

the WELL

DEEP TRUTHS
LASTING
TRANSFORMATION



Devotional Cover Page

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“With joy shall I draw water from the well of salvation.” Isaiah 12:3

I heard John Maxwell say, *“The greatest day in a man’s life is the day he was born. The second greatest day in a man’s life is the day he finds out why.”* You are no accident my friend. God created you on purpose, with purpose and for a purpose. A God-designed destiny to impact the world in which we live. The greatest adventure we will ever live is the journey of following Jesus and discovering why He put us here. It is that great adventure that has brought us here to The Well.

The first step on this grand adventure happens when a person makes a decision to become a “follower of Christ.” For example, in Mark 1:17 Jesus is walking by the side of a sea and sees Peter in a boat and says to him - “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” There are 2 parts to this powerful statement - the first is simple “follow Me,” Jesus said. Every person alive at some point will have that same opportunity. To follow Jesus is to first decide that He alone is Lord of every facet of our life. It is to put our full faith and trust that what the Bible says about Jesus and the way in which I should live is absolute truth. It is a great journey into a personal relationship with this amazing God who created the world, everything and everyone in it. When I commit myself to this process I discover the latter half of the statement where Jesus said - “follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Following Him is the key to discovering purpose and fulfilling our God-given destiny.

Anyone who sets out on a grand adventure, must take stock of the necessary supplies and tools we need in order to succeed in our endeavor. According to the Bible, there are really about 5 things we need:

1. Make a quality decision, to be a life-long follower of Jesus Christ.
2. Develop a daily study of the Word of God.
3. Discover and develop a solid prayer life.
4. Become an active part of the Body of Christ.
5. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

The Well is simply a structure, a set of plans, to assist people who are hungry to grow in their personal relationship with Jesus and successfully fulfill this grand adventure. Each month we will look at a different theme and take us deeper into our understanding of the Scripture and how to apply Biblical principles to our daily lives. Thank you for joining us on this adventure of learning to draw the water of life, from the well of salvation.

Drawing water from - The Well

Different parts of this discipleship tool.

Exercising my Faith this month

- Each month I encourage you to have a faith goal. What are you believing God to do in your life? As you work through this early in the month. Learn to grab a hold of the promises of God by faith and join together with God to see His will fully accomplished in every area of your life. *(Example on p. 6)*

Weekly: Each Week there are 4 sections:

- **The Well - Daily Devotional thought written by multiple authors from The Father's House.**
 - Each day we will be looking at a small passage of Scripture and drawing truths up from the Word of God that will inspire the manner in which we live. Each month will have a theme we will be pursuing. Each day ends with a prompting for each reader to "put the Word to work." Remember it's not about how much we simply read, but how much of the Word we apply to our daily life that really matters.
- **Weekly Bible Reading Guide** (4 different options to choose from) *(See Page 9)*
 - Daily reading and study of the Scripture is essential for spiritual health. Here we provide 4 possible reading guides.
 - Option 1 - Follow this plan to read the entire Bible once in three years.
 - Option 2 - Follow this plan to read the entire Bible once per year.
 - Option 3 - Follow this plan to read the entire Bible once per 3 months.
 - Option 4 - Follow this plan to read the New Testament once per month.
- **Weekly Prayer notes**
 - Recording prayer notes is essential both for remembering what the Holy Spirit is speaking and evaluating what we hear based upon the Word of God. It is also encouraging to look back and see how God has been moving in the areas of life we have been praying about. We encourage you to bring this with you to your prayer time and prayer meetings. Regularly visit and revisit your prayer notes sections and write down what God is doing in and through prayer in your life. *(example, see page 7)*
- **Sermon Notes**
 - Often in services there are many great things said that I want to remember. I have discovered what science has already proven to be correct - if I listen and write down thoughts my retention doubles. Included are pages for sermon notes available to be used for each Wednesday and Sunday of the month. *(Example see page 8)*

In addition, we encourage you to join one of our Growth Groups. Inside these groups of up to 5, people will connect and share insights we are learning and growing in. I highly encourage you to get connected and join one of these groups.

(Example) Exercising my Faith this Month

Hebrews 11:1-2, 6 - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.... 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Q: What are 1 or 2 things you are believing God to do in your life this month?

1. I am believing God that He will surround me with His peace in the middle of a troubling time in the world.

2. I am believing God will heal my mother and renew her strength and vitality.

Q: Are there any Scriptures that directly deal with these?

Isaiah 26:3 ~ You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. John 14:27 ~ Peace I leave

with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Colossians 3:15 ~ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Philippians 4:6-7 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ

Jesus.

Peter 2:24 that 'By Your stripes, I was healed.' Psalm 103:3 - You have 'healed me from every disease.' In Matthew 15:26 that 'healing is the children's bread'

Everyday, we take the Word of God that deals directly with situations we face, and lift up the promises in His Word that deal directly with these situations. We both remind ourselves that God has spoken and secondly, we take that promise and lift it up in prayer.

Part of my daily prayer: *God You said, You will keep me in perfect peace when I bind You to my mind. I choose today to intentionally think about You and trust that You will keep me in perfect peace. You promised your peace you would give me, that it would remain with me. I choose to let your peace rule in my heart, I refuse to be anxious, but come to You with my prayers and needs with thanksgiving present my requests unto You, and in return I today receive Your supernatural peace.*

"God You said in Your Word - I Peter 2:24 that 'By Your stripes, we were healed.' That according to Psalm 103 - You have 'healed us from every disease.' In Matthew 15:26 that 'healing is the children's bread' and since my mother is a child of God, I thank you that healing is hers, I ask you to heal, and renew her strength this day and exercise my faith believing that you will in Jesus' name."

Weekly Prayer Notes (Example)

Week: _____

<p>Specific things I am praying about for my family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Daily for God's protection over my wife and children - (Psalm 91 and Isaiah 54:17)</i> - <i>Daily to hear and know God's voice, to be led by His Spirit in all that I say and do. (John 10 and Romans 8)</i> - <i>To walk in His supernatural provision and wisdom, to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge (Philippians 4, Ephesians 1 and 3).</i> 	<p>Specific things I am praying about for people in my church.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>That God would grant wisdom, protection and provision to our leaders.</i> - <i>Every week, I ask for people to come know and follow Christ, to encounter God's presence and to experience His goodness in every service.</i> - <i>That God would bring every person He has called to be a part of The Father's House here.</i> - <i>That God would heal and deliver those who are in need.</i> - <i>_____, the person who was in my row that told me of his desire to see his son come back to the Lord, I am praying for his son by name all week, that God would send someone across His path to lead Him back to Jesus.</i>
<p>Things I sensed from the Holy Spirit while I was praying this week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>When I asked God if there was anything He wanted to say to me today, I heard Him simply say - "You are my son, and I love you."</i> - <i>I was talking to the Lord, and felt like He reminded me this morning of the story in the gospels when He came walking on the water, and said to Peter, "come out here with me." I felt like He was letting me know, sometimes when He leads it will be in areas I have never gone before, and didn't know I could - such as walking on water.</i> 	<p>People I am praying for their salvation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Benjamin</i> - <i>Paul</i> - <i>Keith</i> - <i>Joel</i> - <i>Jordan</i>

Series (if applicable):

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further
Genesis 17:21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - God has more in store for me than I have yet discovered 	
2 Peter 1:5 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If Abraham laughed when he first heard the promise of God, and could still find God's favor and believe, then I realize I'm not alone, when sometimes I find it almost "too good to be true." - If I "add" these 7 areas to my faith in God - there is unstoppable fruit that will come in my life. - I can lead someone to Jesus - I can bear the fruit of the Spirit - I can discover and develop the call of God on my life - I can be fully assured of my salvation - I can live without stumbling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is Virtue? - What is knowledge referring to? - I think I understand self-control - Are perseverance and patience the same word here? - What is meant here by Godliness - What's the difference between brotherly love and love in 2 Peter 1:7

Versions of the Bible

There have been many arguments over the centuries about which version of the Bible is the best. Truth be told, I have many versions of the Bible and enjoy reading and studying most. The default version for this study will be the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible. If a contributing author uses a different version it will be labeled as such. Other common versions of the Bible quoted from in The Well include, but are not limited to:

The Amplified Bible (AMP)
New International Version (NIV)
The Passion Translation (TPT)
Young's Literal Translation (YLT)

King James Version (KJV)
The Message Translation (MSG)
The New Living Translation (NLT)

Often people will ask, why is the language so much different from one version of the Bible to the next. Very important question. There are two basic distinctions to pay attention to as you are reading the Bible - is the version you are reading a "paraphrase" or is it a literal translation from original language into our language? The goal of a literal translation approach is to have a word-for-word literal translation from the original manuscripts into our modern day language. The goal of a paraphrase is to capture the idea as communicated in the original language and attempt to use modern language to communicate that same idea. For example when we look at the famous John 3:16

(NKJV) - ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

(AMP) - ¹⁶ "For God so [greatly] loved and dearly prized the world, that He [even] gave His [One and] only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him [as Savior] shall not perish, but have eternal life.

