us with the perfume of Christ's life and love, changes us, and gives us power to be witnesses for Him. We need to be continually consumed on Christ's altar, but we also need to be refreshed with the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the laver.

A bit later, God led Elijah to disciple another person who would eventually take his place. Read **1 Kings 19:15,16**. Who did God specifically call him to disciple? _____ And a few days from now, we will see how this disciple of Elijah's was hurled into the harvest!

God told Elijah, "a man with a nature like ours," to call for revival in the most impossible of circumstances. Elijah, using the same principles as the seven we have been studying, followed the Word of the Lord. What is so encouraging is that God took total responsibility for the results: only *He* could send the much-needed fire and rain for this revival!

And Reader, God can do the impossible in your family! As you intercede in prayer and claim Bible promises for your family, God WILL answer you and provide results. He will send fire and rain on your family! He will restore your family altar, so you can worship the true God together again. He will baptize each family member, so you can all go out to be a blessing to others.

Do you believe Jesus can do this in your family? If you are struggling, claim the promise in **Mark 9:23,24**. God is ready to do amazing things in your family! Talk to Him now. _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Call your family to join you each evening for a short and simple worship time together. Pray about how to incorporate God's seven discipleship and eight health principles in a short, simple, step-by-step way into your family worship.

Day 5 - Cry for Fire
Think of a time in your life when fire made all the difference. When was it? _____
Fire on a campout can warm cold fingers, provide needed light, heat up soup, and encourage weary campers. A fire may even determine the outcome of a life-or-death situation.

Let's open the Word of the Lord and read about Elijah's cry to God for fire and God's answer to his prayer. Today God is calling us to cry out for the true fire of the Holy Spirit as we prepare for Jesus' soon return.

Pray: *Good morning, Lord. In* ***Jeremiah 23:29****, You ask, "Is not My word like a fire?" As I open Your Word now, please send Your Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind and impress me with the need of Your fire to do what You're calling me to do. In Jesus' powerful name, Amen.*

Yesterday we read about Elijah's ludicrous request to douse the altar with water. Definitely, no one could say that Elijah had produced the fire. Only _____ could work that miracle and provide fire! Read **1 Kings 18:24**. How did Elijah make a clear contrast between heaven-sent fire and man-made fire?

_____

Elijah taught where true fire comes from.

In **1 Kings 18:24**, what public agreement did Elijah make with the priests of Baal? _____

_____

Read **1 Kings 18:36,37**. How did Elijah appeal to God for fire?

_____

_____

How would the people have viewed him had God not answered his prayer for fire? _____
What would they have done to him? _____

Elijah risked everything, even his life, to call for God's true fire, a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Read **1 Kings 18:38**. What did the fire consume? _____

_____

Everything Elijah had touched with his own hands in the preparation of the altar was burned up completely. There was nothing left as a monument to Elijah. **Man could get NO credit.**

Many years later, John the Baptist would point people to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Read **Matthew 3:11,12**. What did John the Baptist declare about who was to come? How will He baptize? _____

_____

Rub your hands together like you would if you were trying to separate wheat kernels from the husks. Can you feel the friction and heat between your hands that would separate the two? Jesus is ready to baptize His people with the Holy Spirit and to burn off the chaff (sin) in our life with fire. He is ready to purify His people. **God's fire consumes everything.**

Read **1 Kings 18:39**. What was the people's reaction? _____

_____

Through the miracle of the fire, God showed that He could just as easily work a miracle to provide rain for the dry earth and Holy Spirit rain for those people who were dried up spiritually!

Reader, God calls you to ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit, so He can grow your character to be like Jesus and live as a fearless witness for Him every moment of your life. Is this your desire? If so, kneel where you are. Repent of your sins and ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Challenge
Continue to ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in your life. Follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Remember that His voice must be in agreement with the written word of God.

DAY 6 - Help in Our Brokenness
Can you remember a time when you were in deep discouragement from something as simple as an unkind remark

from someone's lips? In our lives, we may have, with the help of God, overcome some obstacles as thick as brambles in an overgrown forest, but then for a moment, we forget what God did for us, and a tiny twig lying on our path trips us up!

Today we will explore the Scriptures to see how God cares for someone "with a nature like ours" who, while working for the Lord, falls into a pit of despair.

Pray: *Dear Father, today I ask that Your sweet Spirit will speak to my heart as I open Your Word. In Jesus' wonderful name I pray, Amen.*

Only once do we have evidence that Elijah forgot to live by the Word of the Lord...and there were disastrous results. Elijah had just lived an extreme high on Mount Carmel. His prayers for fire and rain were answered in abundance. Filled with the Spirit, He ran down the mountain *ahead* of Ahab and his chariot of horses, guiding them safely to the palace. God did amazing feats through him. However, what happened when Ahab arrived home?

Read **1 Kings 19:1,2**. Whose authoritative voice was heard here, and what did it threaten? _____
Read v. **3**. What specifically happened to Elijah when he allowed himself to be overwhelmed with Jezebel's threat? _____
_____

Wet and cold, coming down from a mountain-top experience, Elijah succumbed to discouragement and doubt. Whose word did he believe at this point? _____
He did not do according to the word of the Lord as had been his practice, but rather according to the word of Jezebel! Read v.**4**. How deep did Elijah's depression go? _____
Elijah's fear led to depression and even suicidal thoughts.

Reader, do you sometimes succumb to despondency, especially at the sound of bad news? This sometimes happens in "a nature like ours." Do you think Elijah's disheartened spirit took God by surprise? _____ God not only knew, *but He ran with Elijah, although he was running in the wrong direction.*

Even in Elijah's unfaithfulness, God had a special way planned beforehand to minister to him in such circumstances.

Let's see what God did for Elijah. Read **1 Kings 19:5-7**. Who did God send to minister to him? _____
What was the first line of "treatment"? _____
_____
Does this sound familiar, Reader? God started implementing His laws of health to help Elijah, starting with rest; good, simple food; and water. Read v. **8**. What else was Elijah called to do (on the strength of angel food)? _____
_____ Think of Elijah walking 40 days in the outdoors. Which health principles are applied here?
_____
His trip included exercise, sunlight, fresh air—and we could call the whole journey one of self-control.

Read verses **9** and **13**. What does God do? _____
_____ Twice He gives Elijah space to explain himself. How awesome is our God! He is never in the wrong, and could easily give us a lecture about how to avoid these situations in the first place—but our God is a good listener. He wants to hear our view on our situations, as self-focused as they may be. Read verses **11-12**. How does God choose to speak to Elijah? _____
_____

Elijah came down from an experience that could be likened to gale-force winds, an earthquake, and fire, but He asks Elijah to TRUST His "still small voice." Read verse **15,16**. Then what does God ask Elijah to do, in one word?_____

Testimony
Several years ago, I was praying and thinking of how best to start a ministry. I had never led out in anything before, so I was terrified and prayed like crazy. We started moving forward with the operation. It turned out that a bunch of people loved the idea, and many were quickly getting involved.

