

the
WELL

DEEP TRUTHS
LASTING
TRANSFORMATION



Devotional Cover Page

Table of Contents

Table of contents	3
Introduction	4 - 5
Examples:	
Exercising my faith	6
Weekly Prayer Notes	7
Sermon Notes	8
Special Notes on Bible versions	9
Monthly Bible Reading Plan Options	10
Exercising My Faith This Month	11
The Well - June	
Week One	12 - 23
Week Two	24 - 35
Week Three	36 - 47
Week Four through end of month	48 - 62
Acknowledgements	63

“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. _____ I

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."

<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>

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)	King James Version (KJV)
New International Version (NIV)	The Message Translation (MSG)
The Passion Translation (TPT)	The New Living Translation (NLT)
Young's Literal Translation (YLT)	

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 June

	3 year (2)	Once/year	Once Quarterly	New Testament in a month
1	Isaiah 37	Ezekiel 9-12	Ezekiel 35 - 45	Matt. 1-3; Rom. 1-4; Act 1; Rev. 1
2	Is. 38-39	Ezekiel 13-15	Ezekiel 46 - Daniel 7	Matt. 4-6; Rom. 5-8; Acts 2; Rev. 2
3	Isaiah 40	Ezekiel 16-17	Daniel 8 - Hosea	Matt 7-9; Rom. 9-12; Acts 3; Rev. 3
4	Isaiah 41	Ezekiel 18-20	Joel, Amos, Obadiah	Matt. 10-12; Rom. 13-16; Acts 4; Rev. 5
5	Isaiah 42	Ezekiel 21-22	Jonah, Micah, Nahum	Mat. 13-15; I Cor. 1-4; Acts 5; Rev. 5
6	Isaiah 43	Ezekiel 23-24	Habakkuk & Zephaniah	Matt. 16-18; I Cor. 5-8; Acts 6; Rev. 6
7	Isaiah 44	Ezekiel 25-27	Haggai, Zechariah	Matt. 19-21; I Cor. 9-12; Acts 7; Rev. 7
8	Isaiah 45	Ezekiel 28-30	Malachi - Matt 4	Mat. 22-24; 1 Cor. 13-16; Acts 8; Rev. 8
9	Is. 46-47	Ezekiel 31-33	Matthew 5 - 13	Matt. 25-28; 2 Cor. 1-4; Acts 9; Rev. 9
10	Isaiah 48	Ezekiel 34-36	Matthew 14 - 22	Luke 1-2; 2 Cor. 5-8; Acts 10; Rev. 10
11	Isaiah 49	Ezekiel 37-39	Matthew 23 - Mark 5	Luke 3-4; 2 Cor. 9-13; Acts 11; Rev. 11
12	Isaiah 50	Ezekiel 40-42	Mark 6 - 16	Luke 5-7; Gal. 1-3; Acts 12; Rev. 12
13	Isaiah 51	Ezekiel 43-45	Luke 1 - 9	Luke 8-10; Gal. 4-6; Acts 13; Rev. 13
14	Isaiah 52	Ezekiel 46-48	Luke 10 - John 4	Luke 11-13; Eph. 1-3; Acts 14; Rev. 14
15	Isaiah 53	Hosea 1-7	John 5 - 14	Luke 14-16; Eph. 4-6; Acts 15; Rev. 15
16	Isaiah 54	Hosea 8 - 14	John 15 - Acts 5	Luke 17-19; Phil. 1-4; Acts 16; Rev. 16
17	Isaiah 55	Book of Joel	Acts 6 - 16	Luke 20-22; Col. 1-4; Acts 17; Rev. 17
18	Isaiah 56	Amos 1-5	Acts 17 - Acts 28	Luke 23-24; I Thess. 1-5; Acts 18; Rev. 18
19	Isaiah 57	Amos 6-9	Romans 1-14	Mark. 1-3; 2 Thess. 1-3; Acts 19; Rev. 19
20	Isaiah 58	Obadiah & Jonah	Rom.15 - 1st Corinthians 10	Mark 4-6; I Tim. 1-6; Acts 20; Rev. 20
21	Isaiah 59	Micah	1 Cor 11 - 2 Corinthians 8	Mark 7-9; 2 Tim. 1-4; Acts 21; Rev. 21
22	Isaiah 60	Nahum & Habakkuk	2 Corinthians 9-13 & Galatians	Mark 10-12; Titus. 1-3; Philemon 1; Acts 22; Rev. 22
23	Isaiah 61	Zephaniah & Haggai	Ephesians & Philippians	Mark 13-16; Hebrews 1-4; Acts 23
24	Isaiah 62	Zechariah 1-7	Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thess.	John 1-3; Hebrews 5-8; Acts 24
25	Isaiah 63	Zechariah 8-14	Books of 1st & 2nd Tim, Titus	John 4-5; Hebrews 9-13; Acts 25
26	Isaiah 64	Book of Malachai	Books Philemon - Hebrews 8	John 6-7; James 1-5; Acts 26
27	Isaiah 65	Psalms 1-8	Heb. 8 - 13 & Book of James	John 8-9; I Peter 1-5; Acts 27
28	Isaiah 66	Psalms 9-16	1st & 2nd Peter	John 10-12; 2 Peter 1-3; Acts 28
29	Haggai 1	Psalms 17-20	1st, 2nd, 3rd John & Jude	John 13-16; I John 1-5
30	Haggai 2	Psalms 21-25	Revelation	John 17-21; Books of 2nd & 3rd John & 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

<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>

June 1

The God of Restoration

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 9-12

Let's set the stage. Israel is doing everything wrong. This passage of scripture starts out with God calling for the destruction of the wicked in Jerusalem. God sends a scribe out first to put a mark on the forehead of all of the men who are overwhelmed by the "abominations" that are practiced in the city. Following the scribe are men with their weapons that are instructed to spare no one. Then God turned His wrath toward the counselors and leaders of Israel. He pronounced doom over them and said that the very thing that they feared would come upon them and they would die by the sword that they were so afraid of. Things are not looking very good for the people of Jerusalem at this point.

Then Ezekiel intercedes on behalf of the nation. Ezekiel 11:13 – *'Then I fell on my face and cried with a loud voice, and said, "Ah, Lord God! Will you make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?"* What happened? Ezekiel became an intercessor for the entire nation of Israel. He didn't ask God to deliver him from the coming disaster, but he asked God to relent from His declaration of doom over the country. What was the outcome? Ezekiel 11:16,17 *"...yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone. Therefore say, "Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel."*

Even in His wrath towards the nation, God listens to His prophet and responds to his intercession. No matter how dismal the situation seems to be, God always listens to someone who is willing to intercede on behalf of the afflicted. Although it was many years hence, God once again gathered the remnants of the nation of Israel in 1948. He once again declared Israel to be a nation and gave them back the land that He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

What can we learn from this passage of scripture? God is not finished with America yet. If the body of Christ will pray and intercede on behalf of our nation, perhaps God will turn our nation around and once again make us the bastion of freedom that we have been in the past. 1 Timothy 2:1 *"Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,..."* When the Body of Christ prays, God listens. We can change any situation for the good by bringing the problem to God in intercession and prayer. The Word tells us that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God and making intercession on our behalf. What better example can we ask for?

Putting the Word to Work

Decide a place and time on a weekly basis and set it aside to intercede for our country, state, county and city.