(YLT) - ¹⁶ for God did so love the world, that His Son -- the only begotten -- He gave, that every one who is believing in him may not perish, but may have life age-

(MSG) - ¹⁶ This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

You can quickly see the different approaches in these versions of Bible translation. Some are focused on a direct word for word translation regardless of the difficulty in reading in current language. On the other end of the spectrum authors focus on taking the concept and making it easy to read in our current language.

I am not one that will mandate a single-specific version of the Bible. However, three things I would look to avoid in study of the Bible: 1) Any translation that eliminates the deity of Christ. 2) Some "woke" versions of the Bible being made, for example the "gender neutral" Bible. 3) If an author has attempted to "water" down absolute truths included in Scripture I pay no attention to those versions.

There are many websites that provide access to these translations and more such as biblegateway.com providing free easy access to those who want to compare various translations and paraphrases of the Bible.

Bible Reading Plan December

	3 year (1)	Once/year	Once Quarterly	New Testament in a month
1	Matt. 1	Acts 7-8	Ezekiel 26-38	Matt. 1-3; Rom. 1-4; Act 1; Rev. 1
2	Matt. 2	Acts 9-10	Ezekiel 39 - Daniel 7	Matt. 4-6; Rom. 5-8; Acts 2; Rev. 2
3	Matt. 3	Acts 11-13	Daniel 8 - Hosea	Matt 7-9; Rom. 9-12; Acts 3; Rev. 3
4	Matt. 4	Acts 14-15	Joel, Amos, Obadiah	Matt. 10-12; Rom. 13-16; Acts 4; Rev. 5
5	Matt. 5	Acts 16-17	Jonah, Micah, Nahum	Mat. 13-15; I Cor. 1-4; Acts 5; Rev. 5
6	Matt. 6	Acts 18-20	Habakkuk & Zephaniah	Matt. 16-18; I Cor. 5-8; Acts 6; Rev. 6
7	Matt. 7	Acts 21-23	Haggai, Zechariah	Matt. 19-21; I Cor. 9-12; Acts 7; Rev. 7
8	Matt. 8	Acts 24-26	Malachi - Matt 4	Mat. 22-24; 1 Cor. 13-16; Acts 8; Rev. 8
9	Matt. 9	Acts 27-28	Matthew 5 - 13	Matt. 25-28; 2 Cor. 1-4; Acts 9; Rev. 9
10	Matt. 10	I Timothy	Matthew 14 - 22	Luke 1-2; 2 Cor. 5-8; Acts 10; Rev. 10
11	Matt. 11	Titus & 2 Timothy	Matthew 23 - Mark 5	Luke 3-4; 2 Cor. 9-13; Acts 11; Rev. 11
12	Matt. 12	Hebrews 1-6	Mark 6 - 16	Luke 5-7; Gal. 1-3; Acts 12; Rev. 12
13	Matt. 13	Hebrews 11-13	Luke 1 - 9	Luke 8-10; Gal. 4-6; Acts 13; Rev. 13
14	Matt. 14	1 Peter	Luke 10 - John 4	Luke 11-13; Eph. 1-3; Acts 14; Rev. 14
15	Matt. 15	2 Peter & Jude	John 5 - 14	Luke 14-16; Eph. 4-6; Acts 15; Rev. 15
16	Matt. 16	John 1-2	John 15 - Acts 5	Luke 17-19; Phil. 1-4; Acts 16; Rev. 16
17	Matt. 17	John 3-4	Acts 6 - 16	Luke 20-22; Col. 1-4; Acts 17; Rev. 17
18	Matt. 18	John 5-6	Acts 17 - Acts 28	Luke 23-24; I Thess. 1-5; Acts 18; Rev. 18
19	Matt. 19	John 7-8	Romans 1-14	Mark. 1-3; 2 Thess. 1-3; Acts 19; Rev. 19
20	Matt. 20	John 9-10	Rom.15 - 1st Corinthians 10	Mark 4-6; I Tim. 1-6; Acts 20; Rev. 20
21	Matt. 21	John 11-12	1 Cor 11 - 2 Corinthians 8	Mark 7-9; 2 Tim. 1-4; Acts 21; Rev. 21
22	Matt. 22	John 13-15	2 Corinthians 9-13 & Galatians	Mark 10-12; Titus. 1-3; Philemon 1; Acts 22; Rev. 22
23	Matt. 23	John 16-18	Ephesians & Philippians	Mark 13-16; Hebrews 1-4; Acts 23
24	Matt. 24	John 19-21	Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thess.	John 1-3; Hebrews 5-8; Acts 24
25	Matt. 25	I John	Books of 1st & 2nd Tim, Titus	John 4-5; Hebrews 9-13; Acts 25
26	Matt. 26	2nd & 3rd John	Books Philemon - Hebrews 8	John 6-7; James 1-5; Acts 26
27	Matt. 27	Revelation 1-5	Heb. 8 - 13 & Book of James	John 8-9; I Peter 1-5; Acts 27
28	Matt. 28	Revelation 6-11	1st & 2nd Peter	John 10-12; 2 Peter 1-3; Acts 28
29	Habak. 1	Revelation 12-15	1st, 2nd, 3rd John & Jude	John 13-15; I John 1-5
30	Habak. 2	Revelation 16-18	Revelation 1 - 11	John 16-18; Books of 2nd & 3rd John
31	Habak. 3	Revelation 19-22	Revelation 12-22	John 19-21 & Book of Jude

Exercising my Faith this Month

Hebrews 11:1-2, 6 - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.... 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Q: What are 1 or 2 things you are believing in God to do in your life this month?

Q: Are there any Scriptures that directly deal with these things you are believing in God for?

Everyday, we take the Word of God that deals directly with situations we face, and lift up the promises in His Word that deal directly with these situations. We both remind ourselves that God has spoken and secondly, we take that promise and lift it up in prayer.

Example: "God You said in Your Word - I Peter 2:24 that 'By Your stripes, I was healed.' That in Psalm 103 - You have 'healed me from every disease.' In Matthew 15:26 that 'healing is the children's bread' and since I am a child of God, I thank you and receive healing in Jesus' name."

Week One

Week One Prayer Notes

Specific things I am praying about for my family.

Specific things I am praying about for people in my church.

Things I sense from the Holy Spirit while I pray.

People I am praying for their salvation.

December 1

Stop the Presses! Why is Jesus referred to as the “Messiah” or the “Christ”?

John 1:40-42

“One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah,’ (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.”

Andrew’s excited declaration to his brother, Peter, reflected the sense of anticipation and expectation of the Jews living in Israel in the 1st Century that the deliverer promised throughout the Hebrew Scriptures would arrive and liberate them from the cruel oppression of the Romans who occupied their ancient homeland. Freedom fighters, Zealots, and men who called themselves messiah had led rebellions that had been crushed by the Romans, but the Jews held on to the hope that their promised deliverer would come, break off the yoke Rome had imposed upon them, and restore the glory of the kingdom of Israel.

The term, “Messiah,” is the English translation of the Hebrew word, mashiach, which means “Anointed One” or “Chosen One.” In the Greek translation of the bible, the word mashiach is translated Kristos which when translated to English is Christ.

From the beginning, God instructed His servants to anoint people He called to serve as priests, prophets, or kings by pouring oil upon them, thus consecrating them for their specific individual role. In the Old Testament, the roles of priest, prophet, and king were separate. In Jesus, all those roles came together in one person. He is the promised Anointed One, Priest, Prophet, and King of Kings! Jesus made an announcement in a synagogue in Nazareth when He boldly proclaimed, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me” (Luke 4:18), and then declared that He was the fulfillment of that Messianic prophecy (Isaiah 61:1-2)!

While together with His disciples in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked them this question: “Who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’” (Matthew 16:15-16). Jesus went on to say that Peter’s answer was inspired not by nature, but by direct revelation from God, thus a word from the Holy Spirit attesting Jesus’ identity as the Messiah, the Christ.

Even after He had been raised from among the dead, the disciples were confused about Jesus’ role as the Messiah. Remember, the Jews had been awaiting a deliverer, not a savior. They asked Jesus, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6)? He deferred the answer to that question and promised them that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them enabling them to be those who would proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth! Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, would anoint them to be His witnesses!