The busier I got, the less time I spent praying and studying God's Word. Our success was amazing, and I let pride soak all through my way of thinking. My sense of pride changed how

I was leading, and nearly as fast as the program had risen, it crashed to a halt.

However, the crash did not drive me to rely on God. Instead of making things right with Him, I ran away from the whole ministry. I just went dark and didn't return calls or answer messages. I quit cold turkey and never went back. I was so depressed and embarrassed that I had failed that I even contemplated suicide. I spent a long time feeling unable to move, but I loved my family and didn't really want to die. So I slowly started to follow biblical health principles to try to get back on track. I literally dragged myself outside to sit in the sun; I started to drink more water and eat as healthfully as possible.

As a part of physically working out my depression, I started a prayer walk with the Lord. The extra time with Him made me realize that my failure was completely due to my pride and thinking I was a great leader without God. When I humbled myself before Him, He showed me who I could be with Him. Jesus showed me that He still wanted me to lead.

When I walk humbly in step with Him, Jesus gives me the words to speak, the love to share, and patient endurance to face the trials of leadership. I am now going on six years in ministry, and I thank God for His recovery and His help as I daily recognize His sovereignty in my life, spend time with Him in the Word and prayer, obey His call, and follow His lead. (PS)

Elijah's experience is so encouraging for us who have a similar nature to him, who are susceptible to melancholy and despair.

Reader, at times, do you or someone you are close to lose confidence in God and listen to other voices instead of God's. Do you or that person you love sometimes fall into despondency? God has given you a remedy in the health principles. He has a way to care for you through these principles—starting with rest.

Note that Elijah walked for 40 days before he got to the cave. God knows it's not an overnight fix, and He knows exactly how much time you need to be restored. The good news is that HE

WILL restore you (and your loved ones), and make you ready to "GO" again for Him!

Reader, throw yourself into God's arms right now, asking Him to help you trust Him totally in every situation in your life. Pray the same for your struggling loved ones. _____

_____

_____

Challenge
Ask God to help you trust him totally, even in trials, in darkness as well as in light.

DAY 7 - Mentor Your Elisha
Write down the name of someone who mentored you to do something meaningful that positively impacted your life. _____

_____

What did they teach you? _____
Why did that person mentor you? What would motivate you to mentor someone to do something you know how to do? _____

_____

Let's delve into the Scriptures and watch Elijah invest his life in raising up a younger man to replace himself. As Elijah discipled Elisha, so we too are called to disciple an "Elisha."

Pray: *Dear Heavenly Father, please show me who You have chosen to be my Elisha and how to disciple him/her. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Read **1 Kings 19:14-16**. At what point in Elijah's experience did God call Him to mentor Elisha? _____
God called Elijah to find Elisha even though Elijah had failed.

Read **1 Kings 19:19-21**. What did Elijah ask Elisha to leave to follow him? _____
Elisha followed Elijah for a number of years. Read **2 Kings 2:2,4,6**. As the time approached for God to "take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind," every time Elijah asked Elisha to "stay here," what did Elisha say? _____

_____

He knew he had little time left with Elijah. Read verse **8**. What was one thing Elisha saw Elijah do? _____

_____

In a spiritual sense, Elijah showed Elisha how to cross Jordan rivers.

Let's go back to Elijah's call to Elisha. Read **1 Kings 19:19**. What did Elijah do to call Elisha? _____
Read **2 King 2:11-13**. What fell from Elijah that Elisha picked up? _____ What were the results of Elisha taking up Elijah's mantle according to **2 Kings 2:**
14: _____
15: _____

At this point, Elisha was truly "hurled" into the the harvest. The mantle is symbolic of the tools of ministry that are vested in the disciple. Elisha was ready, with the tools that Elijah had shown him, to begin his own ministry. (For example, see verses **19-22**.)

Testimony
Nine-year-old Dex and his mother came late to our training session. He plunked down in his chair, his legs swinging without touching the floor, surrounded by a little group of adults who were very uncomfortable with leading small groups for the revival. "Who will lead a small group this coming week of revival," I asked.

The adults looked down at their shoes. Some fidgeted with their phones. One or two muttered, "We are so busy this coming week." No one volunteered.

Dex studied the faces of the adults and then raised his hand, "I would like to be a small group leader if my mom would help me! You will help me, won't you, Mom?" He looked up at his mom with great admiration and enthusiasm.

His shy mother gulped and stammered, "Why... of course, I will help you." Within seconds all the rest of the adults were volunteering!

Every evening, Dex came with his mother who had helped him prepare, so he could lead a small group of adults in discussion

and in prayer. Every evening, she encouraged him and prayed with him. After several evenings, Dex asked, "Isn't there something else I can do to help you call my church to Jesus?" I prayed with him and his mom and gave her instructions to prepare him to call everyone to prayer the next evening.

The next evening, Dex came dressed up in a suit and tie. He approached the mic and tried to reach it. I pulled it down so he could speak. "Don't we have a beautiful church?" He asked. Everyone smiled and nodded their heads. "But we have a big problem, don't we?" He asked somberly. "We don't love each other very much in our church, do we?" No one said a word. His mother looked nervously at her hands. This was NOT what she had prepared him to say.

Dex looked quietly over the room. The Holy Spirit spoke through him with power as he lifted up his little arms to heaven and cried out, "We need to repent! We need to ask Jesus to forgive us for the way we have treated each other!" He got down on his little knees and asked, "Who will get on your knees with me and repent and ask Jesus to forgive you?"

A hush fell across the room. One by one, prominent leaders, many old enough to be his parents or grandparents, awkwardly got down on their knees while he cried out to God on behalf of his church. Then he said, "Now it is your turn to pray with the people around you." And God's people prayed. Some wept. And the Spirit of God began a revival in that church. (DM) Someone invested in Dex like Elijah did for Elisha. That someone was his mother.

Reader, will you be an Elijah and choose now to cross your Jordan by faith in the living God to go invest your life in an Elisha and give this young person your mantle so that s/he can do what you have done for the Lord—but from a younger age and with greater power?

Challenge
Ask God for your Elisha: a young person of your same gender that you can pour your life into for Christ. Commit to finding your Elisha and begin investing in him or her within the next 7 days.

DAY 8 - Be an Elijah

Can you think of names of men, women, and youth who were unafraid to champion a worthy cause at great risk? Write down three names and a positive result from each person's risk. ____

_____

_____

What motivated these people to take risks to champion their cause? Were most of the names you thought of from long ago or within your lifetime? Why do you think this is?

These past few months, we have explored Jesus' life, ministry, and the work He desires to do in our lives. This week, we have explored and prayed through the life of Elijah, a "man with a nature like ours" and have been challenged to take a step of faith as he did (**James 5:17**).

Our great danger is to return to the way we lived before we began this revival.

Let's explore how the Word of God calls us to live now as an Elijah in these last days before Jesus returns.

Pray: *Dear Lord, please send Your Holy Spirit to teach me and then to convict me on how to live like Elijah did. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

God sent Elijah the prophet to ancient Israel centuries before Christ's first coming.