June 2

Fuel for the Fire

Today's Bible Reading – Ezekiel 13-15

In this short chapter, the Lord asked Ezekiel a cynical question regarding His appraisal of the worthlessness of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their persistent unfaithfulness to Him and then pronounced judgment on them. History records for us the utter desolation and destruction that came upon Jerusalem when the Babylonians invaded Judah first in 605 BC, took Jerusalem captive in 597 BC, and then destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Throughout the Bible, the vine is a constant symbol of Israel. Asaph, the chief musician of Israel, declared: *“You have brought a vine out of Egypt; You have cast out the nations and planted it. You prepared room for it, and caused it to take deep root, and it filled the land.”* Isaiah wrote: *“My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones and planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst and also made a winepress in it; so, He expected it to bring forth good grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes. ‘And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; and break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned or dug, but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it.’ For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.”*

Jesus told His disciples: *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes that it may bear more fruit. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.”*

It is a harsh reality to consider both the patience of God and the judgment of God.

Putting the Word to Work

Q: Describe the fruit you are bearing for the Lord:

Q: Describe the pruning that the Lord has done in your life

June 3

Restore to Life

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 16,17

*"And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, **"LIVE!"** Yes, I said to you still in your natal blood, **"LIVE!"** Ezekiel 16:6 AMP*

This chapter speaks of the birthing of the people of Israel in the days of Jacob. His sons and grandsons became heads of the 12 tribes of Israel, God's Chosen People. Ezekiel 16:14 says of Israel, *"Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you," says the Lord God.* Their "beauty" was God's very presence and favor that accompanied them.

When they entered the promised land they were warned by God not to adopt the immoral practices of the Canaanites who lived there. (See Leviticus 18:3 and 20:23) Sadly enough they did adopt the moral practices they'd been warned against, worshipping idols, performing acts of harlotry and even sacrificing their children by fire to foreign gods.

Judgement came, God withdrew His protective hand and many of His Chosen People were destroyed by war and starvation. A remnant went into captivity in Babylon at the Prophet Jeremiah's suggestion.

Psalms 107:34, 35 explains what happened to the Israelites: *"They did not destroy the heathen nations as the Lord commanded them, but mingled themselves with the idolatrous nations and learned their ways and works."*

Our faithful loving Father heard their cries of distress, remembered His long ago covenant with them, and caused them to find sympathy with their captors. At the very birth of this nation He declared the word **"LIVE."** Live is the Hebrew word "chayah" which means "to be preserved alive, recover, be repaired, be restored to life and to be made whole."

Our Father had great mercy for this Chosen People, once again drawing them to Himself and leading them back to their homeland. What a forgiving and loving God we serve!

Putting the Word to Work

Declare over yourself the word **"LIVE!"** and look for His promises to "preserve you alive, help you in recovery when you need it, repair" any part of your heart that is broken and hold you close until you are "made whole" in Him.

June 4

In right fellowship with God

TitleToday's Reading Assignment - Ezekiel 18-20

Ezekiel 18:4 "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father, As well as the soul of the son is Mine;

"Like father, like son." A phrase I've heard spoken more in a derisive tone and expressed in attitude. Most often the individual is not in a good place. The hidden reason is that they are acting out a curse that has come down through the ranks of "family." Ezekiel, in these three chapters, is prophesying into the lives of the children of Israel. Verse 2 of chapter 18 says, *"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge!"* God says, *"As I live" you will no longer use this saying.* The key to this and what God was saying is *"As I live in you and you live in me and keep my laws, you shall live and you will show your offspring how to do it as a heritage to them!"*

As you read further down, there is a BUT in there, meaning if you do not abide in Me and do as I command you, you will surely die. The choice is ours. God's way or our way—blessings or cursings. What do I want to give as a heritage to my children? God says you may start out with a curse, but in chapter 18:21 He says, *"But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all my statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die."* That is repentance, and only that will change the course of your life and bring you into the right fellowship with God.

Adam and Eve brought us all under a curse, but Jesus broke that curse so that we might come into that right fellowship with God. Jesus made a way of escaping the curse. It is our choice, individually, to break it by turning to God completely. The struggle is real, but the dividends are much greater and eternal compared to what the world offers.

As an Elder, one of the greatest joys is watching the transformation of one who is found. We carry the weight of the world without God. Our demeanor reflects the fear of that "lostness" until one day we lay it all down at the Master's feet and walk away free—free from the guilt, shame, regret and sorrow. John 8:31-32 "If you abide in My Word, you are disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." We must become seekers of Truth.

Putting the Word to Work

1. Is it time to break the curses in your life?
2. Identify them by allowing God to reveal His Truth in you.
3. Ask God for the release.
Scripture says, "Ask anything in My name believing and it shall be given to you."
4. Always keep in mind: It is God's timing, not ours!

June 5
Standing in the Gap
Ezekiel 21-22

“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.” — Ezekiel 22:30

Ezekiel 21–22 presents a nation in deep moral and spiritual collapse. In chapter 21, judgment is pictured as a sharpened sword moving toward Jerusalem—a warning that consequences are now unavoidable. In chapter 22, God explains why: leaders are corrupt, injustice is widespread, violence is normalized, and truth is ignored. The “wall” of spiritual protection has broken down.

Ezekiel 22:30 sits at the center of this message. God searches for someone who will “stand in the gap”—someone who will intercede, call the people back to righteousness, and hold back judgment through repentance and prayer. But the verse ends with a sobering reality: no one is found. The issue is not God’s unwillingness to forgive, but the absence of anyone willing to step into that role. In simple terms, standing in the gap means stepping in between a broken people and a holy God—through prayer, repentance, and righteous leadership—asking God for mercy while calling people back to truth.

From a Christian perspective, this passage also points forward to Jesus Christ, who ultimately fulfills this role perfectly. Where Ezekiel says no one was found, the gospel reveals that God provides the One who can stand in the gap. Jesus represents humanity, intercedes for sinners, and bears judgment on the cross so mercy can be extended. However, the New Testament also shows that believers are now called to reflect Christ’s heart. Christians are not the Savior, but they are called to be intercessors—people who pray, repent, and plead for others.

When viewed through a modern lens, many Christians see parallels between Ezekiel’s description and the current moral and spiritual condition of nations like the United States: increasing division, confusion over truth, violence, broken families, and growing distance from biblical foundations. Whether one sees this as direct prophetic fulfillment or as a repeating biblical pattern, the call of the passage remains the same. God still looks for people who will stand in the gap. That means Christians are called to pray for their communities, leaders, and the nation; Live differently in a culture that often rejects God’s standards; Speak truth with compassion; Intercede for repentance and mercy rather than judgment. The message of Ezekiel 21–22 is not only a warning—it is an invitation. Judgment comes where no one intercedes, but mercy is always sought where people humble themselves before God.

Putting the Word to Work

Will you stand in the gap for your generation?

What will that look like for you?

June 6

There shall be no other gods before Me

Ezekiel 23 & 24, KJV

“So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.” Ezekiel 24:18

Ezekiel 23 and 24 describes the adultery of Israel, and the consequences it will soon bear for their blatant rebellion and disobedience. Through the prophet Ezekiel, God uses a parable of two adulterous women named Aholah and Aholibah. Aholah represents the region of Samaria, while Aholibah represents Jerusalem. The Lord uses these two women to symbolize the unfaithfulness of the Jewish people in Egypt with their love for Assyrian idols. Exodus 20:3 states, *“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”* The people of Israel knew this commandment extremely well, and not only ignored it, but did so after repeated warnings.