Putting the Word to Work

Q: How does understanding Jesus as the Messiah affect your life today?

Q: Describe your experience with the power of the Holy Spirit making you a witness for Jesus:

December 2

Elijah must come first.

Matthew 17:10-13

And the disciples asked Him, saying "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" Jesus answered and said to them; indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise, the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was the herald sent forth by God to announce the coming of the Messiah. He was foretold in the Book of Isaiah. In chapter 40:3-4 it is written, *"The Voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

This is just one of the many prophecies made about the coming of the Lord in the Old Testament. The life of Jesus fulfilled all of these prophecies and will fulfill many more of them upon His second coming. One of the blessings in knowing about the fulfillment of prophecy by the life of Jesus, is the reassurance that what He has already done He can do again. When we see the promises concerning His second coming, we can be sure that, just as He did at His first coming, so shall He do at His second.

During the upcoming season, we need to pay close attention to the facts of the case. Jesus, was born of a virgin, lived and died to save us from our sins. The chances of a single life meeting all of the prophecies that have been given about Him, are astronomical. One of the most amazing things about the life of Jesus was that Satan did not realize what His death would mean. Apparently, God blinded his eyes so that he would not be able to figure out the ramifications that would come from killing the Son of God. Satan was caught up in the sin of pride. He was so thrilled at having accomplished what he thought was the greatest victory in all history, that he did not understand that he had just defeated himself and lost all that he thought he had gained.

Elijah indeed had to come first, and he did. John the Baptist ushered in the church age by fulfilling the prophecy and announcing the arrival of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Putting the Word to Work

How many prophecies concerning Jesus' first coming can you find. Look some of them up. How do they affect us today?

December 3

The Messiah would be a prophet like Moses

Deut. 18:15, 17-18; John 7:40; Acts 3:22-23

Deuteronomy 18:15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear... 17 "And the Lord said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. 18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

John 7:40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet."

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

On the first article this month, we discussed how there were three types of service people were "anointed for:" priests, prophets and kings. There are three men in my mind considered to be the gold standard in each category. King David, the greatest king in the nation of Israel's history, the one who was promised the Messiah would come through his lineage. Melchizedek who met with Abraham in Genesis 14 following the battle of the kings and talked about in Hebrews. Finally Moses, a prophet like no other in their nations past who God used in the establishment of the nation of Israel (see the story of Exodus).

In the 18th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy we read about how God promised to raise up a "prophet like Moses from your midst... This was one of the greatest signs all the nation of Israel watched for over the centuries was a prophet like Moses. Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah and so on all were amazing in their prophetic offices and assignments, but none of them quite fit the mold of the one they all looked for. Particularly interesting when Jesus asked His disciples in Matthew 16, "*Who do men say that I am...*" their answer is particularly interesting, "*Some say Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.*" People were discussing which prophet does Jesus' ministry closely connected to. The question in everyone's mind was is this Jesus "*The Prophet*" foretold of, that would come, like Moses. When Peter stood and declared, "*You are the Christ the Son of the Living God.*" John wrote in chapter 6 and 7 that people recognized he "*is the Prophet*" in Acts 3 when Peter referenced "*The Prophet*" like Moses taught in Deuteronomy 18 they were acknowledging the fulfillment of this Old Testament promise of God who declared He would raise up another like Moses.

Realize then, that ministry of Moses qualifies now as a "type" and "shadow" describing the ministry of Jesus. Moses was "*The Prophet*" who brought the nation out of slavery, freedom from Egypt, cleansing of Egyptian thinking from the people, the drowning of the enemy in the Red Sea. He brought the nation to the Red Sea and turned individuals into a unified nation that was prepared to conquer the promised territory and expand God's kingdom onto this earth. This is the same ministry Jesus has done and continues to do on our behalf, He delivered us from being slaves of sin, brought us freedom from the enemy, teaches us how to live according to God's ways, and leads us to conquer the promised land He has for us.

Putting the Word to Work

What other parallels do you see between the story of Moses, and the ministry of Jesus you have experienced?

December 4

The Messiah would be the seed of the woman

Genesis 3:15, Matthew 1:16, Luke 3:23

Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Matthew 1:16 "and Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah."

Luke 3:23 "...He was the son, so it was thought of Joseph, the son of Heli,"

Genesis 3:15 is considered the first messianic prophecy in Scripture. You see the wording in the Scripture is unique, and of course no accident. In ancient Bible times lineage was typically traced through men, not women. But in this verse it refers to her offspring. So we see that the coming offspring will be specifically from her. This is where we get the first glimpse of a prophecy pointing to the virgin birth of Christ, from the seed of a woman.

We can then fast forward to the New Testament. You might go straight to the first chapter of Matthew and read the lineage of Jesus. If you are like me you might get hung up on this one. How does this prove Jesus was born of a woman when we are reading the lineage of Joseph? Time to dig deeper my friend! There is more than one lineage of Jesus listed in the New Testament, and they are different, not by contradiction, but by divine purpose! You see, in order to be the Messiah Jesus must not only be from the seed of a woman, but also must be the legal heir to the throne of David.

In Matthew we see the legal line of Jesus, through Joseph, proving his heir to King David's throne. However in Luke 3:23 we see the biological lineage of Jesus through Mary, proving He was from the seed of a woman. Verse 23 says "He was the son, so it was thought of Joseph, the son of Heli" If you remember from Matthew Joseph's father was Jacob, not Heli. Heli was Mary's father! In Jewish genealogies a man could be listed as the "son" of his father-in-law if the woman's lineage was being recorded, as it was not custom to list the woman. So this proves Jesus' bloodline is from the seed of a woman!

Why does this matter? Here are a few things to think about when considering this:

God's plan is always intentional. God will often use humble and unexpected vessels to accomplish His plan. Salvation is entirely God's work, and cannot be accomplished through our own human efforts. And lastly, there is always hope in Jesus! We have seen the beginning and the end, and know that through Christ, we win!

Putting the Word to Work

How does understanding Jesus as the seed of a woman affect your life today?

December 5

The Messiah would be our Kingsman Redeemer

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

It was March 31, 1949, just two weeks after my 11th birthday, when our 6th grade class was surprised by a visit from The Gideons. They gave each of us a King James New Testament. On the back inside cover was a prayer: "Confessing to God that I am a sinner, and believing that the Lord Jesus Christ died for my sins on the cross and was raised for my justification, I do now receive and confess Him as my personal savior." I signed my name to that prayer, on March 31, 1949 and that became the day the Messiah became my Kingsman Redeemer! He doesn't forget us once we sign our name on that line. The Gideons were the "Fishers of Men," and Jesus began reeling.

I grew up in a family that believed in God but did not demonstrate that belief. No prayer before bed, no prayer before meals. My mother and I attended church, but our Sunday School teachers did not teach us how to pray aloud. When I began teaching Sunday School as a young mom, I taught the children Psalms 19:14 *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer,"* which we would say out loud together. It was a start, Jesus was reeling me in.

I confessed to my cousin, Patty, who went to the Church of Christ, that I did not know how to pray aloud except for rote prayers such as that one we said in Sunday School. Patty said, "Gather some neighbors and friends and my friend, Donna, and I will come over and teach you "Conversational Prayers." Jesus was "reeling."

During one of our lessons they challenged us to do something Jesus was asking us to do that we had never done. I knew right away what that was! I was to ask a blessing over our meal that evening. As I was anxiously preparing that meal, His Presence filled the kitchen and I knew He was pleased.

The next night I lost courage to say that prayer at the table; I left the food on the stove and called the family to come and fill their plates. They could eat in the living room watching television. I became immediately aware of His sorrow.

Night three the table was set, I called the family and again, putting on courage, prayed aloud. That became our pattern, the children began taking turns, as well as my husband. Jesus was reeling in the whole family! Glory to our Kingsman Redeemer for all of His patience with me!

Putting the Word to Work

Is Jesus drawing you closer to Him, reeling you in, asking you to take the next step closer to Him?

December 6

The Messiah would be lifted up

Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14-18

Numbers 21:8-9 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.”

John 3:14-15 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

The word lifted up appears simple, but in these two passages, it carries the entire weight of redemption. In Numbers 21, Moses lifted up the bronze serpent as an act of obedience to God’s command. The people were dying because of their rebellion — and the only hope of life was to look up at what had been lifted high. That act of lifting made the object visible to all, raised above their chaos, drawing the eyes of the afflicted toward healing.