1. Elijah risked his life to call Israel to repentance and to return to God.
2. He was a real person with passions and failures like us (**James 5:17**)
3. He lived his life in full faith and acted on His faith in God's Word.

God sent John, son of Zacharius the priest, as a type of Elijah years later, just before Jesus' first advent.

Read **Luke 1:16,17**. According to this prophecy, what would

John the Baptist, who would come in "the spirit and power of Elijah," do? _____

_____

In essence, what was his mission (see last line in verse **17**)?

_____

Turning the hearts of fathers back to their children was a powerful part of turning the hearts of the people back to God Himself before Jesus came the first time 2,000 years ago. Like Elijah:

1. John risked his life to call Israel to repentance and to return to God.
2. He was a real person with doubts and fears like us (see **Matthew 11:2,3**).
3. He lived his life in full faith and acted on His faith in God's Word.

God is sending a people in the spirit and power of Elijah NOW before His second coming (Malachi 4:5).

1. He calls people who are willing to take risks to call His people back to Him.
2. He calls real people with doubts and fears who will surrender to Jesus totally.
3. He calls people who will live life in full faith based on the Word of God.

Here are some examples of modern-day Elijahs:

Charley heard God's call to be an Elijah and retired early so that he and his wife could go anytime and anywhere to call for revival and make disciples. Though he had lived a quiet and successful life, shunning public speaking, the Holy Spirit called Charley to surrender his fear of public speaking. He surrendered his fears, and the love of God and the urgency of preparing a people to meet Jesus when He comes has moved his heart mightily. Now he and his wife call people of all ages to revival. They disciple people online and in person. They are always looking and praying for just one more! Charlie and his wife are Elijahs!

Natalie is a young adult, broken, but healed by the blood of the Lamb! She could let the past hurt rule her life, but she has discovered that she is a daughter of the King. She sings of God's faithfulness and speaks to her community as well as going around the world to make disciples for Jesus. Natalie is an Elijah!

Jimmy is a college student who loves to run. He is full of life... but often also full of pain. Because of his health, he has every reason to be sidelined, but he is a disciple of Jesus and a disciple maker. He refuses to be silent. Jimmy is an Elijah!

Silvia sat listening to early morning revival meetings, and her heart was moved mightily. She knew how to teach but had never dared to call a church to revival. She asked for the speaker's notes, traveled to a far country, and cried out for revival...and the people listened, cried, turned to Christ, and repented. Silvia is an Elijah!

Katara was a child when she first became a disciple of Jesus. She attended a school in a nation hostile to Christ with strict rules against even speaking the name of Christ. She shared Christ anyway on the soccer field, whispering the name of Jesus and answering the questions of her classmates when out of her teacher's hearing. She is a teenager now. She stands up and speaks up for Christ. Katara is an Elijah!

Chris rolls up his sleeves, and you know when you see his arms that he had another life apart from Christ. He knows that some stare, but he also knows he is redeemed by the Savior Himself and he is one of His disciples. His mother prayed for him for years with tears...waiting...watching for the Lord to get through to him. Chris is a young adult today calling his church to revival and risking his friendships to call others to Christ. Chris is an Elijah! (DM)

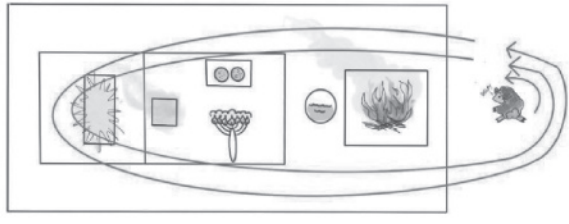
And Reader, God has chosen *you* to live on this planet NOW to be an Elijah before He returns. Will you partner with Him in His work to heal families, to raise up young and old to live like Elijah? God wants to give you and all His followers the voice of Elijah to call children, youth, and adults back to Christ before He

returns. Will you make a covenant with God to call young and old to return to Jesus and prepare to meet Him soon?

Challenge
Within the next 24 hours, set aside unrushed time to tell the Lord, "Help me live as an Elijah every day in the Word of God and in prayer." Then ask God, "Where are You sending me to be an Elijah?" Wait on God and seek His answer on this…for He has called you and each of us now to be *the last Elijah*!

THE NEXT DAY

Pray: *Good morning, Lord. Speak to my heart as I once again review the principles of Your Way in the sanctuary. In Jesus' name, may Your Holy Spirit convict me of areas where You are calling me to make adjustments or complete changes. Give me not only the desire, but also the wisdom and strength to carry it through for "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." In Jesus' powerful name, Amen (***Philippians 4:13***).*



One more time, using the sanctuary diagram, can you write out all the discipleship and health principles, as thoroughly as possible? Try it!

DP1: _____

HP1: _____

DP2: a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

HP2: _____

DP3: _____

HP3: _____

DP4: a. _____

b. _____

HP4: _____

HP5: _____

DP5: _____

HP6: _____

DP6: _____

HP7: _____

DP7: _____

HP8: _____

How did you do? *And more importantly, how are you doing as far as incorporating them in your life?* Keep practicing these principles—these habits will help you "walk in Him" and be "rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith… abounding in it with thanksgiving" (**Colossians 2:6,7**). "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He will strengthen your heart" (**Psalm 27:14**).

Reader, again, take a moment of prayerful reflection on the above principles. What discipleship and health principles does He especially want you to focus on? _____
Is there one in particular that He is especially pressing on your heart? _____

Maybe it is a difficult step for you. Right now, surrender this principle to Him, asking that He help you to move forward in obedience to His voice in your life. Claim God's promise in **2 Corinthians 12:9** for superhuman strength from above: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." _____

_____

_____

_____

Challenge
Every day, ask God to help you practice all of the discipleship and health principles to the best of your ability. Surrender those which are particularly difficult for you to follow.

What If You Lived as a Disciple of Jesus?

If you lived as a disciple of Jesus every day, what would be the result? _____

_____

What would God like to do with you next? _____

_____

Pray, asking God what He would like you to do next. Write down what you feel impressed with. Share and pray with a godly family member or friend. Make plans according to what God has revealed to you.

WHAT IF?

By Don MacLafferty

What if…every day, I met with God BEFORE I met with others, if I connected with God before connecting with my phone?
What if…I lived each day of my life by the Word of God?
What if…I trusted that what God called me to do, He would provide for me to accomplish?
What if…I dared to call family, friends, co-workers, and strangers to follow God?
What if…I repaired the broken-down altar in my home?
What if…I called God each morning to fill me with the fire of the Holy Spirit?
What if…I heard by faith the promised rain—before it came?
What if…I ran the race of my life by the power of God, not my own?
What if…I listened every day for the still, small voice of God?
What if…I invited the *Elisha* God placed on my heart to join me?
What if…I stood by the obstacle confronting me and crossed it by the authority of God?
What if…after mentoring my *Elisha*, I let *Elisha* go?