This reminds me of how many of us today ignore what we should be doing in relation to growing in God. We often do this by excusing hours a day of mindless phone scrolling or TV watching. We may think of these things as simple distractions but that’s just a nice way to say idolatry. Your attention is an act of worship. Ask yourself, does God have more of your attention or other fruitless activities?

Patheos.com describes it perfectly stating, “Distractions siphon our attention away from God and towards lesser things, paving the way to idolatry. At its core, idolatry is elevating anything above God. It manifests in many forms, whether material possessions, career ambitions, relationships, or personal achievements. These idols claim our focus and devotion, often at the expense of our relationship with God.” Furthermore, “Romans 12:1 urges believers to offer their bodies as a living sacrifice, which is described as true and proper worship. By focusing our attention on God, we align our lives with His purposes and acknowledge His sovereignty over every aspect of our existence.”

The penalties for idolatry in Israel were steep. God used Ezekiel’s own wife as an example of what He will soon do to Israel and their beloved temple. Telling Ezekiel, *“Behold, I will profane My sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth...”* (Ezekiel 24:21). Soon after, Ezekiel suddenly and unexpectedly lost his wife, the desire of his eyes. Then God continued by destroying His temple., because repentance never came from the Israeli people.

In this experience, Israel learned that the temple was never the source of the Lord, it was just a sign that He was with Israel. Afterwards, God goes on to display His omnipresence, and that is something that can never be destroyed. Hallelujah!

Putting the Word to Work

What is one habit that you need to set aside to make more room for God?

Source:

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/jacksonwu/2024/09/17/worship-through-attention-guarding-against-idolatry/>

June 7

A lamentation for Tyre, merchant of the people

Today's Bible Reading – Ezekiel 25-27

Ezekiel 26:17 "And they will take up a lamentation for you, and say to you: "How you have perished, O one inhabited by seafaring men, O renowned city, Who was strong at sea, She and her inhabitants,"

Chapter 25, in the Book of Ezekiel proclaims judgment against the nations of Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia because of their vengeance and disdain for the land of Israel and the house of Judah. God clearly describes the judgment and desolation that He will bring upon each one. When the prophesied desolation comes upon them, "...they will know that I am the LORD."

About a year later, the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel to speak against the nation of Tyre when they devised to take Jerusalem. God caused many nations to plunder Tyre.

Then God brought Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon with its chariots, horsemen, and an army. The people of Tyre moved to an island half mile out in the sea to prevent Nebuchadnezzar from taking their valuables.

Chapter 26 *"¹⁷ And they will take up a lamentation for you." "¹⁹ For thus says the Lord God: "When I make you a desolate city, like cities that are not inhabited, when I bring the deep upon you, and great waters cover you, then I will bring you down with those who descend into the Pit..."*

Chapter 27 recounts the greatness of Tyre's reputation on the seas and it was impressive at a time when they became a great maritime commercial center. Tyre was rich, diverse and prolific, trading many different products with a host of nations in the known world. Many cities and their many varieties of valuable commodities are listed in verses 1-24. I cannot recall seeing so many cities and their wares listed together.

Verses 25-36 relate the end results for Tyre. *"³⁶ The merchants among the peoples will hiss at you; You will become a horror, and be no more forever."*

Hebrews 10 *"³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord." And again, "The Lord will judge His people. ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*

But our God is zealous for His people. 1 John 2 *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."*

Putting the Word to Work

We must recognize our place of love and acceptance in the Family of God if we walk with Him. We must know who we are in Jesus.

How can we demonstrate our confidence in God to a struggling world? *"If necessary, use words!"*

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

<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>

June 8

Pride goeth before the fall

Today's Reading Assignment - Ezekiel 28-30

Pride: abilities of those with whom one is closely associated, widely admired; a feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, or from qualities or possessions that are inherent.

There is one big issue in these chapters that has erupted over eons and has set the course of this present darkness. That issue is pride, setting one's heart and thoughts above God by exalting oneself above the Lord, or just plain taking credit for our lives in a way that does not honor or magnify God.

We know that Satan wanted glory and exaltation and tried to elevate himself (pride) to be as God. He ended up falling to earth and taking a third of the angels (God's created beings) with him. We also know that God is a jealous God. In Exodus 34:14, He wants us to worship Him and Him alone. He does not like for us to bathe in the limelight and take credit for His actions in our lives.

When one begins, through arrogance and pride, to think of himself as special and set apart, taking too much credit for one's life. When overly focusing on self and accomplishments, one forgets that without God we are nothing. Yes, He is a jealous God and wants all of our adoration.

In chapters 28 and 29 God humbled two Kings to show it is He that holds sovereignty and appropriation in His hands. God gave the king of Tyre splendor and wealth, but pride had him say, *"I have done this. I am a god."* He knew who God was, but took the credit for himself. God says to Ezekiel in chapter 29:2-8, ² *"Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt."* ³ *Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt..."* ⁶ *"Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD..."*

My ways of seeing and interpreting the word may not be correct to scholars, but I feel that God is Love and He loves us most of all. So when we fall into pride we tend to leave Him behind. More than being jealous, He is hurt. We know that wherever we go and whatever we do He is with us. Have you ever been with a close friend when something marvelous happened in their life, but you were left out of the story when it is told? Just think how God must feel when we leave Him out of our story. Proverbs 3:6 says, *"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]."*

Winning the battle with pride begins with acknowledging God's goodness in every aspect of our lives.

Putting the Word to Work

1. Pray every day. "Thank you father for another day, for the breath in my lungs and the sight in my eyes"
2. Before taking credit, be humble and give the lion's share to God.
3. Be the one who puts others first. John 15:13

June 9

I have made you a watchman

Today's Bible reading - Ezekiel 31-33

Ezekiel 33:7 "So you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from Me." (Amp)

We are all called to be watchmen and tell others about Jesus. We are called to be salt and light. As long as we live we are to exhibit God's heart.

Ezekiel 33:11 says *"The Lord God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked would turn from their way and live."* John 10:10b *"...I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)."* (AMP)

2 Peter 3:9 *"The Lord...desires that none should perish, that all men come to repentance."*

1 John 1:9 *"If we [freely] admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just (true to His own nature and promises) and will forgive our sins [dismiss our lawlessness] and [continuously] cleanse us from all unrighteousness [everything not in conformity to His will in purpose, thought and action]."* (AMP)

Ezekiel 33:16a *"None of his sins that he has committed shall be [seriously] remembered against him;..."* (AMP)
Micah 7:19 *"He will again have compassion on us; He will subdue and tread underfoot our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."* (AMP) People are watching you.

Matthew 5:16 *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."* (NLT)

Colossians 1:28 *"We preach Christ. We tell every man how he must live. We use wisdom in teaching every man. We do this so every man will be complete in Christ."* (NLT)

Ezekiel 33:6,7 *"But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, he is taken away in and for his perversity and iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand." 7 So you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me."* (AMP)

We are not responsible or accountable for anyone's response to the word of the Lord, only for our obedience. (Ezekiel 3:19)

Putting the Word to Work

Do we care about others enough to take time to hear the Lord daily?