In John 3, Jesus reveals that this ancient act pointed directly to Him. He, too, would be lifted up — not on a pole, but on a cross. The parallel is striking, yet the meaning goes far deeper. The serpent was a lifeless image of judgment turned into mercy. But Jesus, the living Son of God, became sin for us so that mercy might triumph forever. Being lifted up meant more than crucifixion. It meant exaltation. In John’s Gospel, “lifted up” always carries this double meaning — Jesus would be physically raised on the cross, but through that suffering, He would also be spiritually exalted by the Father. What appeared to be humiliation was actually glorification. In human eyes, crucifixion was the lowest point imaginable — shame, rejection, and death. But in God’s plan, it was the highest moment of revelation. The cross became the platform from which the love of God was displayed to the entire world. Christ was lifted up so that all might see Him. The symbol of death became the signal of salvation.

When Jesus was lifted up, heaven and earth met. Sin met grace. Judgment met love. And through that elevation — that public, visible, and eternal act — God declared that salvation would come not by human striving, but by looking up to the One who bore our curse. The Israelites looked up to live physically. We look up to Christ and live eternally. Every glance of faith toward the cross is a recognition that what man meant for death, God meant for glory.

Putting the Word to Work

The lifting up of Jesus shows that what seems like defeat in our lives can become the very means of God’s glory. When life presses you down, how can you choose to “lift up” your eyes toward Christ — the One who turned suffering into victory?

December 7

The Messiah would bare our sins and suffer in our place

Isaiah 53:10-11 & Luke 22:20 (KJV)

“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:10-11

“Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you.” Luke 22:20

In the course of my near-death experience the angels delivered me right below Heaven's floor, and let go. I tried to catch a glimpse of them but they were way too fast. Next, as I moved upward, I felt myself literally transforming. I then noticed that the floor I seemingly just came up through, was a beautiful white, with pearl and ivory.

I was confused as to where I was, causing me to brace my arms out in front of myself, and say, “What's going on?!” When I heard the Father's beautiful voice for the first time. It was as of many waters (Rev. 14:2) and He gently responded, “You no longer have to fear.”

After He said I no longer had to fear, all of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) rushed over me like a waterfall. I could feel this waterfall, and it was indeed the Holy Spirit. I then realized this amazingly pure energy I had! This was fulfilling Scripture, and because the Messiah bore my sins, for the short time I was in Heaven, true perfection was realized.

In Matthew 5:48, Jesus was delivering His famous Sermon on the Mount, when He said, *“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”* When researching this verse in the concordance, the word perfect actually means of full age, or completeness. This signifies an end goal and something that we continually labor toward until that day when we are in fact made perfect, in Heaven, just as our Father in Heaven is also perfect.

The new covenant, or testament formed through Christ's offering to suffer in our place, as He was the satisfactory sacrifice. Now, all of us who believe in His name, are made righteous in Christ, hallelujah! This Christmas, please make a genuine effort to praise Him for His sacrifice, as well as His birth, amen!

Putting the Word to Work

Do you fully see yourself as the righteousness of God in Christ, because of His sacrifice? Why or why not?

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with a concordance. It changed my life!

Week One Sermon Notes

Week One Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (if applicable): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week One Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (*if applicable*): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Two

Week Two Prayer Notes

Specific things I am praying about for my family.

Specific things I am praying about for people in my church.

Things I sense from the Holy Spirit while I pray.

People I am praying for their salvation.

December 8

Jesus as the Messiah – The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53

Isaiah 53:5-6

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

The Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah are numerous and varied, but all true! The Messiah was the expected king and deliverer of the Jews. Several titles describe His role as Savior: Messiah in Hebrew; Christos in Greek; Christ or Chosen One in English; Jesus was and is the 'Anointed One.' Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies and redeemed us from the requirements of the law for sin. The hope and proof is made clear in the New Testament.

Romans 10:16 *"But not everyone who hears the Good News has welcomed it, for Isaiah the prophet said, "Lord, who has believed me when I told them (Is. 53:1)?"*

In Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45 Jesus said, *"Your attitude must be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give my life as a ransom for many."* The concept of Jesus being a "Servant" for you and I is unfathomable to me, afterall, He is God!

1 Peter 2:21-25 *"21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."*

Hebrews 9:28 *"So also Christ died only once as an offering for the sins of many people; and he will come again, but not to deal again with our sins."* His suffering and shed blood on the cross already paid for the sins of ALL. For yours, too, if you believe and accept it.

Putting the Word to Work

How would you describe the impact on you, of God, Creator of all things, that was willing to come and be a suffering servant on your behalf?

December 9

The Messiah would be pierced

Messiah, “deliverer, saviour, leader, redeemer”

***Isaiah 53:5** But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our wickedness [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing]; The punishment [required] for our well-being fell on Him, And by His stripes (wounds) we are healed.*

***Zachariah 12:10** “...And they will look at Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son..*

***John 19:34, 36-37** 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came [flowing] out... 36 For these things took place to fulfill the Scripture, “NOT A BONE OF HIS SHALL BE BROKEN.” 37 And again another Scripture says, “THEY SHALL LOOK AT HIM WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED.”*

***Revelation 1:7** BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes (nations) of the earth will mourn over Him*

Strong's concordance refers to two primary words translated as being “pierced.” The Old Testament Hebrew word (דָּקַר - daqar) It means “to pierce, to thrust through, to stab.” The New Testament Greek word (ἐξώθεω - exótheó): It means “to drive out, to thrust out.” These definitions are used in Biblical contexts to describe actions of piercing or expelling sin and guilt, and anticipating the coming wrath.

There are seven places Jesus shed his blood during his final 24 hours on earth, but in four of those places Jesus was pierced. Each is an act of redemption. To redeem means to regain possession of something by paying a stipulated price or fulfilling a condition. The first was the crown of thorns. His head and brow were pierced to redeem our thoughts and minds. As we put on the helmet of salvation (we are saved or redeemed by the blood) We guard our minds from the enemy and claim “no negative, doubting or impure thoughts Today” They crowned Him in mockery but He was indeed king of kings.

The second redemption was when His hands were pierced. The blood took back our hands set to sin and placed them back to Deuteronomy 30:9 ESV “*the Lord God will make you abundantly prosperous in the work of your hand*” A promise redeemed by the blood.

The third act of redemption was the piercing of His feet. Placed back and put on the true path. No more to wander in sin. Proverbs 3:6 “*In all your ways know and acknowledge and recognize Him, And He will make your paths straight and smooth* [removing obstacles that block your way]” So not only will He make the pathway smooth but He will go before us and clear away all obstacles.

The 4th and final place He was pierced and redemption was made was His side. This time there was not only blood but water as well. The blood placed us next to Him at His side and under His arm for protection and comfort. The water was given up so that we never thirst again, but thirst for God instead. John 4:14 “But whoever drinks the water that I give him will never be thirsty again. But the water that I give him will become in him a spring of water [satisfying his thirst for God] welling up [continually flowing, bubbling within him] to eternal life.”

Putting the word to work

How does understanding Jesus was pierced effect you today?

Is there an area of your life do you need to claim for your redemption

December 10

Messiah came riding on a donkey

Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4, 5a

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.”

Matthew 21:4, 5a *“All this was done so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 5 Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King is coming to you...”*

The Joyous Sound

The joyous sound was heard that morning in the land
 To those who had an ear to hear God revealing His plan
 Well the angels they had plenty to do
 As nothing was to stop God's gift for me and you
 The joyous sound still rings loud and clear today
 To those who choose to hearken following Him each day
 The joyous sound has an aroma of its own
 As Jesus was embarking on the Father's love song
 As we who have received this great gift of life
 Enjoying Him and His fullness brings such delight
 The joyous sound still abounds today
 Let's celebrate and honor Him today
 Bless Your name Lord Jesus

Jesus was embarking on the Father's love song, as Messiah by God, liberator to deliver people from sin. He was on a mission. When a king would enter a city, if He came on a horse, it was a symbol of I have come to conquer you, a terrifying sight and sound. But, if He came riding on a donkey, it was a symbol that shouted, “I have come to declare peace.” Just like the angelic choir in heaven breaking out with the joyous sound, “Peace on earth, good will toward men, the night Jesus was born, our King came riding on a donkey to shout the joyous sound, “PEace on earth.”

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.”* That being said, the Joyous sound has an aroma of its own. 1 John 3:8b ...*“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”* In the Amplified it says, to undo, destroy, loosen and dissolve the works of the devil. Having salvation is what the people longed for, truly a time of jubilation. A great happiness and triumphal joyous occasion.

Jehovah Nissi fights our battle.	Jehovah Jireh meets our needs.
Jehovah Rapha heals our body.	Jehovah Shalom is our peace.

Thank You God for sending Jesus. Thank You Jesus that You came. Holy Spirit won't You teach us more about that lovely name.

Putting the Word to Work

Have you made Jesus Lord of your life? Are you serving Him with joy?