Endnotes

Week 4, Day 3 (Table of Shewbread)

[1] Bread was housed in two areas of the sanctuary, in the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.

The bread in the Most Holy Place was housed inside the ark in the form of manna, which was Israel's sustenance for 40 years while they wandered in the wilderness (**Hebrews 9:4**). Six days a week, God sent bread from heaven for them to collect. They took as much as they needed for that day for themselves and their families (on Friday, they collected for two days: Friday and Sabbath) (**Exodus 16:14-26**).

Manna was different from the bread on the table of shewbread as it was totally divine—"angels' food"—made solely by the hand of God. The shewbread was manmade but was set apart for holy purposes, and God preserved it, keeping it fresh so it wouldn't mold for two weeks! (Compare **Psalm 78:23-25** and **Leviticus 24:5,6**.)

Notice the detail in the way the bread on the table of shewbread was arranged (**Leviticus 24:6**). The 12 loaves were arranged in two piles of 6, suggestive of the Word of God, which is composed of 66 books. The Bible was also a human-divine combination as was the shewbread: All the truths were "given by inspiration of God" yet they were written by the hands and expressed in the words of men inspired by the Holy Spirit (**2 Timothy 3:16**).

Note that the Ten Commandments (also kept inside the ark) have no trace of humanity; God inscribed them on tables of stone with His own hands (**Exodus 31:18**). Like the divinely fashioned manna housed INSIDE the ark, so God wants to inscribe His law INSIDE our hearts and minds (**Jeremiah 31:33**).

In **John 6:31-35**, Jesus said He was the manna from heaven but also called Himself the "bread of life." While Jesus was in heaven with His Father, He was the divine manna. He was "with God," and He "was God." (**John 1:1**). He was the manna sent down from heaven, the Word made flesh who "dwelt

among us, full of grace and truth" (**John 1:14**). When He traversed the veil, He became the shewbread on the table for us to ingest. Thus, both the manna and shewbread are beautiful emblems, not only of the written word but also of the Word made flesh, Jesus!

Week 5

[1] Hale, L. Youth Screen Media Habits and Sleep: Sleep-friendly Screen-behavior Recommendations for Clinicians, Educators, and Parents. Child Adolesc Psychiatr Clin N Am. 2018 Apr; 27(2): 229–245.doi: 10.1016/j.chc.2017.11.014

[2] Clark, I., Landolt, H., Coffee, Caffeine, and Sleep: A Systematic Review of Epidemiological Studies and Randomized Controlled Trials. Sleep Medicine Reviews. February 2017 DOI:10.1016/j.smrv.2016.01.006

[3] Gavidia, M. Eating or Drinking Up to 1 Hour Before Bedtime May Impair Sleep Quality. AJMC. September 14, 2021.

Week 7

[1] Ferrell, VH, Cherne, HM, The Natural Remedies Encyclopedia, 7th Edition. Harvestime Books. pp78-80. 2010.

[2] Center for Disease control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/water-and-healthier-drinks.html

[3] Trivia answers:

1. approximately 60-70%.
2. 50 gallons! (Most of this is recycled.)

3-7. Answers are all True!

[4] Gill, S., Cross, K. When is the best time to drink water? Medical News Today. 2018, March 18.

Week 8

[1] Tuso, Philip J., et al, Nutritional Update for Physicians: Plant-Based Diets, Permanente J. 2013 Spring; 17(2): 61–66. doi: 10.7812/TPP/12-085

[2] Pye A, Bash K, Joiner A, Beenstock J. Good for the planet and good for our health: the evidence for whole-food plant-based diets. BJPsych International. 2022;19(4):90-92. doi:10.1192/bji.2022.7

[3] Ferrell, Vance H. and Harold M. Cherne, MD. The Natural Remedies Encyclopedia. Harvestime Books. 2010. p 75.

[4] The Atmosphere -NOAA. July 28, 2023. [www.noaa.gov]

[5] White, EG. Ministry of Healing, Boise, Idaho. Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942. page 272.

[6] Idrose, Alzamani Mohammad, et. al, Singing Improves Oxygen Saturation in Simulated High-Altitude Environment. Journal of Voice. Volume 36, Issue 3, May 2022, Pages 316-321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2020.06.031

Week 9

[1] While the Bible doesn't explicitly state that the couple wed at Cana were relatives of Jesus, Mary's presence at the wedding and awareness of the lack of wine shows that she, in some way, was involved in wedding preparations, strongly suggesting that they were related. Also, Jesus and His disciples were invited, which hints of a close connection. Some Bible scholars and commentators speculate that the wedding may have been for one of Jesus' siblings or a close friend of the family.

[2] Make God's Word the Welcome and Witness of Your Front Door

"You shall write them on the door posts of your house."
How can you make God's Word into a "welcome and witness" to all who come into your home?
Possible examples: Place a Bible promise above an inside door. Prayerfully place Bible promises in different rooms of your home, matching texts with activities that might take place in those rooms — eating, sleeping, studying, etc. Using wet-erase markers, write a Bible verse on the mirror of a bathroom.

Make God's Word the Welcome and Witness of the Entry to Your Property

"You shall write them...on your gates."
What can you do to make God's Word the welcome and witness of your property?
Invite your guests to join you on a Bible prayer walk on your property. If you don't have much property or don't live where you can do Bible prayer walks in nature, walk your neighborhood and pray for your neighbors — and let them know you are praying for them. Ask, when possible, how you can pray for them.
For ideas for Bible prayer walks, see the book Meet Jesus Outside: Bible Prayer Walks, downloadable for free at indisicpleship.org.

[3]Ferrell, VH, Cherne, HM, The Natural Remedies Encyclopedia, 7th Edition. Harvestime Books. pp. 50-53. 2010.

[4] Alexander J. Smalley, Mathew P. White, Beyond blue-sky thinking: Diurnal patterns and ephemeral meteorological phenomena impact appraisals of beauty, awe, and value in urban and natural landscapes, Journal of Environmental Psychology, Volume 86, 2023, 101955, ISSN 0272-4944, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2023.101955.(https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272494423000038)

Week 10

[1] Ferrell and Cherne, *The Natural Remedies Encyclopedia 7th Edition, pp. 68-69.*

[2] Hijikata, Y and Yamada, S. Walking just after a meal seems to be more effective for weight loss than waiting for one hour to walk after a meal. Int J Gen Med. 2011; 4: 447–450. Published online 2011 Jun 09. doi: 10.2147/IJGM.S18837. PMCID: PMC3119587 PMID: 21731896

[3] Kathleen Mikkelsen, Lily Stojanovska, Momir Polenakovic, Marijan Bosevski, Vasso Apostolopoulos, Exercise and mental health, Maturitas, Volume 106, 2017, Pages 48-56. ISSN 0378-5122, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2017.09.003. (https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378512217308563)

[4] https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm

[5] Nieman DC, Wentz LM. The compelling link between physical activity and the body's defense system. J Sport Health Sci. 2019 May;8(3):201-217. doi: 10.1016/j.jshs.2018.09.009. Epub 2018 Nov 16. PMID: 31193280; PMCID: PMC6523821.