June 10

I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 34-36

Ezekiel 36:24-30; 33-36 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. 28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 29 I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations...

33 'Thus says the Lord God: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. 34 The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. 35 So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' 36 Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it."

What a promise from the Lord, the Good Shepherd of Israel. Remember Ezekiel was a young man who was taken in captivity and now is seeing and hearing a vision of great restoration. A reclamation of territory, a renovation of the hearts, a removal of reproach, a rebuilding of the ruins and a restoration of the lands and their production. God the Master Renovator casting vision for a future almost unfathomable to a young prophet who saw the destruction and captivity first hand, and yet here we have a promise of a great rebuild.

Interestingly enough, sandwiched between these two sections describing internal transformation in the hearts and minds of the people and physical territorial restoration of the lands and property are a few verses that must be observed. Vs. 31-32 describe memories of their evil ways and a loathing of their previous lifestyle and choices. I pray you choose to live in such a manner that you never experience the great depth of pain and sorrow that comes with ungodly choices. Most of us however, have moments of reflection where we sit back and realize that those were some terrible choices. It is important to remember where we came from in humble gratitude to God for the life He graciously delivered us from. We could not save ourselves, so let it drive you to worship the One who gave everything for you and I so that we could be free.

I have found that the more I thank God for His grace and mercy and deliverance from sin, my heart becomes softer towards Him and His leading.

Putting the Word to Work

What has God delivered you from?

June 11

God Questions

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 37-39

Ezekiel 37:1-3 The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. 2 Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord God, You know."

This particular passage of Scripture seems to have been utilized by the Lord frequently in this decade. Worldwide Christian music artists have written song after song, including worship songs we have sung in this house, drawing on the graphic language of this particular passage of Scripture, especially following the covid era in 2020-2021.

The prophet is taken in a vision to a place known as the valley of dry bones. Lucas Levin taught on this subject at our church one time, that this was not just symbolic language, but was an actual valley, where the enemies of Israel had taken and piled and scattered the bones of the armies of Israel to make a statement to them and the world of the great power of Babylon. Yet, God brings Ezekiel to this place and asks the prophet a question, "*Can these bones live?*" I have discovered a few things when God asks me a question. First, God is never looking for information. God is all-knowing, therefore there is no information I can share with Him that He does not already know. God questions are not about information but about confrontation. When God asks a question, He is often, if not always, confronting someone in order to pull them up to a higher level of thinking and living.

God questions have a way of shifting paradigms. Webster defines a paradigm shift as, a "*major change in which the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way.*" Oh, that God would break into our thinking to raise our standard of thinking and living until we see and live His ways.

Putting the Word to Work

Is there a time when the Holy Spirit asked you a question?

Are there any questions God has been asking you lately?

June 12

Ministers to the Lord

Today's Bible Reading – Ezekiel 40-42

Ezekiel 40:45-46 "Then he said to me, 'This chamber which faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple. The chamber which faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar; these are the sons of Zadok, from the sons of Levi, who come near the Lord to minister to Him.'"

While in exile, a captive of the dread Babylonians, Ezekiel was given a vision of the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem that had been destroyed by the Babylonian army. Amid the detailed description of the rebuilt Temple, we find provision for two chambers designed to house the Levitical priests *"who come near to the Lord to minister to Him."* One group of priests had charge of the temple, the other had charge of the altar.

Most believers are conscious of their responsibility to minister for the Lord but miss the imperative to minister to the Lord. Perhaps you have been frustrated in your efforts to minister for the Lord. You have not yet discovered how best to use your time, talent, and treasure for the Lord. God has given you resources that you desire to use for Him, but you have not yet found an opportunity to be used by Him effectively. The reason may be that your priorities need to be rearranged. God has called you to Himself, and you believed that it was your responsibility to go out when He first wanted you to stay.

The Old Testament is filled with verses declaring the proper priority. God's servants were anointed to minister to the Lord before they were allowed to minister for the Lord. The gospels are filled with references to the women who ministered to Jesus as He ministered for the Lord. The early church discovered and demonstrated the imperative to minister to the Lord in order to be properly equipped and directed in their ministry for the Lord: *"Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'* Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:1-3).

Please note that it was while they all ministered to the Lord in worship, prayer and fasting that they were directed by the Holy Spirit to minister for the Lord as He called two of them to the mission of ministering for the Lord as they were told to preach the gospel in places that had never heard it. That demonstrates for us today the priority that we all must place on being ministers to the Lord first and foremost.

Putting the Word to work:

Q: Describe how you minister to the Lord.

June 13

Gates of Glory

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 43-45

Ezekiel 43:1-5 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. 2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

After all the amazing revelations in Ezekiel we are approaching the closing section of this great book today and tomorrow. We find here Ezekiel has a God-encounter that is very similar to the one outlined at the beginning of the book. Here He describes the impact of the presence and glory of the Lord had on him. *"I fell on my face..."* It took the Spirit of the Lord to lift him up, and bring him into the inner court, and behold the glory of the Lord filling the temple.

A couple of observations from this passage. First, notice that the earth *"shone"* with His glory. Strong's defines this root word, as a word that means "to become luminous" to kindle and set on fire, to cause to shine. Notice that as the Lord approaches the earth, the earth responds by becoming luminous or to catch fire. If you are needing a "fresh fire" of the Holy Spirit, do those things which draw His presence closer and the naturally occurring byproduct is to become on fire. Secondly the Spirit of the Lord *"lifted me up."* If you spend time in the presence of the Lord, there is a lifting effect we experience. I have never been in the presence of the Lord, and the result was to be depressed. No, in His presence is fullness of joy. He is the glory and the lifter of my head. If you are feeling downtrodden with life, run to the presence of the Lord, for there you will experience a lifting.

Putting the Word to Work

What are some patterns described in the Bible, that when you have followed the patterns, you have felt closer to the Lord, and have been uplifted?

June 14

The 4th Crossing

Today's Bible Reading - Ezekiel 46-48

Ezekiel 47:5 Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed.

The first time I recall a message from George Watkins being preached, was a sermon he delivered entitled the "4th Crossing," taken from this passage of Scripture in Ezekiel 47. The encounter and imagery utilized by the prophet Ezekiel is so encouraging and we all connect to it so well. The simple idea of the message (and I believe the truth to the passage and confirmed throughout the passage of Scripture) includes this idea of the nature of God's goodness being progressive and revealed to His followers.

Notice here the prophet is shown a river that is flowing from the throne of God, and flowing out. He is led by an angel to the river, where the waters are ankle deep. He is then led with a measuring line, to see that after 1,000 cubits, the river is now knee deep. Another 1,000 cubits, it is now waist deep. Another 1,000 cubits and it is a river that cannot be waded through, but must be swummed in in order to have a chance at crossing. I know my understanding of the goodness of God has dramatically expanded. As good as salvation is (the first crossing), He is much more than just a Savior, Deliverer, Redeemer, Creator and Healer. As I have walked with the Lord, I have grown from simply being born again, to becoming a disciple.

Oh, brothers and sisters, discipleship deepens your knowledge of the goodness of God. I have often taught that discipleship is very personal and has 5 basic steps. The first 2 are one-time steps: 1) You must be born again, and 2) Be baptized in water. The next three steps are repeated lifelong disciplines of walking with God: 3) Daily study the Word; and 4) develop a daily prayer life. Step 5) is to get plugged into the body of Christ. Discipleship is a key component of going deeper in your relationship with God. I would describe this perhaps as the 3rd crossing "waist deep."