December 11

The Messiah would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver

Zechariah 11:12-13, Matthew 26:14-15, Matthew 27:3, Matthew 27:8-10

Zechariah 11:12-13 *I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—the handsome price at which they valued me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the house of the Lord.*

Matthew 26:14 *Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests 15 and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver.*

Matthew 27:8-10 *When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 9 Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, 10 and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."*

In the time that the prophet Zechariah penned his accounts, thirty pieces of silver was the going price for a slave. The price is considered insulting and worthless. There is great detail throughout the New Testament about why Judas might have betrayed Jesus, some of my observations include greed, jealousy, and frustration in what Jesus' mission was and how he was going about it. Judas did not seem to understand the ways, timing, and purposes of the kingdom of God. He was physically walking with the Lord, but many times in scripture you read about his attitude toward the ways of God and can see that Judas was thinking and operating in the ways of the world. Romans 12:2 tells us, *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is— His good, pleasing, and perfect will."* We see in Scripture that Judas was still thinking in the patterns of the ways of this world. This thinking kept Him from clearly seeing what Jesus was doing, and understanding the mission. This thinking took him down a dark road of justification, deception, and separation from the Lord. Judas betrayed Jesus because He did not manage his thought life well.

How are we to know God's ways? His Will? The patterns and purposes of the Kingdom of God? We are to come and follow Jesus, the same way His disciples did. We are to become students of the word, devoted in prayer, and willing to walk a surrendered life to Jesus. We don't just settle for the "normal" patterns of life, we stand everything in comparison to scripture, and say, "Lord, I choose your way." We pray, Holy Spirit, open my eyes to see clearly your plan and your purposes. I ask that you guide me, direct me, and teach me your ways."

Putting the Word to Work

What helps you manage your thought life?

December 12

The Messiah Would Be a Willing Sacrifice

Genesis 22:1-18 (NKJV)

22 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

In this story of Abraham & Isaac, God told Abraham to sacrifice his promised son. Abraham was willingly to do what God had asked of him. We know that God was testing Abraham's faith and trust in God. Abraham knew that God was going to do something supernatural. (My thought would have been Him not being harmed by the fire or brought back somehow!) God made a way for Abraham to save his son.

John 3:16 (AMP) *"For God so [greatly] loved and dearly prized the world, that He [even] gave His [One and] [a]only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him [as Savior] shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

God the Father willingly gave up His one and only son! So that we all could be saved from death. (Spiritually & from hell.) So, let's take a minute and think about our level of willingness...

1. How willing would you be to pay the debt of someone who has made one poor choice after another?
2. How willing would you be to take a murderer's death sentence and serve time for their crime in their place?
3. How willing would you be to surrender to authorities and be arrested for a crime you did not commit, so that the guilty person could go free?
4. How willing would you be to invest time and energy into someone who would turn around and betray you or say they never knew you?

Jesus was willing to do these things....he was ready...eager...and prepared for the task at hand....and because he was WILLING...the price for sin is paid and relationship with God is possible for all who believe.

Put the Word to Work

If He was willing to do that for us, should not we be willing to totally surrender everything to Jesus as he did for us on that wooden cross? What is your level of willingness?

December 13

The Messiah would be the Passover lamb

Exodus 12:3-8

3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. 4 And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without[a] blemish, a male [b]of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. 7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8 Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Picture with me if you will. You wake up to the sounds of screaming. You jump up, you check your spouse & your children. They are all present & accounted for. You step outside to survey the area. There it is still there the blood from the young spotless lamb that you had smeared on the sides & lintel of the door frame as Moses had instructed. Your first born was spared.

Jesus is the fulfillment of the event that is Passover. Just as the Israelites were instructed to place blood of a spotless lamb on the sides & top (lintel) of the door posts in order for the death angel to pass over their home, thus sparing their first born from death. Jesus is our spotless lamb. His blood was shed on the cross for our sin, our healing, our deliverance. Literally everything we need is found in him.

Just as the two door posts & the lintel showed the smeared blood of the lamb. The Cross showed the smeared blood of the Messiah the Passover lamb. Just as those beams bear the weight of holding back the death angel from the Israelites homes. The Cross bore the weight of protecting us from sin & death.

John 1:36 *And looking at Jesus as He walked, he [John the Baptist] said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"*

Putting the Word to Work

Think about what ways your life would look differently if God had not chosen to send Jesus to be the Passover Lamb?

In what ways can you choose this week to further honor Christ for his selfless sacrifice?

December 14

The Messiah would be the Righteous Sufferer

Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46

Psalm 22:1 "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?"

Matthew 27:46 "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

David lived life from the perspective of a worshipper. The songs he penned from the hills as a shepherd to the caves hiding for his life and later to the halls of the palace became the backbone of Israel's hymnal and many of our great songs today. Music is a mighty gift from the Lord. There is no other mode of communication that can capture what is happening in the human soul like music. While many of David's psalms speak of the experiences his journey took him through, some were also very prophetic in nature such as Psalm 22.

Psalm 22 describes in great detail the anguish of soul experienced by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ while He hung on the cross as a substitute in our place. These Nine words our Lord and Savior Jesus uttered on the cross are to this day difficult for me to fathom. "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me." When Jesus took upon Himself the weight of sin, it required the Father to turn His back to Jesus leaving Jesus isolated, covered in shame that was not His, guilt that was not His all to fulfill the promise that He would be a Righteous Sufferer.

Putting the Word to Work

Remember today the ultimate reason for the season. The joy of knowing Jesus now, is because of the suffering He took upon Himself in our place. Let us celebrate this month knowing we are free because of His sacrifice. The Bible says, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness. As we pray today, ask the Lord to forgive any sin you have not dealt with. Commit to live for Him, in response to His sacrifice for you.

Week Two Sermon Notes

Week Two Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (if applicable): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Two Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (*if applicable*): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Three

Week Three Prayer Notes

Specific things I am praying about for my family.

Specific things I am praying about for people in my church.

Things I sense from the Holy Spirit while I pray.

People I am praying for their salvation.

December 15

The Messiah would be the great Light unto the nations

Isaiah 9:1-2 & Matthew 4:12-16

Isaiah 9:1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. 2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

Matthew 4:12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: 16 The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."

Isaiah the prophet had an amazing ministry one God blessed to give him accurate foresight into the ministry of Jesus like no other Old Testament prophet. This being one of many predictions he accurately made over 700 years before Jesus walked on the earth. Zebulun and Naphtali were Israeli tribal territories surrounding and near the Sea of Galilee. As you read through the gospels you will notice that much of Jesus' ministry was accomplished in these territories. Very unique in that one would not necessarily expect in the time of the Old Testament Prophets that these would be the territories containing the bulk of the Messiah's earthly ministry. We know that the Messiah was also predicted to be the heir to the throne of David which would make him of the tribe of Judah. Yet, because of the situation surrounding the birth of Jesus the assault by Herod to try and take out Jesus as a baby required an interesting home choice for Mary and Joseph as they raised Jesus.

In the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali had been trampled over and over by armies marching to and from Jerusalem and the surrounding regions. Yet here, the Great Light of the gospel first shined brightly as Jesus called disciples, multiplied Peter's catch of fish, walked on the water, healed bodies, opened blind eyes and deaf ears, calmed the stormy sea, cast the legion of demons out of the man of Gadera, and so much more.

For those who have felt as if the world has been using you like a doormat, trodding over you again and again. The Great Light of Jesus the Messiah, can shine on you. Whether the world understands or sees you matters not. Regardless of your situation, the Great Light of the gospel is calling you, can heal you, can multiply your capacity, can empower you to do the unthinkable. All we need to do is to respond to Him.

Putting the Word to Work

What are some times or things you have seen or experienced, where God took what was an impossibility in your life, and turned it around?

December 16

He shall be called the Son of God.

Mark 1:11

“Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, In whom I am well pleased.”

During His earthly ministry, Jesus would be called a great deal of things. In Luke’s gospel, Jesus says, *“The son of man has come eating and drinking and you say, “Look a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!”* He was called a charlatan and a person who was in consort with the devil. It was also said of Him that He was no friend of Caesar. Jesus was maligned, plotted against, ridiculed and would have been beaten and stoned if they could have. His own disciples could not agree on who He was. In Matthew 16:14 they were asked *“Who do men say that I, the ‘son of Man, am?”* The answer was, *“Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”* Jesus asks them again, *“Who do you say I am?”* Simon Peter answered and said, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Why was it that the people of the time could not recognize Jesus for who He was? The answer is found in the same scripture in Matthew 16. Verse 17, Jesus says, *“Blessed are you Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.* The world did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God because God had blinded their worldly eyes. We, however, have been given the privilege of recognizing Him as who He really is. We see him through our spiritual eyes and realize that he truly is the Son of God. Why does this make a difference? When the world, even today, looks at Jesus they see a nice man who did miracles way back when. They do not see Him with spiritual eyes because they have not been born again, and given the spiritual incite into who He really is. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever, and will continue as the Son of God throughout eternity. We can call upon Him, use His name and see results because He is the Son of God, and through His death and resurrection He has the right to impart to us His very nature. What does that mean for us? We have now become the Sons and Daughters of God, with all the rights and privileges that Jesus has. Can you fathom the enormity of that privilege?

