



**I CHOOSE  
YOU!**

# **DAILY STUDY GUIDE**



**AUG-SEPT  
2025**

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# Introduction

## Service times

Saturday night: 5:30pm

Sunday Morning: 10:30am

Sunday morning Bible study: 9:30am

Watch Service the Followi8ng Wek Via: App, Website, or YouTube

## Christian Education for Our Kids

Promiseland: Sunday 10:30am

Youth Sunday School: 10:30am 6<sup>th</sup> and up

## Office Hours

### Closed Friday – Monday

Tuesday and Thursday 10am – 4pm

Wednesday 1pm & 2pm – 4pm

Do You have questions about God, the Bible, church? How about a question about our current series? Text your question in to 760-301-4840 and we may be able to answer them during our next message. You can even text in during our Saturday night service and we will answer them.

We provide free counselling: marriage, family, financial, and pre-marital, Homeless assistance, fuel cards, and family support. Please contact our office at 760-384-3333 for any questions.

## Week 1



August 11<sup>th</sup>– August 16<sup>th</sup>

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [1 John 4:1-6](#), [Acts 17:11](#)

### Going Deeper:

Just about everyone is familiar with the very popular series about Jesus and His disciples, "The Chosen". It is a series about the life of Jesus and the disciples, but not in the traditional sense. Producer, Dallas Jenkins, approaches this daunting task from the perspective of the context, culture, personality, and plausible backstory of many of the people in and around Jesus during His earthly ministry. The focus tends more on the disciples – their personalities, interpersonal relationships, faults, and lack of understanding of Jesus' teachings. It is not orthodox, to say the least, and opinions are divided... some find they can relate to the disciples and feel connected with Jesus, and that the series has motivated them to read their Bible or explore Christianity, while others adamantly oppose it due to the creative liberty taken to fill in some gaps and that Jesus is not portrayed accurately.

As a church, we are neither promoting nor forbidding The Chosen, whether you follow the series or not, we are encouraging people to seek the truth. So, whatever your opinion, this series is simply meant to help us learn to search the scriptures for truth and learn more about the disciples and why Jesus chose them – what made them special? God's purpose in using flawed and sinful humans to carry out His plan of redemption and the fact He is still using flawed and sinful people.

As we begin, what do today's passages teach about searching the scriptures and the reason for it?

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In all cases, Christians should always go to the Bible to test what they read, hear, and see. Sadly, in the church world, there have been many times a well-known and influential pastor, worship leader, or author has been found guilty of inappropriate or illegal behavior. This can be devastating to individuals as well as Christianity as a whole. The reason for testing the spirits as well as searching the scriptures (*by the way, it's impossible to test the spirits if we are not searching the scriptures – without the Bible we have no way of knowing the truth from our own thoughts or feelings*) is not only for our protection but the protection of the church as a whole. Do you read Christian books? Do you listen to other pastors and teachers on YouTube or podcasts? How do you know if they are biblically solid?

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If you discover that they are teaching bad doctrine, do you warn others or keep it to yourself? Why/why not?

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If you are watching the series, what do you like about it?

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What don't you like about it?

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Why?

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If you are not watching the series, what is the reason?

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Either way, do you have biblical confirmation?

**What's the Main Point?**

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## Personal Application:

Like it or not, The Chosen can be a powerful evangelistic tool, opening doors to conversations with people in a world that seems closed to Jesus. Have you experienced this? If you haven't, how would you use it given the opportunity?

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Much of our challenge is making assumptions... we make assumptions about people, situations, events, and many other things all the time. We live in a world that formulates opinions based on headlines and rhetoric rather than facts, and this is definitely true in the church. What are some things, good or bad, you have heard about The Chosen, Dallas Jenkins, or the cast?

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Did you fact check them? What were your sources? What do you know, or think you know, about Dallas Jenkins? Whatever you may have heard, we must always remember that even a person with good intentions can be off the mark, and conversely, God can work through people with bad or misdirected intentions. There are a LOT of videos on YouTube to wade through, but here are a couple of Dallas... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WINe2yAIA98> (Dallas Jenkins Testimony), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpjrUzfkfSo>, (Interview with Jordan B. Peterson from the Daily Wire on why the Chosen resonates with people so much ). Remember, we are NOT trying to sway you one way or another, just encouraging taking steps to do research.

Tuesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [Romans 5:6-21](#)



## Going Deeper:

To begin, we must lay the groundwork to get us to Jesus choosing His disciples, and it starts with God's plan to save the world from eternal death. If we disconnect Jesus from this plan of redemption and how it was worked out through His ministry and the on-going work of His disciples, we have reduced Jesus to nothing more than a good teacher.

In verses 6-11, when did Christ die?

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Were there any requirements on humanity's part? What did Jesus' death do for our relationship to God?

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In his letter to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul is explaining the "backstory" of how we got to the place of being enemies of God. How does he explain this in verse 12?

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It may be difficult to understand or even seem unfair that all of humanity is condemned because of the bad choice of one man thousands of years ago, but let's look at it this way... when a child is born, they did not make that choice, yet once they are born into a family, everything about that family is part of who they are. If the family has a history of bad choices, the child has a growing chance of doing the same or, at the very least, associated with them. The child also represents the family, but if this child chooses to do things differently, making good choices, not only do they change the trajectory of their own life but that of their children. It is this way for us... we didn't choose to be born with a death penalty from one man's sin, but once we know the truth we can choose a different trajectory. God, through Jesus, gives us that ability. Let's continue with this example...

In verses 13 and 20, what was given and what was it for?

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When a child is born, do parents hand them a rule book in the hospital to tell them what to do and not do? Of course not! What is the natural flow of rules, boundaries and consequences of disobedience?

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Under normal, or preferred circumstances, parents will train children obedience and the consequences of disobedience as well as increasing rules or boundaries come as a result. Will a child naturally know right from wrong if they are never taught? **What** teaches them?

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So it is with us. Although we do have an internal compass, when sin is practiced, we don't always follow it. In order for us to know when we are sinning, God gave the law (of Moses, Ten Commandments). The law can guide but it cannot save, so God's plan to offer forgiveness and eternity in heaven had to come from another source. Who was that source and what was the result (Vs. 15-21)?

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**What's the Main Point?**

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**Personal Application:**

Few of us would choose to be reconciled to someone we considered an enemy let alone make a sacrifice for them. Yet God, out of His immeasurable love for us chose to do this, full well knowing many will reject His offer. Jesus chose to go to the cross knowing many would reject His sacrifice, including the enemy in His own group of disciples! How hard do you think that was for Him? The great news is that although all of humanity has a death sentence because of one man's sin, all of humanity can choose a life sentence through one man's sacrifice! Which do you choose?

Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 3

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [Acts 17:16-34](#)

### Going Deeper:

Living in the age of information and access to it has its benefits and drawbacks. How has the increase of knowledge and access to it through the internet and other sources improved your life?

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How has it negatively impacted your life?

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How has it changed the way people learn and make decisions?

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The internet is not inherently evil, but it can be used for evil just as it can be used for good – it all comes down to how we choose to use it.

In biblical times, information was passed on through oral tradition, letters, teachers, and philosophers and it took time. In the days of the apostle Paul, people loved information and learning as well and as he traveled from Berea, he stopped in Athens. While there, what did he notice about the city in verses 16-21?

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How does he describe the people and what they liked to do?

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What did it prompt him to do?

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What was Paul invited to do?

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In the remainder of this passage, how did Paul address the people?

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In this section, it is not only important to look at WHAT Paul told them but HOW he spoke to them. What did Paul specifically address in verse 22?

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How do you think this could engage his audience?

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What did he then tell them in verse 23?

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Who does he introduce them to in verse 24?

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What does he then explain in verses 25-28?

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This portion of scripture is one of the best models of evangelism using current culture to connect with our audience. Paul didn't immediately confront these people to tell them they were going to hell, he used what he saw of their culture to start a conversation. Paul sees the people are very religious (or in today's terms, spiritual) by the vast number of statues and shrines to the gods they worshipped. When he points to the fact that the "unknown" God they included didn't live in temples made with human hands, or that he needed anything from them was pointing to the truth that their gods were not all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present. If you have studied Greek and Roman mythology you quickly learn that these pagan gods are limited in power and represent different aspects of life (for more on this: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Greek-gods-in-the-Bible.html>, and <https://greekgodsandgoddesses.net/greek-vs-roman-gods/>). Not only did Paul highlight how the one true God was the God they were really looking for, he also used their own poetry to make his point (verse 28: *Probably from Epimenides of Crete and Aratus's poem "Phainomena"*).