It is true that you can be saved without being committed to a local church, but you will also be severely missing out on the blessing that comes with being connected to the body of Christ. We were not made to be isolated islands. Make the commitment to participate at least once/week in a local church service. You will experience a deeper revelation of the goodness of God.

However, the final crossing for me came when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. That moment came for me, while I was by myself, in a car, in a parking lot, at a baseball field, in St. Joseph Missouri. The impact it had on me was profound, suddenly I was experiencing God at a level I had never experienced before. Remember the Bible-described the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to make us effective witnesses for Christ (See Acts 1:5-8). Salvation and discipleship are often focused on the revelation of God to us, but at this level suddenly things changed and it became about God moving, not just to me, but through me. When God begins to move through a person, it is a whole new level of revelation of the goodness of God.

Putting the Word to Work

Which crossing do you dwell at?

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

<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>

June 15

Conviction or Condemnation

Today's Bible Reading - Hosea 1-7

Hosea 2:23 "...And to those I called 'Not my people,' I will say, 'Now you are my people.' And they will reply, 'You are our God!'"

The opening chapters of Hosea are uncomfortable because they are supposed to be. God tells Hosea to remain in a marriage marked by betrayal as a living picture of Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness. Israel had continually run after other gods, trusted other nations for security, and abandoned covenant faithfulness, yet God kept pursuing them. That is what makes Hosea so startling. You see this story is not ultimately about human failure, but rather divine persistence.

Hosea reveals a God who confronts sin without withdrawing His love. His pursuit is not passive or indifferent. He calls out rebellion honestly while still inviting His people back into relationship. Hosea 2:19 & 20 paints this beautifully: *"I will take you to be my wife forever.. in faithfulness, and you will know the Lord."*

Even after judgment, God speaks covenant language. Restoration remains His desire, because conviction is not the same thing as rejection. God exposing sin is not evidence that He has abandoned us. It is often evidence that He refuses to give up on us.

Israel kept running towards things they believed would satisfy, protect, or sustain them apart from God. Don't we sometimes do the same? We chase control, comfort, approval, distraction, success, or self reliance, and then wonder why we feel distant from God. Hosea reminds us that God still moves towards wandering people. Not to excuse sin; Not to ignore it; But to redeem it.

Putting the Word to Work

Where have I confused conviction with rejection?

June 16

Watch what you are sowing

Today's Bible Reading Hosea 8-14

Hosea 10:12 Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the Lord, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

How often do we ponder our current situation or circumstance when we are children of God and wonder why we are reaping a whirlwind. We seek the Lord and ask Him what we are doing wrong, when actually we are reaping what we have sown. You cannot plant beans and go out into your garden looking for an ear of sweet corn to eat. My wife and I plant quite a variety of vegetables with the plan to can some of them aside to put aside for the winter. Some of the garden is reserved for things that we will eat during the summer, and others are for the crops that we will preserve for the future.

However, there are certain rules that apply in order to reap the harvest that we hope to have. First, you must sow the seeds of the crop that you expect to harvest. You can't sow beans and reap corn. You can't plant zucchini squash and expect to produce a crop of beefsteak tomatoes. You will reap whatever you sow. Second, you must have patience. You can't put your seed in the ground and the following day go out expecting to have fresh veggies for dinner. What you plant takes time to grow and develop. Third, there are maintenance requirements that must be met. You need to keep the weeds in check, water, feed and nurture the things that you have planted.

Likewise, in our Christian walk, we must pay close attention to what we are sowing. Today's scripture says, "*Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap in mercy.*" If we spend our time listening to the latest news talk show or perusing the latest Instagram or Tik Tok video, we are sowing the seeds of the world. If instead, we spend time listening to Christian music or the Word, we are sowing to the Kingdom of God. When the crises of life hit, we will respond from the harvest we have planted. Quite frequently, when something happens that we do not understand, we are reaping the results of seeds we planted long ago. An old preacher friend once said, "You can't go out on Saturday night and sow your wild oats, and then come to church on Sunday and pray for a crop failure."

God has provided a means by which we can pray for those crop failures. We can go before the Lord and ask for forgiveness from our past mistakes. What we don't want to develop is the habit of asking God to forgive us, then go out and start sowing bad seed, all over again. Be careful of what you are sowing into your heart. What you let your eyes see, what you let your ears hear, and what you allow yourself to be involved in will set your future. Sow unto righteousness. Reap mercy.

Putting the Word to Work

Take an inventory. What are you reading, listening to, and seeing on a daily basis? Are there things in your life that you need to change?

June 17

Repentance Results in Restoration

Today's Bible Reading - Book of Joel

12 "Now, therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." 13 So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

Joel 2 is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. Of course, it is cited by Peter in Acts 2 as well, on the day of Pentecost. Notice in this chapter some of the things He promised to do to restore Israel:

Grain, New wine and oil (vs. 19)

Reproval of reproach (vs. 19)

A reason to rejoice (vs. 21)

Productive pastures, fruit bearing trees, figs and grapes (vs. 22)

The former and the latter rain in the first month (vs. 23)

Full threshing floors (vs. 24)

Vats overflowing with new wine and oil (vs. 24)

Restoration (vs. 25)

Removal of shame (vs. 26)

A knowing that He is the God of Israel (vs. 27)

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Sons and daughters prophesying, old men dreaming again, young men seeing vision (vs. 28)

Servants receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (29)

Signs in the heavens (30-31)

Salvation for whoever calls on the name of the Lord (vs. 32)

One thing God asked of His people, however, prior to the restoration. In verses 12 & 13, we read this, *"Turn to Me with all your heart... rend your heart, not your garments, return to the Lord..."* Brothers and sisters, can I encourage you with this idea? Repentance results in restoration.

Putting the Word to Work

Repentance means that we should stop thinking, living and acting in one way and to turn into a new direction, to God's way of thinking, living and acting. Ask the Lord, if there is any repentance you need in your life.

June 18

Today's Bible Reading - Amos 1-5

Amos 3:2-3, 7 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." 3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Amos is a powerful prophetic book, small in size, but powerful in confrontation. Chapters 1 and 2 describe who Amos is: a shepherd turned prophet by the call of the Lord, and a series of blunt confrontations on the nation of Israel. It turns in chapter 3-6 with a series of prophetic sermons, again of confrontation. Finally chapters 7-9 carry a weighty description, a series of visions on the coming destruction of the nation of Israel. *The Bible Project* has a great description on the overview of this book, "*Though God confronts humanity's evil, his long-term purpose is to restore creation and create a new family. Amos' words are a call to embrace the true worship of God that should always include acts of justice, righteousness, and love for one's neighbor.*"

In chapter three, we see the heart of God who sought out the nation of Israel, chose them and loved them too much to allow them to continue walking in the direction they currently were. He greatly desires to walk as He once did, with the people living in agreement with His will and ways. A very important statement that exists in verse 7, "*The Lord does nothing, unless He revealed His secret to His servants the prophets.*"

Prophets have a unique calling of the Lord. They existed in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, and still exist in the world today. The role of a prophet was a little different in the Old Testament than in the New Testament for one simple reason: After Jesus' death and resurrection on the cross, and the Holy Spirit was poured into the earth coming to dwell inside all born again believers, providing each believer with the ability and opportunity to hear from the Lord for one's self.