Appendix A
Tips for Healthy Digital and Smart Phone Management

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16).

- Adopt the motto: Word before world!
- Surrender your phone to Jesus each and every morning!
- Remember, your phone is for your convenience, not for the convenience of everyone else.
- Make a conscious choice to look up and keep looking up!
- Look up to Jesus each morning (Ps. 5:3).
- Look at people's eyes when they are talking.
- Look around you at nature and the beauty God has given.
- Look at how you can bless someone in need.
- Put your phone on silent more often.
- Turn off all nonessential push notifications on your phone.
- Delete expired, nonessential, and time-wasting applications.
- At night, store your phone out of your room.
- If you must use an alarm, use an actual alarm clock, not your phone alarm.
- Guard your morning devotions and evening sleeping patterns by using phone settings to mute all notifications.
- Before going to bed, have worship with your family or a friend, read a book, or enjoy nature instead of scrolling.
- In the morning, after you've had your time with God, prayerfully plan your agenda for the day before you look at the messages on your phone or get distracted.
- Answer non-urgent emails from your computer rather than responding immediately from your phone.
- While on the job, work for an hour or two at a time with your phone turned off. You will be much more productive.
- Delete social media accounts from your phone so you aren't tempted to waste time scrolling when you are bored.

- If needed, use self-restricting apps, which will help limit time spent mindlessly browsing or scrolling.
- When eating or spending quality time with family or friends, leave your phone out of sight and on silent mode so you're not distracted.
- Invite your family members and close friends to give you feedback on your digital habits, to help you be aware of excessive phone absorption.
- While at church, leave your phone in the car or turn it off completely.
- Consider taking strategic times in your life to digitally detox and recalibrate your priorities. That might mean stepping away from your phone for days at a time or taking a digital fast each Sabbath. It might also mean going on a phone fast for an entire week or switching to an old flip phone without internet and social media distractions.
- If in doubt regarding anything you read, watch, or listen to, consider Philippians 4:8 as a safe rule of guidance.
- Above all, don't let your phone become your master. Remember who your true Master is!

The above list, with a few additions, is taken from the book *Daring to Live by Every Word: Loving God with Heart, Body, Mind and Soul*, by Melody Mason, pp. 161–163.

Appendix B
Scriptures to Call Young and Old to Worship

Praise to God Himself
Deuteronomy 32:1-4
Nehemiah 9:5-6
Job 26:12-14
Psalm 24:1,2, 7-10
Psalm 29:1-4
Psalm 68:32-35
Psalm 90:1-3
Psalm 92:1-5
Psalm 95:1-7
Psalm 96:1-6
Psalm 99:1-5
Psalm 100
Psalm 113
Psalm 117
Psalm 134
Psalm 145:1-13
Psalm 150:1-6
Daniel 4:34-37
Revelation 4:8-11
Revelation 5:9-13
Revelation 15:2-4
Revelation 19:1,4-7

Praise & Thanksgiving for God's Mighty Acts
1 Chronicles 16:8-13
1 Chronicles 16:34-36
Psalm 18:1-3
Psalm 19:1
Psalm 23
Psalm 44:1-7
Psalm 46
Psalm 82:1
Psalm 91
Psalm 98:1-6
Psalm 103:1-5
Psalm 105:2,3
Psalm 145:14-21
Psalm 147:1-9
Daniel 2:20-23
Luke 1:46-50

Confession & Forgiveness
Nehemiah 1:5-7
Psalm 32:1-5
Psalm 51:1-4
Psalm 51:5-9
Psalm 51:10-19
Psalm 66:18-20
Isaiah 1:18
Daniel 9:4-10
Daniel 9:11-19
Hosea 10:12
Micah 7:18,19
James 5:16-18
I John 1:9

Repentance
Proverbs 28:13
Isaiah 59:1,2
Jonah 3:7-10
Acts 2:36-39
Acts 3:17-20
Revelation 2:4,5
Revelation 2:14-16
Revelation 3:1-3
Revelation 3:15-20

Revival
I Samuel 7:3,4
I Kings 8:46-50
2 Chronicles 7:14
Psalm 51:10-13
Psalm 51:14-19
Ezekiel 36:25-27
Hosea 10:12
Joel 2:12-17
Matthew 5:6
Mark 1:8
Acts 19:18-20
Romans 8:6-11
2 Corinthians 4:16-18,
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Ephesians 2:4-7
Colossians 1:27-29
Titus 3:4-7
I John 5:11-13
Revelation 22:17

Holy Spirit
Ezekiel 36:25-27
Zechariah 4:6
Matthew 3:11,12
Matthew 3:13-17
Mark 1:9-12
Luke 11:11-13
John 3:34
John 7:37-39
John 14:16-18
John 14:26,27
John 16:7-11
Acts 1:4,5
Acts 1:8
Acts 2:17
Acts 4:7-13
Acts 4:31
Romans 8:6-11

Appendix C
Song Suggestions for Worship*

Praise God for WHO He is!

1. All Creatures of Our God and King, (2)
2. I Love You Lord
3. Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee (12)
4. Oh, Worship the King (83)
5. Oh, How I Love Jesus, (248)
6. Praise Him! Praise Him! (249)
7. Praise to the Lord (1)
8. To God Be the Glory (341)
9. We Have This Hope (214)
10. What a Friend We Have in Jesus (499)

Praise and thank God for WHAT He does!

1. How Great Thou Art (86)
2. I Sing the Almighty Power of God (88)
3. Jesus Paid it All (184)
4. Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart (27)
5. Sing a New Song to the Lord (33)
6. For the Beauty of the Earth (565)

Confession

1. Amazing Grace (108)
2. Be Still My Soul (461)
3. Have Thine Own Way Lord (567)
4. Just As I Am (314)
5. Open My Eyes That I May See (326)
6. Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (290)
7. All to Jesus I Surrender (309)

Ask for the Holy Spirit

1. Come Holy Spirit, I Need You
2. Into My Heart
3. Spirit of the Living God (672)
4. Sweet, Sweet Spirit (262)
5. We are One in the Spirit, we are One in the Lord

* *SDA Hymnal* number in parentheses

Appendix D
Keys to Experiencing God's Word

Wondering how to journal and go deeper in God's Word? We hope the following pointers will be helpful.

- Prayerfully open God's Word with a teachable heart.
- Read a Bible passage several times, allowing Scripture to interpret itself.
- Circle and highlight key words, themes, or phrases.
- Highlight promises and words of encouragement.
- Meditate on the passage and individual verses that speak to you.
- Ask questions like:
- What is the message of this passage?
- What is the context surrounding the passage?
- What is God saying to me in this passage?
- What commands, instructions, and life principles are found here?
- What changes should I ask God to make in my life to align with this Scripture?
- What do I learn about God's character in this passage?
- How does this passage show me a fresh picture of Jesus?
- How do I see the great conflict between Christ and Satan played out?
- Pray the Bible passage verse by verse, personalizing it for your own life.
- As you pray, listen to what the Holy Spirit tells you.
- Journal (or audio record) the special insights God gives you.
- Journal a prayer of worship, including praise, confession, thanksgiving, and surrender to God in response.
- Write out your specific prayer requests, along with Bible promises to claim for those requests. Record any answers to prayer you receive.
- Journal a summary thought from your time with God that you could share with someone today.