What Paul did in a very short time was get the people interested in what he was teaching for the purpose of preaching the Gospel. How did the people respond to this in verses 32-34?

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When we talk to others about Christ, we may not catch everyone, but as you can see, we can make a lasting difference for some!

Thursday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [1 Corinthians 9:1-27](#)

Going Deeper:

In this chapter, Paul is addressing the fact that there were those who questioned his authority and apostleship and this was something he frequently had to deal with. Even in our own day, it is common for people to place assumptions on Christians regarding how they should live and act... basically stereotypes. What are some stereotypes placed on Christians and the church?

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How do you think church roles – staff, pastors, and leadership should be compensated for their work?

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In this passage, Paul was also pointing out that he was not like the other “super apostles” or false teachers that placed themselves above Paul and were motivated by greed – in fact, greed was one of the most obvious traits of a false teacher and the New Testament is filled with warnings about them.

His point in this chapter is that as an apostle he shared the same rights as any other person... to be married, to work, to be compensated for his work, etc. However, he also made certain he was not a burden financially or otherwise to anyone thereby bringing shame to the Lord so he supported himself as a tent maker ([Acts 18:1-3](#)). Before his conversion to Christianity, Paul was a leading Pharisee and enjoyed the status that came with that, but when Jesus transformed him, he left all of that behind ([Philippians 3:13](#)). His heart was completely sold out for Christ and his only goal became winning others to Christ through the Gospel. His passion behind this was so powerful he was willing to do whatever it took. In verses 19-23, how did he demonstrate this?

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How does this work together with yesterday's study?

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### **What is the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

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In many crime show storylines you will see a detective on a case who goes undercover and takes on the look and actions of a criminal to catch the suspect – even to the point of doing illegal or harmful activities to not blow their cover. What Paul says of himself in verses 19-23 are another powerful example of what we can do to witness to people, however, there must be a line drawn for our own safety. If we're not careful, the "becoming all things to all people" can get us into trouble if taken too far – like the detective, we may need to be able to connect with people from different walks of life, but we should never cross the line into sin! Just as Paul demonstrated in yesterday's study, the ability to use cultural context, we can also minister to people very different from ourselves... but how? How can you minister to someone who has had very different experiences than you? This is where it can get muddy – it is often thought/taught a person who has never experienced addiction, been physically abused, suffered with anxiety or depression, etc. can't counsel someone who has. Is this true? If we are to help others biblically, then does that make the Bible the counselor? If Jesus is the answer and we know He was fully human and tempted in every way we are ([Hebrews 4:15](#)) yet without sin, would that make Him the best counselor? Although it can be helpful to be able to empathize with someone in a specific way, the fact is we can all identify with addiction to sin, pain, and hurts from others and times of emotional distress and that qualifies us to show the healing power of Christ to those who need Him.

Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 5

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

**Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1**

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [Hebrews 5:11-14](#) – [Hebrews 6:1-8](#)

### Going Deeper:

Dallas Jenkins goal for The Chosen is to bring the gospel to people in a new way and as we already stated, many people not only have reported that their faith has deepened through watching the series but that some have also reported coming to saving faith through the show. However, there still remains a good portion who doubt this or simply are concerned with how the show portrays Jesus and the disciples. It is said, God can draw a straight line with a crooked stick, and we certainly have many examples of that in the Bible... Moses, David, the disciples, us!

For those who may have come to saving faith through The Chosen, or any other powerful teaching they have heard or watched, we must be sure our faith is genuine and rooted in the real Jesus and not a representation of Jesus. It is very common for an emotionally driven salvation to occur at any time, such as painful circumstances, but it is especially common through things like Christian conferences or gatherings – think of Billy Graham, Greg Laurie Harvest Crusades, Asbury revival. This is not to say that all people who became Christian through events like these are not really saved, but that we must examine our faith and move from emotionally driven faith to a grounded and mature faith. We find this instruction in today's reading – in Hebrews 5, how is this described?

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Who is "solid food" for and how is it attained?

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In Hebrews 6, what is the reason for this instruction?

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What dangerous possibilities exist for the person who is not truly saved?

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This brings up the age-old discussion of can a person lose their salvation? Based on these verses and [Hebrews 10:26-31](#), what do you think?