We do not need to go to a prophet today in order to receive a "word of the Lord." There are those who God still called as prophets today (see Ephesians 4). The heart of a true prophet will sound very much like the heart message in Amos: God calling His people into a deepening relationship with Him. One primary impact of a true prophet's ministry will be a deepening desire to hear and know God at a deep personal level. *(rabbit trail... It's true that all the 5-fold ministers described in Eph. 4:11 have similar effects, so do not misunderstand this to mean that anyone who stirs in you a desire to deepen your relationship with God is a prophet.)*

Don't look for a prophet just based upon their style of delivering a message, or scary end-of-the-world declarations. An every day prophet is called to equip the saints for the work of ministry, helping the body to have a better sense of hearing what the Lord is saying and seeing what the Lord is doing. Prophecy carries with it a sense of what is coming in the future.

Putting the Word to Work

Who are the two or three people (again not that we are calling them a prophet, but just people) who stir in you a desire to go deeper in your relationship with the Lord?

June 19

The Remnant

Today's Reading Assignment - Amos 6-9

Amos 9: 8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; But I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," Says the Lord.

Amos' prophecy is timeless. It could apply to any living generation. God's chosen people never fully surrendered to God. He warned them time after time and His mercy was given in some measure. They would heed for a time only to return to their wicked ways and their idols. He gave them kings to rule over them and yet out of the kings only two tore down their places of idol worship.

God sent them prophets. In Ezekiel 2:4, God tells the prophets that they are "impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them and you shall say to them, "Thus, says the Lord God." God also calls them a rebellious house. God made provisions for them yet they rejected His words.

On a personal note, God will send people to warn a person and sometimes He will give us numerous warnings and signs. *"Turn from your ways and follow Me."* And sometimes after so many warnings and so many rejections, He will bring judgment down on our house—not because He doesn't love us, but because He does.

I remember as a child, after getting spanked for being disobedient, my parents saying, "This hurts me more than you." I also remember thinking, "Are you kidding me?" But the time came when I had naughty little ones that needed correcting and I then knew what my parents meant. It is heart-breaking to God to punish His children.

In chapter 9:1 Amos said he saw the Lord standing at the altar, the altar of sacrifice. It was too late, judgment was coming, and thus there was to be a sacrifice. There would be a few who would escape and those were the ones who went through the fires and came out with the laws of God embedded in their hearts. These are the remnants, the faithful. Verse 11 says what God tears down He will resurrect. There is hope always, when we finally turn to Him and allow Him to rebuild our house that is built on Him as our foundation—not man, not idols or crazy ideologies, but on the word of truth and the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus is His name.

Putting the Word to Work

1. Do you have a stubborn, obstinate disposition?
2. God knows and can help you overcome anything. Pray for God to put in a heart of flesh so that His love can be written upon it.
3. Check in with God often to see what condition your heart is in! (And I don't mean the song!)

June 20

Attitude is a primary asset in relationships

Today's Reading Assignment - Obadiah and Jonah

Obadiah 1:17 "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, And there shall be holiness." 18, "*And no survivor shall remain of the House of Esau, For the LORD has spoken.*"

The battle between the brothers Esau and Jacob began at birth. Their strong differences were evident from their physical appearance to their combative personalities and attitudes. Those differences have persisted through their descendants even into the present time. So much throughout the Bible describes the battles and attitudes between those two nations in the middle east.

Obadiah was sent from God as a messenger to the nations to rise up in battle against Edom (Esau's descendants) because of their haughty behavior toward Israel. Haughty means proud, arrogant, scornfully superior, arrogant, and condescending. God brought judgment to Edom, but brought triumph to Mount Zion for Israel.

Jonah 3:10 "*Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.*"

We all know the well-known Bible story of Jonah. He believed God from the beginning of the story, but he refused to obey. Jonah immediately ran from the presence of the LORD. He ran south to board a ship going the opposite way. God brought a terrible storm and the ship's crew cried out to their gods to no avail. They begged Jonah to call on his God. Jonah was always honest and told them to throw him overboard so they could live. They threw him overboard and God provided a whale to swallow him. After three days and three nights in the whale's belly, Jonah was desolate, prayed, and accepted his assignment. [Matt. 12:40 Jesus compared His crucifixion to Jonah's three days and three nights.] God told the whale to vomit Jonah onto dry land.

At Nineveh Jonah finally preached God's message: "*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!*" The people believed God, and the king proclaimed a decree for everyone to fast and '*turn from their evil ways.*' God saw their repentance and did not destroy them. Jonah became very angry because he knew his merciful God would relent. So, he asked God to take his life. Jonah went out of the city and held a 'pity party' for himself. God questioned his anger and attitude. Again, he wished death for himself. Wow!

Jonah's attitude was willful, selfish, stubborn, defiant, prejudiced, and negative. He was self-absorbed and would rather die than comply with a merciful and gracious God. The story stops there, so we do not know how his life developed. We truly hope he was eventually enlightened.

Putting the Word to Work

The Bible teaches that obedience is foundational in our relationship with God? How is it going?

What entrenched attitudes do each of us carry through life without giving it a thought?

Ask the Holy Spirit to expose, heal, and refine those attitudes to better serve the Kingdom of God.

June 21

Great Expectations

Today's Bible Reading - The Book of Micah

Micah 6:8 - "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God?" (Amp)

Deuteronomy 10:12,13. "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you but [reverently] to fear the Lord your God, [that is] to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your [mind and] heart and with your entire being, 13 To keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good." (Amp)

Luke 12:48b - "... For everyone to whom much is given, of him shall much be required; and of him to whom men entrust much, they require and demand all the more."

It is often said that salvation is a free gift, which is very true. It is a principle that is taught and echoed from Genesis through Revelation that salvation is a gift which can never be earned. It is a phrase used to communicate the idea that we as mankind are hopelessly lost apart from the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Also important to understand however, is that while it is a free gift, it comes with great expectations as well.

Salvation does bring with it an expectation of a changed life, for example. We are born again, and then we learn how to live out the born-again life. We experience freedom from the penalty of sin, then we learn how to walk free from the ways of sin. We experience peace of mind, then we learn how to live with the mind of Christ. It is a journey.

Putting the Word to Work

What has following Jesus cost you?

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

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.

June 22

Vision or di-vision

Today's Reading - Nahum and Habakkuk

Habakkuk 2:2-3 Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

Habakkuk writes in chapter 2 of the importance of having clear vision. Vision allows us to be able to run, and to stay on course, to not lose focus and to make progress in life. The simple truth recorded here is that a person cannot run in two directions at the same time. The word "division" literally means "two visions." One cannot serve two masters. Jesus taught, he will either love the one and hate the other or serve the one and despise the other. Having singular vision and focus in life gives one the ability to run our race with confidence and endurance.

One of the main ways division sneaks in is through distractions. How many times have you seen or heard of an accident or a mistake where the person says, "I'm sorry, I just wasn't thinking..."? There are so many distractions available to us today. I was driving home this afternoon, and realized, I didn't think I had had 10 minutes of silence throughout the day. Not because I was bombarded with inescapable noise, nor from bad things that had entered my ears. In the background all day had been worship music, instrumental music, podcasts, news clips, or sports talk radio. None of which in themselves is bad or evil, but it suddenly occurred to me, while I was driving, that I was experiencing some of my first moments of silence in the background. This is not a good pattern.