Additional Ideas for Deepening Your Bible Study

- Ask "Who, What, When, Where, Why, How" questions.
- Read the Bible passage in different Bible translations.
- Look up cross-references and parallel passages.
- Look up key words in Greek or Hebrew or use a study Bible that explains key words.
- Consult trustworthy Bible commentaries.

Your words were found, and I ate them,
and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.
Jeremiah 15:16

Appendix E
Ideas for Creating Family Worships

Tips

- Keep the worship time short. The younger the child, the shorter the worship time should be. Three to five minutes that connect a child with God is better than 15–20 minutes that leave a child bored and unengaged. The length of worship can grow with the age of the child.
- Focus your time together on God. Do not use the time to correct family members; rather, celebrate who God is and what He longs to do in and through your family!
- Make the time together interactive rather than only reading or lecturing.
- Consider the following ways to make the worship of God interactive.
    - Share what God did during the day and thank Him.
    - Praise God for what you love about Him.
    - If your family likes to sing or play instruments, praise God through song.
    - Ask God to send the Holy Spirit to bless what you read in the Bible.
    - Create a simple, fun activity that connects your family members' minds and hearts with the theme you will explore in the Bible.
    - Explore a Bible story with the focus on discovering Jesus. Ask:
        - What does this story show us about who Jesus is?
        - What is God calling us to do today with the lesson of this story?
    - Pray together for God to help you live the truth about Jesus.

Questions to Ask Yourself As You Prepare a Family Worship

1. "What has Jesus been doing in my own heart?" Share from your current living experience with Jesus.
2. "How is God's Word currently moving my own heart?" Share something new and fresh that you've discovered in God's Word.

3. "What are the current needs of my family members? What are they going through in their lives?"
4. "What Scripture passage speaks most effectively to the present heart needs of my family?" This is not a time to preach, but an opportunity to share healing and hope.
5. "What fun activity would connect each family member with the Scripture that I'm going to share for worship?" (See creative examples on the following pages.)
6. "What questions should I ask that would help my family explore the Word and discover Jesus?"
7. "How can I encourage my family to apply what they've learned to their daily life?"

Example of an Interactive Family Worship Flow

1. 1.Connect Activity
   Debrief
   Prayer
2. Explore the Word
3. Apply the Word
   - Songs may be added that are true to the theme chosen.
   - Closing Prayer

Creative Worship Examples

The following worship ideas are just to get you started. Adapt ideas for your family's age group. Ask for the Holy Spirit, and He will guide your time and show you how to connect heart to heart with your spouse and children. With the Lord's blessing, daily family worships can be a time everyone in the family looks forward to.

Building Trust
Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, 6.
Theme: Trust
Connect Activity: Trust Fall
Have a family member stand with arms at their sides. Place two family members behind them with arms locked together, ready to catch them. Invite the person to fall backward without bending their knees.
Discussion: Discuss what it means to trust each other and what

it means to trust God.
Pray: Pray for God to help you discover Jesus in a fresh way in the Bible story.
Explore: Read Matthew 14:22–33 and Proverbs 3:5, 6.
What does this story show us about Jesus?
What do we need to trust in Jesus completely today?
Pray: Pray together for God to help you totally trust in Jesus today.

Following the Word
Scripture: Psalm 119:105.
Theme: God's Word
Connect Activity: Follow the Light
Appoint one person to hold a flashlight. Line up behind that person. Turn off all the lights in the house. Turn on the flashlight and follow the leader who holds the light.
Discussion: Discuss how God's Word is like a light in the darkness.
Pray: Pray for God to help you discover Jesus in a fresh way in the Bible story.
Explore: Read Psalm 119:105 and Acts 8:25–40.
What does this story show us about Jesus?
How will we practice following the Word of God today as a light for our path?
Pray: Pray together for God to help you follow His Word like a light in the darkness.

Seeing Jesus
Scripture: John 15:5
Theme: Abiding Life
Connect Activity 1: Seeing Jesus in Daily Life
Take turns sharing how you saw Jesus at work in your day — through both good and tough things that happened.
Connect Activity 2: Seeing Jesus in Each Other
Take time to fill in the blank, "I saw Jesus in ___ (name of family member) today and/or this week as he/she __ (fill in the blank)."
Discussion: Describe how you have seen Jesus in each other through daily life activities. This allows for family members to affirm and be affirmed in the reality of Christ living in them and through them by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Pray: Pray that you can discover Jesus in a fresh way in His Word.

Explore: Read John 15:5 again and Galatians 5:22, 23. What do these scriptures teach us about Jesus living in us? If Jesus is living in us, what kind of fruit (attitudes and actions) will be seen in our lives?
Pray: Pray together for Jesus to live in you and make His home with you. Pray that His fruit will be seen in your life.

The Answered-Prayer Jar
Prepare: Get two glass jars. Label one Prayer Requests and the other Answered Prayers. Get 3x5 colored cards or colored paper.
Write: As a family, write out your prayer requests on different-colored 3x5 cards. Ask your children for their requests. Find a Bible verse you can write on the back of each card. Teach your children why we claim God's Word for our requests (see Isa. 55:11). Put all the prayer requests in the Prayer Request jar.
Pray: During each worship, pull out the Prayer Request jar and put it in the center of your family circle as you pray. If you have time, pull out several requests to pray over. Pray short prayers, conversation-style, with family members taking turns and contributing to one family-sized prayer.
Celebrate: Whenever a prayer is answered, have a child experience the joy of moving that request to the Answered Prayer jar. Then celebrate with praise to God. Children of all ages love watching the Answered Prayer jar fill up, and it builds their faith.

The Best Gifts!*
Prepare: Identify at least two spiritual gifts you think God has given to each of your children. Find something to symbolize these gifts and wrap each individually with beautiful gift wrap and ribbon.
Read: Read 1 Corinthians 12:1–11 and give your children their gifts, affirming evidence you have seen that shows God has bestowed these gifts upon them. Give your children a chance to think about how they will enjoy these gifts and use them to share the Good News about Jesus and in service to others.
Pray: Dedicate your children and their gifts to God afresh.

On A Mission*

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, 20

How do you see yourselves fitting into this picture? Write a mission statement for your family.

Pray: Pray together over your family mission statement.

Plan: Make a plan for how you as a family can start living your mission statement in practical ways.

Conquer the Mountains*

Scripture: Isaiah 40:28–31

What is the secret to renewed strength? What does it mean to wait on the Lord?