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It is often noted in the Christian community that if a person were to walk away from their faith that they were never truly saved... is this true? Although this is a great conversation, we don't have time to fully explore it here, however, looking at the scripture from today, it is clear that we can put ourselves in a very dangerous position if our salvation never matures from infancy. Just like infants move from living on milk alone to eating solid food, we can't stop at the first experience with Jesus and neglect moving into a mature and solid relationship so we can teach others. If a person were to never eat solid food but continue drinking milk, they would become malnourished and fail to thrive and so many people who accept Jesus as their Savior do this – they try to live on milk alone.

### **What is the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

It may be easy to misunderstand that the apostle Paul has given Christians a loophole in today's passage – especially chapter 5 verse 14. Do you view yourself as a “mature” Christian? Why/why not?

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What makes a Christian mature? Is it knowledge or familiarity of scripture? Is it consistent church attendance? Is the length of time a person has been a Christian? Believe it or not, [Google AI](#) has a good explanation - simply go to Google and ask, “what defines a Christian as mature?” Each characteristic noted is found in mature believers – not perfection but striving for. When it comes to the mature Christian, yes it does include knowledge of the scripture, but also personal application – consistent church attendance, but for the purpose of worship, fellowship, and serving. This can happen with a person who has only been a Christian for a few months, so age and length



of time isn't the key, but a growing and abiding love and faithful obedience. How are you doing in this? Go to the Google search and note if there is anything missing in your faith life.

Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Today's Reading: [Matthew 3:1-12](#)

Going Deeper:

Can you imagine what it would be like to know you had been chosen by the God of Israel to prepare the way for the Messiah to come? [Isaiah 40:3](#) prophesied of John several hundred years earlier and then his father received the news when he was visited by an angel of the Lord ([Luke 1:5-17](#)) telling him that he and his wife would have a son who would be "great in the sight of the Lord". That's not a normal birth announcement! John and his parents were chosen for this incredible gift – but why? Read Luke 1:6 and note what is said about them.

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Walking blamelessly before the Lord does not mean they were sinless, it means they were faithful and obedient to the Commandments, but for the right reason – love. Anyone can be outwardly obedient while inwardly rebellious or lacking in love for God – and this was John's point in today's reading. In verses 7-8, who came to John and what did he say to them?

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The Pharisees and Sadducees were meticulous about keeping the law of Moses – great at looking good on the outside - but that's often where it ended. There were those who truly loved the Lord,

but many were more concerned with legalism and status, so when John appears on scene and calls them out, it wasn't taken well.

John's baptism was water baptism, as a symbol of being washed clean and repentance of sin – repentance is key. What does John mean to “bear fruit in keeping with repentance”?

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Turn to [Luke 3:10-14](#), what examples does John give?

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This is not an exhaustive list of what it means to have a life of repentance there is more to it. The word repentance, simply put, means “a change of mind” but it is more an entirely new way of thinking – especially about who we are. Josephus, in his book of Antiquities explains it this way, *“especially the change of mind of those who have begun to abhor their errors and misdeeds, and have determined to enter upon a better course of life, so that it embraces both a recognition of sin and sorrow for it and hearty amendment, the tokens and effects of which are good deeds”*. The key word here is *abhor*... when we come to that place where not only do we recognize we are a sinner, but that we are devastated, ashamed, and broken hearted by our sin. It is so painful to think of that it can cause a physical response, and our only option is to fall to our knees before God. However, we must be careful to not mistake good deeds as payment for our sins – only Christ can do that and any good deeds we do afterward is the result of a grateful heart.

John's purpose and calling was clear, yet many Christians spend their entire lives waiting for their “calling” and never truly fulfill the purposes for which God made them. In [Ephesians 2:10](#), what are we created for?

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When was this decision made?

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Does this mean that you were chosen from the foundation of the world for a purpose?

**What is the Main Point?**

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### Personal Application:

Between yesterdays and today's study, it should be clear that every person who chooses to repent and follow Christ has been chosen for something great in this world. Our problem is how we view what that great something is! Is preaching at a church greater than raising godly children? Is building houses in Mexico greater than demonstrating love, patience, and kindness to a grumpy neighbor? When it comes to repentance and purpose, it must permeate every area of our life – private thoughts, words, actions, motives, worldview, goals, marriages, children... you get the picture. Is there any area of your life that you haven't repented of sin? If you are Christian, you have been chosen for good works in each of these areas – how are you practicing this?