According to Dr. Caroline Leaf, humans need at least one stretch of 16 consecutive minutes a day of uninterrupted silence just to allow the brain to decompress from the day, and file all the experiences from the day. If you feel a need to have noise in the background, it could be that what you really need is a little quiet time where you can allow your brain to have time to process life in a healthy way, and then get back to what you were doing.

A second way division creeps in, is often through the deterioration of priorities. When a person allows his or her energy to be poured into misaligned priorities, division (dual or competing vision) is a common result. One of the greatest book titles I have ever seen was simply titled, "The Main Thing, is to Keep the Main Thing, the Main Thing." Simple, yet so profound. When we live a life of focus, minimizing distractions as much as possible and maintaining healthy priorities, it is simply amazing what we can accomplish.

Putting the Word to Work

Perhaps you are like me, and this has sparked some thoughts on distractions in your life that really need to be cut back. If so, what are a few of the distractions you can eliminate from life so you can run more effectively?

Rank your top five priorities in life. Now, ask yourself this question: does my schedule reflect what I value?

June 23

**He has cast out your enemy, the King of Israel is in your midst
Today's Reading Assignment - Zephaniah and Haggai**

Hebrews 12:5-6 "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."

Have you noticed a common theme as we move through the "minor prophets"? There is so much doom and gloom for God's people because they continued to disobey and turn to pagan idols. God sends prophet after prophet to warn them of their impending peril if they do not turn around. As our Creator, who has a better right? God has always loved His people... enough to chasten them (and us). Often His actions revolve around the pagan nations that come against them, so God must deal with them also. He includes the rebellious city of Jerusalem who has not obeyed His voice.

But chapter 3:8, says to a faithful remnant, "Wait for Me, says the Lord." and 9 "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord." Reread chapter 3:8-20 (the end of this Book). God always has a plan to restore His people after He takes them to task. His plan has a good ending for us. See verse 20. Amen.

Haggai 1:13-14 "Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's message to the people, saying, "I am with you, says the LORD." 14 "So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel..., and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God."

When the people return to Judah after the Babylonian exile (Book of Daniel), God chastises the people for not rebuilding the House of God. The plan of God for His house is specific and detailed just as in previous works. The Lord said that "the glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former, and He will give peace." And God said that from the day the foundation was laid, He would bless them.

In the very last verse (2:23) in the Book of Haggai, God declares Haggai to be "a signet ring." Such a title is a symbol of authority, identity, and status within a government or kingdom. A great honor indeed.

Putting the Word to Work

When we are in difficult times, we should ask God to show us what we need to learn from it. Obedience is the key. He wants to bless us. Seek Him and watch!

Remember, it's not just about you. God works in every situation and person to accomplish His plan.

June 24

Your Past Should Not Define Your Future

Today's Bible Reading - Zechariah 1-7

Zechariah 2:1-5 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. 2 So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length." 3 And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, 4 who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. 5 For I,' says the Lord, 'will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.' "

The young prophet Zechariah has a series of visions brought to him by the Lord. Here at the beginning of chapter 2 is one of my favorites in his book. Known as the vision of the measuring line. In this vision, he sees a man walking around the city of Jerusalem with his tape measure, where the old walls used to stand. Know that at this time, the walls of Jerusalem are still in rubble as Nehemiah has not yet come on the scene back in Jerusalem to lead the rebuilding of the walls. So you can imagine a young man, longing for the day that the walls will be rebuilt and the city restored to its former glory.

As they are talking about the measuring on the size and location of the old walls, they are interrupted by another angel who sends him to the young man saying, there is no need to measure where the walls used to be, for Jerusalem will be inhabited as a city without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock, for the Lord will be a wall of fire around her and the glory in her midst. Zechariah is suddenly hit with a powerful encouraging vision of the future. Where God is speaking, because I will be in the midst of Jerusalem, I am the one who will define where the walls will be and by the way, the old walls won't be able to contain what I am going to do, I'm just going to take over and be the walls and place the borders where I see fit.

May God stir in us this same vision. May God be the glory who dwells in our midst, who does not allow us to limit what He can do by simply remembering what He has done, but to look to where He wants to extend the borders and boundaries in our future.

Putting the Word to Work

Are there any things from your past that act as walls limiting what God can do in and through you?

June 25

Pray For Rain

Today's Bible Reading - Zechariah 8-14

Zechariah 10:1 - Ask the Lord for rain In the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, Grass in the field for everyone.

As an agricultural nation, Israel was highly dependent upon the rains to have productive lands. Not necessarily a land with many rivers and streams, etc., but the rainy seasons were absolutely essential. So when you read through the Bible, you see God speaking about “*giving the rain of the land in its season.*” (Deut. 28:12)

The two types of rain often described in the Bible were the “*former rain*” and the “*latter rain.*” The former rains were the rains that would come in the spring, preparing the ground for planting. The Latter rains were the rains that would come to prepare the land for the harvest. I love this phrase written by the prophet Zechariah, “*Ask of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain.*”

May I encourage you today? It's harvest time. Ask the Lord for rain. Ask God to begin to water and soften the hearts of those in your field today, to prepare their hearts to receive from heaven the great gift of salvation, freedom, deliverance. It's time to walk in all the blessings God has in store for us, for the harvest is truly ready, and we are the laborers in the field. And just like the nation of Israel had to trust God to provide the necessary rains so they could bring in a great harvest, it's time to ask God to pour out the rains and go and collect His great harvest.

Putting the Word to Work

Simple, Ask the Lord for rain.

June 26

The Great Day of the Lord

Today's Bible Reading - Book of Malachi

The book of Malachi is rich in its teaching on the way in which a believer should live. It warns us to live a life of personal purity, it tells us God highly esteems the relationship of marriage, it shows us steps to knowing God and His ways. Often the book of Malachi is referred to as the book of tithing because of the passage in Malachi 3:8-12. In this section the prophet compares those that do not bring their tithes into the storehouse to someone who is robbing God. Remember that we cannot give our tithes because they do not belong to us in the first place. We bring our tithes into God's house so that there will be food in His house. We bring our tithe and deposit it in the treasury of God's house for the priest to use for the running of His house. We can give an offering from the remainder of our blessings, but we bring the tithe.

Malachi is rich in teaching and admonition. Chapter 4 refers to "The Great Day of the Lord". The first verse tells of the reward that the proud and those that do wickedly will receive. The prophet then continues with a reminder for us of what is in store for those that "... *fear My name.*" Jesus is coming back with healing in his wings. The righteous shall go out and grow fat like "*stall-fed calves.*" We will trample the wicked under our feet like ashes. He references Elijah the Prophet. In this instance, it refers to the second coming of Jesus, not the appearance of John the Baptist in the New Testament.

One of the most moving parts of this chapter of Malachi is verse 8, "*And He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*" The Lord will reconcile the hearts of the children to their parents and the parents to their children. In this manner He will save the world from a curse that has plagued us for generations.