Discuss: What makes you feel great, like you could conquer Mt. Everest? Tell your family about a time when God renewed your strength. Have family members take turns sharing practical ways they could be the "wind beneath each other's wings" this week.

Pray: Pray this Bible passage over your lives as a family.

Get Comfortable*

Ask: Ask each family member to bring to family worship something that comforts them when they are tired, sick, or worried. Perhaps it's a favorite blanket, a hot drink, a soft toy, an aromatic lotion, etc.

Read: Isaiah 40:1, 2.

Discuss: Talk together about the comfort that comes from knowing that God has reconciled the whole world to Himself in Jesus Christ and that you are part of that world brought back into the family of God. Celebrate your decision to accept this gift from God by standing in a circle and holding out your tightly closed fists, then unclasping them to receive the salvation that is yours in Jesus.

Pray: Pray this Bible passage over your family.

ABCs of Praise and Worship*

Connect: Share why you gave your children the names you did and explain why their names are special.

Read: Philippians 2:9–11.

Search: Think of all the names for Christ you can find in the Bible. See if you can find at least one name for every letter in the alphabet.

Discuss: Talk about the different names you have found and how they are meaningful in your life.
Praise: Take time going through the ABCs of praise, praising God for each name you have found. In addition, see how many things you can think of to praise God for using each letter of the alphabet. Don't move on to the next letter until someone can't think of any more ideas to thank God for.
Pray: Pray for your family to incorporate more praise in your lives.

*We thank Adventist Family Ministries for these worship ideas. Links for additional family, youth, and children's resources are included at the end of this .

Appendix F
How to Share Your Testimony

Explore the testimony of the apostle Paul by reading Acts 21:39–22:21, Philippians 4:10-13, and 1 Peter 3:15–17.

A simple way to think of your personal testimony (the story of you and Jesus Christ) is to prepare it in three parts:

1. Before Christ: Describe briefly what your life was like before you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Tell what was missing in your life. Do not make your sinful life look glamorous.

2. How you met Christ: Share how Jesus Christ intervened in your life. How did He get your attention? How did He call you to Him? Include a Bible verse or passage if possible.

3. How Jesus is changing you: Tell what difference Jesus Christ has made in your life. Why do you love and serve Him? What has He done for you? Your audience needs to see something fresh in your spiritual journey; share the difference He is making in your daily experience now! What do you have in your walk with Jesus that others need to have? This should be the sweetest part of your testimony.

Please note that:

1. You don't need a *huge* falling away and coming back to the Lord to have a testimony. A more powerful and far-reaching testimony may be how Jesus helped cut the selfishness and pride out of your life.

2. Testimonies are not always "The One" about our coming to Jesus for the first time—we have constant little comings to the Lord about which we can testify to His goodness in our lives—daily! We may have a testimony about an answered prayer or an opportunity we recently had.

Write out your testimony. Make sure to include at least 1-2 Scriptures. You might prepare three different versions:

- The 1-minute elevator version — in other words, a testimony you can give in one minute on an elevator.

- The 5-minute nutshell version — giving the gold nuggets and a few special highlights.

- The 10- to 15-minute version, with more details and testimonies of God's intervention and leading.

After you've written out your testimony, get comfortable sharing it with others. If you've never shared before, practice on a friend, mentor, or family member. Remember, be genuine and real and joyful. You are on a journey with Jesus. Your life is no longer about yourself or seeking your own glory. It's all about bringing Him glory. (See Ps. 115:1.)

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

"So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "and I am God" (Isa. 43:12).

Appendix G
"Night" of Prayer

Jesus' Example

"Now it was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer with God. And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles…" (Luke 6:12–13).

"The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked" (1 John 2:6).

Challenge

Jesus took a night of prayer before He chose His twelve disciples. Take a night of prayer to worship God and ask and receive direction on two questions:

- God, who do You want me to disciple to Christ at this time?
- God, how do You want me to operate my life/ministry at this time?

Tips for Your Night of Prayer

- Come into God's presence with thanksgiving. Enjoy reviewing all the ways God has been working in your life and thank Him for these blessings (Ps. 100:4).
- Praise God for who He is! How has God revealed Himself to you? Give Him glory for His character, His power, and His kingdom (Ps. 100:4).
- Surrender fully (Matt. 28:18 and Phil. 2:5–11) to Jesus as Lord over:
    - All you are as a person — your identity, successes, and failures
    - All you have — your time, talent, wealth, and influence
- Your whole attitude
- Confess your sins and claim God's forgiveness (Ps. 51:10–12 and 1 John 1:9).
- Invite God to search out any sins or sinful patterns that you keep confessing but do not turn away from (Acts 2:38, 39). Repent from these sins. If you don't feel like repenting, pray Ezekiel 36:25–27, claiming these promises as yours.
- Ask God to give you:

- The baptism of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:11–13 and Acts 1:4, 5).
    - Wisdom to know who God is calling you to disciple now (Isa. 30:21). Pray: "God, who do YOU want me to disciple for Your mission in this end time?" (James 1:5–8).
    - Direction on how God wants you to operate your life/ministry now (Prov. 3:5, 6).
- Wait with expectation (Jer. 33:3; Ps. 25:4, 5; Ps. 46:10).
- Test your conclusions with God's Word (Isa. 8:20). Ask: "Lord, is there anything in Your Word that challenges my conclusions or confirms my conclusions?"
- Give thanks to God for spending the night of prayer with you (1 Thess. 5:18).

Pointers

Ask friends and/or family to pray for you during this time.

Jesus spent a night of prayer. We don't know how many hours that was, just that it was "a night." Don't stress about how long or short your "night" is. Your "night" might be done during the day. Just give God the time and let the Holy Spirit guide you when to conclude it. God knows your personal limits better than you do. This outline is simply a tool. Submit this tool to the leading of the Holy Spirit to change it up as He wishes.

Appendix H
Finding Your God-Given Mission

Five questions to ask:

1. Read Nehemiah 1:1–4. Nehemiah grieved over the broken-down walls of Jerusalem. God-given missions address something that God allows us to see that is broken in our world. What is broken in the world around you that grieves your heart? Pray and ask God to help you identify the broken things in the world that He has given you eyes to see. Be as specific as possible. Narrow your responses to the one issue that God has given you the most passion to address. Describe this issue, this broken thing, in one sentence.

2. Read Nehemiah 1:4–10. Nehemiah set aside days to fast and pray about the broken-down walls. Have you done the following in response to what God has shown you is broken:
   - Praised God for who He is?
   - Confessed your sins?
   - Repented from these sins? (Turn away from these sins with the power of Jesus Christ.)
   - Fasted? (Why fast? To humble yourself before God and to clear your mind so you can discern God's leading.)
   - Claimed God's promises? (Identify God's promises in His Word that are relevant to God's dream for you. Choose to believe in these promises. Ask God by faith to fulfill these promises for His glory.)