Why is Jesus called the Son of God? Short answer, because God said He was His Son. Likewise, God has said that you are His sons and daughters,

Putting the Word to Work

Take a moment, sit down somewhere quiet and meditate on the thought, “You are a son or daughter of the Most High God.” It will change your day.

December 17

The Messiah will be the coming One to whom the scepter belongs.

Romans 1:5,6

Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:8,9 *But to the Son He says " Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter (a Ruler's staff) of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."*

Jesus finds us: John 15:16 *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."*

We are so grateful to have been found of Him; we welcome His love and His fellowship! Then we recognize that He carries a scepter, actually a scepter of Righteousness. Now there is a further step He wants us to take. He wants us to recognize His Kingship and make Him Lord of our entire lives, to turn from our old ways and to follow His lead into righteousness.

Our Grandson, John, enjoys hunting season and the family enjoys venison. There were only six days left to the season that Sunday morning. John had to make a decision: Do I honor God and take my family to church or do I take my last day off from work to hunt? He made the decision to honor God. His wife was looking out a window into the back yard of their country home and saw a three point buck just behind the house. The family was a little late coming in that day as it took time to take care of their provision. What blessings we receive when we turn and follow His ways!

Putting the word to work

Have you noticed the Messiah's scepter of Righteousness?

Have you taken that next step after baptism to make Jesus Lord of every area of your life?

December 18

**Jesus as the Messiah – The descendant of Abraham through whom all nations would be blessed.
Acts 3:24-26**

“Samuel and every prophet since have all spoken about what is going on today. 25 You are the children of those prophets; and you are included in God’s promise to your ancestors to bless the entire world through the Jewish race—that is the promise God gave to Abraham. 26 And as soon as God had brought his servant to life again, he sent him first of all to you men of Israel, to bless you by turning you back from your sins.”

In our advancement with technology, we have discovered a way, through DNA testing to trace our physical origins. It can produce surprising results, both good and disconcerting. In like manner the Bible serves as a guide to our spiritual DNA as it tracks the bloodline of our Lord and Savior.

Genesis 12:3 *“I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you; and the entire world will be blessed because of you.”* Since Jesus came both as man and God, the Bible reveals how both physical and spiritual DNA came to be in Him. On His mother’s side his name was Jesus, but on His Father’s side it was Emmanuel. On His mother’s side He came through Abraham just as was told in prophecy (Genesis 12:3). God told Abraham He would make him a great nation, blessings and curses would come and in you (Abraham) all your families of the earth shall be blessed. Even after total destruction by a flood, Abraham’s seed was in Noah as God watched over and protected what He had promised to Abraham.

God prophesied through the prophets of old the promise of a Savior for mankind. Acts 3:24-25 bears witness to the writings in the Old Testament. We are the sons and daughters of the men of old who believed in the promises God gave to Abraham. Everything changed for mankind’s redemption the day Jesus died on the cross and His shed blood flowed back in time as well as forward ensuring mankind would not be lost but would be redeemed by the Blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The mortal man died on that cross so that our spirit man could have eternal life.

Brothers and sisters, we have decisions to make. Do we follow after the fleshly DNA with death imminent? Or do we choose the spiritual side of our DNA and live under the blessings of a risen Savior, that when we make mistakes and humbly repent, the precious blood flow from the cross will cover us with forgiveness?

Joshua 24:15 *“Choose for yourselves this day who you will serve.” “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*

Putting the Word to Work

1. In this moment are you living under a curse or a blessing?
2. Remember the Savior of the world, the Messiah’s blood covers what could be a curse and turn circumstances into a blessing. Are you open to humbling yourself by admitting your mistakes and receiving forgiveness from God?
3. Don’t forget to forgive yourself. If He can do it, you can do it!

December 19

Jesus as the Messiah – The Messiah would be a descendant of David

2 Samuel 7:8; 12-16

“Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts... 16 When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. 15 But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”

The New Testament begins with Matthew 1:1 *“These are the ancestors of Jesus Christ, a descendant of King David and of Abraham:”* The genealogy of Jesus begins with Abraham, then lists each generation up to the birth of Jesus. Luke 3:23-38 The genealogy in Luke starts with Jesus and goes back to “Adam, the son of God.” Luke reverses the order of Matthew’s listing and goes beyond Abraham back to Adam.

During Jesus’ ministry, His reputation for healing and deliverance carried the powerful authority of the expected Messiah. Therefore, when Jesus entered an area, those in need called out to “the Son of David.” He responded by meeting their needs appropriately. However, they may also have been expecting Him to be a man of war like David, who would deliver them from Roman rule. The means of their true salvation and deliverance was not yet revealed. “Messiah” has a much greater meaning than what they expected or understood.

Luke 1:32-33 *“He shall be very great and shall be called the Son of God. And the Lord God shall give him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 And he shall reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom shall never end!”*

Again, the people only understood His Kingdom in earthly terms. We need the Holy Spirit to have spiritual understanding. That became available after Jesus’ resurrection. Now the fulness of His words become evident to anyone who seeks His Truth and continues to seek Him. His Kingdom is eternal and never changing.

Putting the Word to Work

- What do you want the “son of David” to do for you? Have you asked Him?
- Does ‘eternity’ scare you or give you comfort? Why?

If you don’t know the Old Testament, you may not know what you were delivered from.

December 20

Title: The Names of the Messiah

Scripture Study – Isaiah 9:6-7

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

A Child is born, a Son is given: The Hebrew prophet Isaiah foresaw the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the virgin, Mary, who foretold Mary that her first born child would be the Messiah, and that His name would be great and that He would rule over Israel on the throne of David her ancestor forever (Luke 1:26-35).

Wonderful Counselor: The apostle Paul encouraged the believers in Colossae to understand that everything they needed was found in the One who had promised to be their Wonderful Counselor, because all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him (Colossians 2:2-10)..

Almighty God: Peter told Cornelius, the Roman centurion, that Jesus was Lord of all (Acts 10:36). Paul the apostle referred to Jesus as the eternally blessed God who is over all (Romans 9:5).

Everlasting Father: When Phillip asked Jesus, “Show us the Father,” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” Paul described Jesus as “our God and Father” (2 Thessalonians 2:16).

Prince of Peace: Jesus bequeathed peace to His disciples (John 14:27), and Paul admonished us: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

Putting the Word to Work

Q: How does understanding Jesus as the Wonderful Counselor affect your life today?

Q: How does understanding Jesus as Almighty God affect your life today?

Q: How does understanding Jesus as Everlasting Father affect your life today?

Q: How does understanding Jesus as Prince of Peace affect your life today?

December 21

The Messiah would be called out of Egypt

Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:13-15; 19-21

Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.

Matthew 2:13-15 13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." 14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son..." 19 Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." 21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

I love this unique prophetic prediction to help identify the Messiah. The Messiah would be called both the Son of God, and would be called out of Egypt. In the story of Christmas we always emphasize the journey to Bethlehem where Jesus was born in the stable. While we do not know exactly how quickly the wisemen arrived, we know that it wasn't the same night as displayed in so many of our nativity scenes, etc., It was within the first two years of Jesus' life. At the same time, Herod the wicked ruler who was governing Israel at that time, issued a decree sending his soldiers to murder every male child in Bethlehem under two years of age, thinking he could remove any threat to his kingship. God knowing this was coming, gave Joseph a warning sending him to Egypt to preserve the life of Jesus and his family. Joseph then travels to Egypt and they remained there a number of years until word reached them of Herod's death, and the Lord spoke to Joseph in another dream calling him out of Egypt and to return back to Israel.

The part I love about this so much, is less about another prophetic prediction that Jesus fulfilled, but involves a deeper look at the Old Testament pattern with the nation of Israel that also pointed towards the coming Messiah. Jacob, after having his name changed to Israel by God in Genesis 32 found his family in trouble because of a severe famine on the earth, and was sent by God to leave the promised land, and move to Egypt for a season to survive. After 400 years, God called His children out of Egypt to return to the land of promise. They saw the miraculous wonders of God on display as he delivered them and led them out of Egypt. They went through the red sea on dry ground. Met with God on Mt. Sinai as God taught them how to live as a free people. Brought them to the Jordan River with a promise He would be with them as He sent them to conquer the promised land. The story of Exodus and Joshua form a prophetic predictive picture of the assignment of Jesus and the mission of the redeemed church.