Malachi has a recurring theme: To offer the Lord less than our best is unworthy of His Holy Name. Everyday, we should start our day with the pledge to offer to God our very best for that day. Our best praise, our best in thought and deed, our best in giving of ourselves and our treasures to further the Kingdom of God. We may slip during the day, but God looks upon the heart, and as long as we keep our hearts right, God's grace will cover the rest.

Putting the Word to Work

Try beginning your day by greeting the Holy Spirit. Thank Him for being with you throughout the day, and pledge Him your best effort to listen and follow whatever He speaks to you.

June 27

Today's Bible Reading - Psalm 1-8

Psalm 1:1-6 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

David beautifully unwraps three keys he discovered to walking in the blessing of the Lord.

First, by *“refusing to walk in the counsel of the ungodly.”* There are many things God instructs us to do that the ungodly do not understand. Yet if we honor God and His Word, there is blessing that awaits. The World says, “live together before you get married, to make sure you are compatible.” God says, get married, then the two become one flesh. Talk about being compatible. A covenant relationship with God’s blessing brings two together at a level unknown or unavailable to those who follow a worldly pattern.

Second. *“nor stands in the path of sinners.”* Keep in mind that to “sin” means to “miss the mark.” To stand in the path of the one who misses the mark, is a picture that says I’m not going to intentionally sin, but I’m going to hang around in close proximity to the ones who do, even though I’m not going to participate, I can just stand around in their path. That’s foolishness my friend. Sure, we need to love people and go into the world to reach the lost, but to “stand,” to hang around in, to intentionally stop our forward progress, to spend time on the path of missing the mark is foolishness. If there is an issue that has been a “besetting sin,” a pattern that you have struggled with, don’t stand around where there is a higher probability of being exposed to temptation.

Third, blessing does not come by *“sitting in the seat of the scornful.”* Be aware of sitting down and being saturated in an environment of scorn or disdain for people. God does not like when there is an environment of disdain for people. God so loved people that He gave His Son to die in our place.

David then goes on to describe the kind of blessed life that exists for the one who avoids those three things, and who delights in the Law of the Lord: 1) He is solid like a tree, planted by rivers of water; 2) Always close to its source of life, flourishing and fruitful; and 3) Prospering in anything he should set his hand to.

Putting the Word to Work

Are any of those 3 areas something you need to address in your own life to avoid ?

June 28

Honest Prayer

Today's Bible Reading - Psalm 9-16

Psalm 13:1 "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?"

I don't know about you, but some days it truly feels like the Lord has forgotten me. Being human, with human emotions, and living in a broken and fallen world, our vision gets cloudy sometimes. You don't get the promotion, inflation is suddenly making paydays feel very far apart, you get a diagnosis you never saw coming. And emotions take over and suddenly the God who felt so close feels like a world away from you.

We see this in the Bible in several places, but to me no one shows the range of human emotions better than David. In Psalms 9-16 you see David completely unfiltered. He brings confusion, frustration, and grief all before the feet of God. In Psalms 13 he even asks the question, *"How long, Lord?"*

That question doesn't sound philosophical or religious, it sounds human. And that is the point. You see what is important is not that he has those emotions, it's what he does with them. He brings them directly to God. He doesn't reroute his pain into silence, bitterness, or distance himself from the Lord. David models that struggling with God is not the same as leaving God. In fact later in Psalm 13, he shows a turning point that doesn't come because his circumstances have improved, but because his focus has. *"But I have trusted in your faithful love..."*

The word *'but'* matters here. Nothing external has changed for David. However, he has remembered who God is, while still feeling his feelings. This is where Psalm 16 completes the thread. *"I keep the Lord in mind always... because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken."*

Faith does not require pretending everything is fine, it requires refusing to disconnect from God in the middle of what isn't.

Putting the Word to Work

Q. What honest prayer do you need to bring to the feet of Jesus?

June 29

The Hope of the Resurrection

Today's Bible Reading - Psalm 17-20

Psalm 17:15 "As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness." With those words, King David echoed what Job declared to his friends: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"

The Rolling Stones bore witness to the futility of life on earth with their 1965 epic hit song "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," echoing King Solomon's plaintive cry: *"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind"* (Ecc. 1:14). Our Declaration of Independence stated plainly that our founders believed that our Creator endowed all of humanity with the right to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." They did not guarantee that our pursuit of happiness would produce happiness. In fact, King Solomon admitted that the endless pursuit of happiness was designed by God to humble humanity: *"This burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised"* (Ecc. 1:13). The apostle Paul explained: *"For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope."* (Rom. 8:22-24).

Our hope is that one day our physical bodies will be resurrected. Paul explained in detail: *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'"* (I Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54).

As we wait for that glorious day and the total satisfaction our own bodily resurrection will bring, may we heed the words the apostle John wrote: *"And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."* (I John 3:3).

Putting the Word to work:

Q: Describe what your pursuit of happiness has produced:

Q: Describe how your hope of your resurrection has purified you:

June 30

The Crucifixion

Today's Reading Assignment - Psalms 21-25

Psalm 22:30-31 "A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this."

Psalm 22 is a Psalm of prophecy hundreds of years before He would come, describing how the Messiah would suffer and die. It included the method of crucifixion by which Jesus died that had not been invented at that time. David paints a hauntingly vivid picture of the Cross of Calvary and the suffering and redemption that would unfold.

Matthew 27 tells what the world thought He was worth. Thirty (30) pieces of silver. He was ridiculed and spit upon. Let that God rescue you! Verse 8: "Let Him deliver Him since He delights in Him." It has been said that mankind would betray Him again for even less than thirty pieces of silver. In today's culture they would even drive in the nails that held him. For those who have turned away from God after having a 'knowing' relationship with Him, Hebrews 6:4-6 says, *"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted the heavenly gift and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 If they fall away, they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."*

Judas determined his own judgment when he took his own life. God didn't do it. Would the outcome have been the same if Judas had been truly repentant? I believe God already knew how it would end for him. I believe the ones who sell Him out today never "knew" Him and the ones who claim to 'know' Him, yet turn away from Him, never experienced the "real Savior."

I've served God for 71 years and I still am getting to know my Savior. He is so vast. He's the beginning and the end. We can't even grasp the real meaning of that and I believe we were never meant to, so we could keep singing, "I want to know you more!"

Putting the Word to Work

When He was being crucified, we were on His mind! In what ways are you getting to know Him?

What new revelation have you received about Him?

Share your revelation with someone who needs to hear it. Yes?

***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

Special thank you to the following devotional contributors:

Rachael Burke
 Pastor Jeff Byars
 Candi Kooken
 Jeanie Dowdy
 Marilyn Downs
 Pastor Justin Denney
 Camile Ghent
 Ruth Herrington
 Steven Huft
 Gordon Merwin
 Pastor Denny Stahl
 Pastor Brian Vaughn
 Pastor Jennifer Vaughn
 Pastor John Zumwalt
 Pastor Kami Zumwalt

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 - Family dinner at 5:30
	6:30 pm - Wednesday Worship Experience
Thursday	9 am - Prayer meeting
Friday	7 pm - Prayer meeting
Saturday	6 pm - Prayer Meeting

You can contact us in the following ways:

Location:	376 E. 2nd Ave in Sutherlin, OR. 97479
Phone:	541-459-2303
Email:	admin@thefathershouseint.org
Mailing:	P.O. Box 427, Sutherlin, OR. 97479
Website:	thefathershouseint.org