3. Read Nehemiah 1:11. Nehemiah asked for favor with the king. He was ready for a divine appointment. When the king asked him a question, Nehemiah had a choice: to respond with faith or with fear. Divine appointments are initiated by the Holy Spirit through us or the other person. The Holy Spirit can tell you to make the first move or tell the other person to initiate the conversation. Have you asked God for a divine appointment with a pivotal person of His choosing who holds the key to your God-given dream? Prayerfully identify who that person would be. Seek God

for an appointment with this person in the way that would give Him the most glory.

4. Read Nehemiah 2:1–8. When the king asked Nehemiah what he needed to rebuild the broken-down walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah was not caught off-guard. He had a God-given plan. Have you written out the mission God has put in your heart with what you need to do it, plus the time you will do it in? Write out the dream or mission God has placed on your heart on one side of one page. Address the following: What is the need? What is the mission to address the need? How and when will you accomplish the mission? What are the intended benefits of the mission? What do you need to accomplish the mission? What accountability do you have in place for accomplishing this mission?

5. Re-read Nehemiah 2:1–8. Nehemiah did not stop with praying for a divine appointment with the king. He shared the dream and mission as soon as God impressed him to share it! Have you shared this vision with the key individuals God brings to your mind? Share the dream and mission with those God impresses on your heart.

Appendix J
Knowing God's Will for Your Life

Five steps to follow:

1. Read: Matthew 28:18 and Ephesians 1:20–22; 6:10–12, 18. Pray in the authoritative name of Jesus to prevent Satan from confusing you or distracting you from discovering God's will.

2. Read: Matthew 28:18 and Philippians 2:9–11. Surrender your dreams, circumstances, and life fully to the authority of Jesus Christ. Repent of anything compromising your faithfulness to Christ. Seek what would give Him the highest glory!

3. Read: James 1:5-8. Ask God for wisdom. Believe He has given it to you. Do not doubt.

4. Read: Psalm 25:5; 46:10 and Jeremiah 33:3. Wait in God's Presence for Him to reveal His wisdom to you. Wait with expectation that God will reveal His will to you.

5. Read: Isaiah 8:20. Test your conclusions with the written Word of God. Ask God: Is there anything in Your Word that affirms or challenges my conclusion?

Other Helpful Discipling Resources

Go to indiscipleship.org for the following free downloadable books and resources by Don MacLafferty. All these resources may be used for personal growth and/or for small groups.

- **Footprints for Parents and Mentors** – Small group studies to help parents and other mentors grow as disciples and disciple makers of their children for Christ.
- **Footprints for Kids** – Small group studies for parents, mentors, and children to experience together building your relationship with Jesus, knowing the truth of Jesus, and sharing Jesus with others.
- **Follow*** – Step-by-step Bible studies in learning to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. May be used one-on-one or in small groups.
- **Inside Out*** – Calling busy families to invest in God and to disciple their children.
- **Come Home** – Small-group studies to call individuals and couples back to worship and live God's vision for the home in preparation for Christ's soon return.
- **The Way** – Teacher's notes on how to live daily as a disciple of Jesus.
- **The Way Back to the Altar** – Comprehensive seven-part Bible study on how to live daily as a disciple of Jesus. Intended for both personal use and small groups, complete with teacher's guide.
- **Meet Jesus Outside: Bible Prayer Walks** – Twenty outdoor adventures for children, youth, and adults to experience the Creator in His Word, His book of nature, prayer, and action.
- **Jesus' Last Love Letter: A Revival for Children, Youth, and Adults** – Teacher's notes for seven interactive, intergenerational meetings to call all to Jesus as Friend, Savior, and Lord.
- **Discipling the New Generations** – Small-group studies for parents/mentors/ students to grow disciples of Jesus who know and live these life-transforming truths by the Holy Spirit's power.
- **Live Like Elijah** – More life-changing stories from the MacLafferty family's personal journey of living by faith.

Also included are lessons to help you discover purpose and how to live each day with fearless faithfulness, resting in the providence of God.

- **The Last Elijah*** – Revival series for all age groups based on the life of Elijah.
- **Schools in Discipleship: A Field Manual** – Provides practical tools to equip teachers to intentionally partner with parents and pastors to disciple students to Christ.
- **God Still Lives*+** – Sixteen true stories and testimonies that will encourage all generations to trust God completely and follow Him wherever He leads.

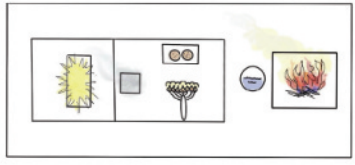
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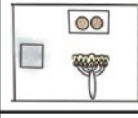
*Available in Spanish
+Available in Portuguese

Dear Heavenly Father,
You promise that "the poor shall eat and be satisfied."
So as You did with the five loaves,
bless,
break,
and
multiply *Your Word*
as it is distributed to the hearts of the people.
Amen.

Psalm 22:25; Mark 6:41,42

EVERY DAY, follow Jesus through the sanctuary!



Discipleship Principle (DP)	Health Principle (HP)	Matching Sanc. Piece
1-Practice coming to Jesus as you are at any and every moment, no matter how you feel or what you've done! Be assured of His love and His salvation which gives you the freedom to run to Him always.	1-Get your rest.	At the foot of the altar 
2- Honor Jesus as Lord: *Every evening, ask God to awaken you in the morning to have unrushed time alone with Him. *Every morning, surrender all you are, all you have, and your attitude and electronics to Him. *All day long, by the power of Jesus who lives within you by faith, follow His lead in all your choices.	2-Practice Spirit-filled self-control.	On the alter 
3-Ask for and receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. Practice receiving this gift by faith, not by feeling. Follow His lead.	3-Drink more water.	
4-Look for a fresh picture of Jesus in the written Word of God. Pray and apply what you have discovered to the way you live and how you worship Him.	4-Practice healthy, balanced eating habits. 5-Daily sing a praise song to God, and go outside for some frseh air.	 
5-Love your family sacrificially.	6-Expose your skin to sunshine.	
6-Be intentional about discipling someone to Jesus.	7-Exercise throughout the day by staying active.	
7- Ask God to hurl you into the harvest to fulfill your God-given dream.	8-Trust your Heavenly Father.	

Have you ever tried to describe how to do something you know nothing about? How about explain with passion a hobby that you don't take part in, that you may even think is boring?

As Christians, we often lack passion for the Lord and His things and are sometimes hesitant, even embarrassed, to say anything or act a certain way in front of people. At the same time, we may feel guilty for not "going" into all the world as we have been commissioned by Jesus in Matthew 28.

But God says:
"Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)
Of all the gods on earth, He is the only one who invites us to spend quiet time, being still in His presence to get to *know Him*. His Word discloses the beauty of His character and His ultimate, specific will for each one of us. He doesn't want you simply to know and believe certain tenets that your religion ascribes to, but to *know* and *believe HIM*. To *trust HIM*.

Simply put, Jesus invites you to ***come*** to Him before He calls you to ***go*** for Him. He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life desires to show you *The Way* to know and follow Him. Are you ready for this journey? Grab your Bible and a pencil, and dig in.

Visit us at: indiscipleship.org