Putting the Word to Work

What are some other Old Testament stories can you think of that point to the mission and assignment of Jesus as the Messiah?

Week Three Sermon Notes

Week Three Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (if applicable): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Three Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series *(if applicable)*: _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Four to the end of the Month

Week Four to the End of the Month Prayer Notes

<p>Specific things I am praying about for my family.</p>	<p>Specific things I am praying about for people in my church.</p>
<p>Things I sense from the Holy Spirit while I pray.</p>	<p>People I am praying for their salvation.</p>

December 22

The Messiah would be called a Nazarene

Matthew 2:23, John 1:45-46; Isaiah 11:1

Matthew 2:23 *“And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, ‘He shall be called a Nazarene.’”*

John 1:45-46a 45 *“Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’”* 46 *And Nathanael said to him, ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’*

Isaiah 11:1 *“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a **Branch** shall grow out of his roots.”*

Matthew brings about an interesting connection at the close of Chapter two of his gospel account describing an Old Testament prophecy being fulfilled by Jesus being called a “Nazarene.” There are a few possible explanations for this as one studies the Scripture both of which in my opinion fit within the Biblical narrative of Jesus as the Messiah.

Nazareth was a small town outside of a major trading center of the Roman empire in the northern part of Israel called the town of Sepphoris. Nazareth had a terrible reputation making it a logical place for Joseph to settle in when he returned from Egypt after Herod’s death, for who would look for a king to come from Nazareth. Even the early followers of Jesus were perplexed about his coming from Nazareth. According to Matthew Henry, “To be called a Nazarene, was to be called a despicable man, a man from whom no good was to be expected, and to whom no respect was to be paid.” In general the Old Testament prophets spoke of how Jesus would be *“despised and rejected of men”* (Is 53:2, 3). *“A Worm, and no man”* (Psalm 22:6, 7), that he should be an *“Alien to his brethren”* (Psalm 69:7, 8). Evidently, these were not uncommon thoughts of anyone who announced that they were from the town of Nazareth.

There is another connection however to the prophet Isaiah who prophesied in the 11th chapter that “a Branch” would shoot forth from the cut off stump of the line of David. The word there is Netzar, which signifies either a branch, or the city of Nazareth. Isn’t it just like God, to grow a branch out of a perceived worthless place that would redeem the world.

Putting the Word to Work

If God was not afraid to be identified with a city like Nazareth, realize He is not afraid of anyone’s reputation but can redeem any life. How does it affect you to know that regardless of your past, God can shoot forth a new life in and through you?

December 23

The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem

Matthew 2:1-6

2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, [a]wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His Star in the East and have come to worship Him."

3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

There was a decree that required everyone to return to their ancestral hometowns to be registered. Because Joseph was "of the house and line of David," he and Mary traveled from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem for the registration. While they were in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus.

Joseph, Jesus's earthly father, was a descendant of King David. Therefore, his return to Bethlehem for the census connected Jesus to David's royal line. This was one of the reasons they went to Bethlehem. Based on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem to fulfill an Old Testament prophecy. It was a part of God's divine plan to identify Jesus as the Messiah.

Put the Word to Work

As we read the Word of God, we see the high level of planning and details God put into place. I wonder, to what extent do we recognize and see God's high-level of planning and purpose in our own lives? Ask Him every morning. Holy Spirit, what do you have planned for me today? What should I be watching for?

December 24

The Messiah would come according to God's timetable

Daniel 9:21-25

"While I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: 24 'Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. 25 'Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

The Bible contains prophecies with timelines for the Messiah's birth. The most prominent is Daniel's 70 week prophecy, which predicts a 490-year period from a decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah's arrival and crucifixion. Additionally, prophecies from Micah 5:2 *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."* Isaiah 7:14 *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."* These predict key details about his birth, such as his birthplace in Bethlehem and his miraculous conception.

On this busy Christmas Eve day, remember God has a timeline for you as well. There is a timeline to just about everything, even our own lives. Psalms 1139:16 says *"Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."* Seeking the Lord to hear and to see what His plans may hold for our future can lead us down the adventurous life of faith, and into a life we have yet to imagine.

Put the Word to Work

Ask the Lord, what He has written for your day today, you never know what faith adventures might be awaiting.

December 25

The Messiah would be born of a virgin

Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34-38

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Luke 1:34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I [g]do not know a man?" 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible." 38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Merry Christmas! Today we celebrate the greatest gift, Jesus God's one and only Son, born of the virgin Mary into this earth with the assignment to redeem mankind. We understand the great mysterious question that Mary asked of the angel Gabriel when she heard God's announcement that she would give birth to a Son, "how can this be?" More importantly the question we might ask is why? What was the purpose of the Son of God to be born of the virgin Mary? To understand we have to think all the way back to the garden of Eden when God created man blameless and sinless. Yet in Genesis 3 when the serpent beguiled Eve she violated God's command, offering her husband Adam of the same fruit and he also violated God's command inviting sin to taint themselves and all of creation, everything about Adam and Eve in that moment fell from perfection into the chaos sin created - death. From that moment on, everything about Adam and Eve was now disconnected from God including their seed. Just like salt water source cannot produce fresh water nor can fresh water produce salt water, all their offspring would be tainted in sin.

A sin-stained bloodline could never reproduce perfection. So God, out of His great love for us, came to the virgin Mary, spoke the Word over her womb, conceiving in her His Son, Jesus. Jesus was willing to live a human life capable of failure and sin choosing to take upon Himself the torment of sin and death as a substitute in order to offer redemption to the world.

Often times in our walk with the Lord, we are faced with situations that are bigger than our understanding, or even what we think to be possible, just like Mary. Things where we don't fully understand how God can do something or especially why God would do something. In moments like these, Mary gave the greatest response a person can give, "Be it unto me according to your word."

Putting the Word to Work

May I encourage you to pray this Christmas day, God may Your will be done in every area of my life according to Your plans, your purposes and Your Word. Take a few moments and ask God today, if He has a gift for you? Write down the first few thoughts that come to your mind after you ask the question.

P.S. Remember, if He gives you a gift, make sure to accept it, unwrap it, put it to work. He only gives good things.

December 26

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 21:9

Then the multitude who went before and those who followed cried out saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Also see Mark 11:9-10, John 12:13)

The crowds around Jerusalem were ecstatic about the arrival of Jesus. They were motivated by the miracles they had seen and the way in which Jesus presented the gospel to them. He spoke with authority and grace that they had never seen before. Many of them believed in Him and believed that He was there to restore the kingdom of Israel to its original glory and power.

However, none of them, including the disciples, even imagined that He had arrived in Jerusalem to be crucified and offered up as the final sacrifice of the period of the law. He was to be tortured, beaten and killed so that mankind could be reconciled back to God, and receive an open door to a direct relationship to God the Father.

When we read the account of the triumphal entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem from John's gospel, they went out to meet Him with palm branches in their hands. They cried Hosanna. Hosanna originally meant save or help. It became a proclamation meaning, "A special honor given to the one who saves." It has become an element of praise in the Christian world.

Why was Jesus acclaimed so highly as He was entering Jerusalem? If we look a little further in the thirteenth chapter of John, verse 32 answers that question. *"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."* Many feel that this scripture refers to the manner in which Jesus died. Just as in the time of Moses, the brass serpent was lifted up and anyone who looked upon it was delivered from the bite of the snakes, Jesus being lifted up will draw all men to Him. We can also see that as Jesus was acclaimed and given the adoration that was due Him, by believing in Him, we are saved from our sinful lives and delivered from the deprivation of this world.

In today's world, we need to acclaim the Lord Jesus more often and with more vigor. The world will be drawn to the enthusiasm of believers as they observe the unity and love that we express amongst ourselves. Jesus said, *"...by this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

Putting the Word to Work

Begin a new challenge. Each time that you have an opportunity, praise the Lord, out loud, in a public place. As you acclaim your love for Him publicly, see if the people around you aren't immediately drawn to you and as such to Him.

December 27

The Messiah would be the coming One to whom the scepter belongs.

Romans 1:5 TPT

Through Him a joy-producing grace cascaded into us, empowering us with the gift of apostleship, so that we can win people from every nation into a faithful commitment to Jesus, to bring honor to His name.

The New King James version of this verse says: *"Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience...."*

We had moved back to our fishing cabin in Lakeside, Oregon. Since we had lived there before, we looked forward to seeing friends again in the little church on Main Street. The Women's Ministry leader asked me if I would help her with a Bible Study. I told her I would be glad to, thinking she would ask me to teach it. She did not; she asked me to host it. I went to the Lord asking Him where else my place of service was to be. Instead of an answer, He asked me a gardening question---"Would you be willing to thin the carrots?" He knew I really wanted to pick the corn (teach the ladie's group), but that obviously was not His plan. And since the "scepter belongs to the Messiah," it was wise to comply.

He asked me to teach a third and fourth grade Sunday School class, so in turn, I began asking the Holy Spirit for innovative ways to teach them. When it came time to teach on communion, we made very tasty unleavened bread, allowing them to have as much as they wanted. We lowered the table to the floor and set around it as we imagined the disciples did at the last supper.

We took pictures of their friends who were not yet in church and made "WANTED" posters to decorate the classroom. We started a Wednesday night class inviting all ages, made a puppet stage out of a refrigerator box and used puppets to teach the gospel. We took memory verses and turned them into songs....soon they were easily learning verse after verse. We met the school bus (the kids were bussed to Hauser), and followed children home to meet their parents and to invite the whole family to church.

What started out as sheer obedience to the Messiah who held the scepter, became truly the joy of our lives!

Putting the Word to Work

Have you recently asked the Messiah where your place of service should be? Watch out----you may find that you truly enjoy your next assignment!

December 28

Jesus as the Messiah – The Messiah would be the rejected cornerstone

Psalm 118:22-24

“The stone rejected by the builders has now become the capstone of the arch! 23 This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous to see! 24 This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Rejection is an emotion that is hard to deal with, especially if a professed love has been one to reject us. Rejection produces many reactions: hurt feelings, deep sorrow, and grief likened unto death. You have given your love without expectations, wholly committed even unto death. Everything you have you gave and yet it wasn’t enough, or worse yet, just not good enough. For a moment Jesus looked down and said, *“O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”* (Matthew 25:29) In that moment rejection was very real and filled every fiber of His body, but He didn’t stay there. He submitted to His Father because His Father had a better and more righteous plan for Him. He was to be *“the cornerstone that the builders had rejected.”*

Ephesians 2:20 *“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”* We are the temple of God where He lives and the cornerstone of our foundation is Jesus Christ. The dictionary describes a cornerstone as a beginning: first in time, first in order, and first in place. The Jews refused Jesus as the first and as a result 1 Peter 2:8 says, He became *“A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.”*

In 1 Peter 2:4 *“He came as a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* Think it not strange or unusual if you are not accepted by man. You are in good company. Keeping our hearts right and obedient to God, man will hurt us, reject us, spurn us, turn from us if their hearts are not right with God. We will suffer rejection even as our Lord and Savior did. We are spiritual beings living in an ungodly world.

Putting the Word to Work

1. Since making Jesus your Lord, have you been hurt by the world not accepting you? Remember this: they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting the One whom you represent.

2. Think on this, then take it to Jesus. Who will bring comfort and joy to you?

December 29

Jesus as the Messiah – The Messiah would perform signs of healing

Isaiah 35:5-6

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness.”

Jesus did not make himself conspicuous, but merely came among the people and responded to the needs of those who crossed His path. His purpose was to draw the people to the Kingdom of God. The miracles He performed demanded their attention and the word of hope spread. But unlike amazing miracles like turning water into wine, most of His miracles met the needs of the people before Him: the blind, lame, diseased, downtrodden and possessed. With compassion, Jesus displayed the power of the Kingdom He proclaimed. It was so simple for Him, but His peaceful authority was evident. Those who received healing knew it was no ordinary thing. The evidence must be acknowledged with the personal evidence in front of them.

Matthew 11:4-6 also Luke 7:20-23 *“When the men had come to Him, they said, ‘John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’ ” 21 And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. 22 Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. 23 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”*

Who could be offended by a worker of such miracles? You guessed it! Members of the Sanhedrin: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And why? Because they relished their positions of power and privilege. A miracle working healer just might cause people to turn to the One who has true power and gets results. Jesus didn't expect payment from anyone. He freely gave to all who came to Him. Some Jews may have been aware of the prophecies about the Messiah, i.e. Malachi 4:2 *“But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.”*

Many people today believe that the prophecies we read about in the Bible will happen “someday.” But are we watching for them now? Hmmmmmm. If not now, when?

Putting the Word to Work

Are you paying attention and watching for the signs of the times? Ask God for discernment.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the next steps YOU need to take for new growth.

December 30

The Messiah would be the object of a murderous plot, but hope lies ahead.

Matthew 2:16

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.”

Herod wanted to kill Jesus so he tried to make sure it happened. Habakkuk 1:5 *“Look among the nations and watch-be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you will not believe, though it were told you.”* This is truly what happened as Herod sought to kill the Messiah. He had no clue as to what God was doing-God’s ways are higher than ours. Herod thought he could thwart God’s plans for Jesus by killing him. Consider many of the stories in the Bible where the enemy sought to destroy God’s plans and people.

Isaiah 14:27 (AMP) *“For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who can annul it? And His hand is stretched out, who can turn it back?”*

Job 42:2 (NIV) *“I know that You can do all things; no purposes of Yours can be thwarted.”*
Thwarted means to be hindered, obstructed or defeated. Most often in reference to human plans being stopped by divine intervention.”

1 Corinthians 1:19 (AMP) *“For it is written, I will baffle and destroy the learning of the learned and the philosophy of the philosophers and the cleverness of the cleaver and the discernment of the discerning; I will frustrate and nullify [them] and bring [them] to nothing.”*

Job 5:12 (AMP) *“He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise or anything of [lasting] worth.”*

Proverbs 19:21 (AMP) *“Many plans are in a man’s mind, but it is the Lord’s purpose that will stand.”*

Acts 5:39 (AMP) *“But if it is of God, you will not be able to stop or overthrow or destroy them; you might even be found fighting against God!”*

Many times the enemy of our souls foolishly attempts to undercut God’s plan and intentions. Just as the enemies plans were turned upside down, the Lord has made so many promises such as these where He lets us know, as long as we walk in His ways, and follow His plans He will guide and protect us, regardless of what things look like at the time we see them. As you examine these verses, reflect where the enemy has tried to take you out, and yet here you are pursuing God and His plans.

Putting the Word to Work

What are you believing God for in the new year? And what is God believing in you for in the new year?

December 31

The Messiah Will be a Light for All the Nations

Isaiah 42:1-7

1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law." 5 Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

During a tour to the Holy Land I led in 2000, our group visited the Temple Institute in the Old City of Jerusalem. Our guide stood next to the model of the Third Temple which is situated in the middle of their building and told us about her excitement due to the anticipation of the Third Temple being constructed soon. I asked her the reason for her excitement, and she immediately replied that she believed that the building of the Third Temple would herald the coming of the Messiah, not only be a blessing for Jews, but the Messiah would bring peace and prosperity to all the nations of the world. Undoubtedly, she knew about the Hebrew prophets who foretold that indeed, Messiah would redeem Israel and be a light to all of humanity.

When Joseph and Mary brought baby Jesus to be dedicated at the Second Temple in Jerusalem, Simeon, a devout man, filled with the Holy Spirit, who had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah, led by the Spirit to enter the temple at that exact moment, took the baby Jesus into his arms, lifted Him up and prophesied over the baby: *"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel"* (Luke 2:27-32). Jesus declared, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life"* (John 8:12).

History records for us how the light that shined so brightly when Jesus was here was spread by His disciples to all the nations on our planet, to every tribe, every language group, every culture. The apostle John saw and heard them in the throne room in heaven when they stood around the throne and sang to Jesus: *"You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."*

As the Spirit transported John into the future, he also witnessed the arrival of the New City of Jerusalem: *"But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it"* (Revelation 21:22-26).

Putting the Word to Work

Q: How does understanding Jesus as the light of the world affect your life today?

Week Four to the end of the Month Sermon Notes

Week Four to the end of the Month Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (*if applicable*): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Week Four to the end of the Month Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Series (*if applicable*): _____

Scripture(s)	Things I want to remember	Things I want to study further

Acknowledgements

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For more information about The Father's House, you can check out our website:

thefathershouseint.org or on Facebook or our YouTube channel. Weekly we gather:

Sunday	9 am & 11 am - Sunday Worship Experience
Tuesday	9 am - Prayer meeting
Wednesday	9 am - Prayer meeting
	5:30 pm - Dollar Diner at 5:30
	6:30 pm - Wednesday Worship Experience
Thursday	9 am - Prayer meeting
Friday	7 pm - Prayer meeting
Saturday	6 pm - Prayer Meeting

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