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## Week 2



August 18<sup>th</sup> – August 23<sup>rd</sup>

Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Monday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

**Memory Verse: Luke 9:23**

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

**Today's Reading: [Luke 9:23-26](#)**

### Going Deeper:

The title "Christian" was first mentioned in the book of Acts ([Acts 11:26](#)) after Jesus had been crucified and resurrected. The book of Acts is a record of the acts of the disciples, or what we know as the first century church, but up to this point, the term disciple or follower of Christ was how people were identified. Unfortunately, in our day and age, the term Christian has lost its uniqueness because so many have distorted what it takes and what it means to be a Christian. In the Greek, Christian is *Christianos* and simply means *a follower of Christ*.

This week we will spend time learning what it means and what it takes to follow Jesus... *really* follow Jesus, not just in name but in reality. Jesus' invitation to His listeners is not terribly appealing! He is very clear what it will cost a person to join with Him – in today's reading, what does He state we must do to follow Him?

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The wording in verse 23 is interesting – Jesus says if anyone would "come after" Him – the meaning here denotes a person following behind Him as He goes, then denial of self, taking up the cross, and then following. The word "follow" means to join Him – so we must be careful to understand that there's a difference between being a follower OF Christ and one who just follows Him around. It is also worth noting that in many cases (as we will see in the following days) that Jesus often taught what a person must give up or let go of to follow Him, yet today He places a challenge in front of us... picking up the cross.

If you've ever had your arms full - carrying groceries into the house or suitcases into your hotel room – and your phone rings or you need the key to open the door, what do you need to do? It is not possible to dig your keys out of your purse or pocket unless you set everything down. Jesus uses this

metaphor to help us understand that not only is taking up our cross needed to follow Him, but we can't pick it up unless we've first emptied our arms of whatever we're carrying. This denial of self is where the line is drawn and many try to hang on to their personal desires and current lifestyle, giving up nothing, while trying to add Jesus into it.

Being a disciple of Jesus means a crucified life ([Galatians 2:20](#)) and when Jesus told the crowds they must take up their cross, they knew exactly what He meant. Roman crucifixion was a well known and practiced death sentence. Not only was it gruesome but the person to be crucified had to carry the very cross they were to die on... that's like building your own electric chair! Being a real Christian IS a death sentence – death to self – selfishness, pride, anger, lust, greed, jealousy, apathy, etc. Are you willing?

### What is the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

This week you will be challenged to examine and identify what you are and are not willing to give up to become a true disciple or follower of Christ. If you are Christian, take some time to search your heart for anything you might be holding onto. If you haven't yet made the decision to follow Jesus, write any questions you may have or what you find difficult in this.

Tuesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

### Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Today's Reading: [John 6:35-70](#)

## Going Deeper:

Have you ever heard a story that was so outrageous that you had a hard time believing it was true? Most of us have and we have the choice of believing, not believing, or living somewhere in between. During Jesus' earthly ministry, He wasn't concerned about being liked or popular, but believed, no matter how difficult it was to understand what He was saying.

Shortly after Jesus miraculously fed the 5,000 (realistically 10-15 thousand including women and children), He crossed over to the other side of the sea of Galilee. The people He fed were looking for Him and upon discovering He went to the other side, they followed Him there. Jesus knew their hearts and that they weren't following Him to know Him but to get more food, and so He confronts the people. Before we become too judgmental, consider the fact that many of the people who were there struggled to put food on the table. Chances are we know people who battle this today – trying to make ends meet and feed their family - some not even having enough money at the end of the month to buy food for their children. It's easy to see why the people were so shortsighted and focused on immediate needs.

Jesus' response to them, "... *Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 6:26*", was not a coldhearted response but a call to understand their true need *"Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal. Vs 27"*. In verse 35 of today's reading, what does Jesus say of Himself?

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Do you think the people understood what He meant? If you were there, do you think you would have understood? What did Jesus want the people to believe in verse 40?

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How did the Jews respond to Him?

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What was the hard saying in verses 51-58?

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What was the result of this teaching in verse 66?

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Jesus often used the circumstances in front of Him to teach people the truths of God – in this case, bread. Was He really talking about literal bread? In the Old Testament, when Moses led the people out of Egypt God provided food for them in the desert... it was called manna and it came down from heaven ([Exodus 16:4](#)), but here Jesus is trying to teach them that their real need isn't physical hunger but spiritual hunger that can only be fulfilled by Him - the Bread of Life – true satisfaction! Of course Jesus did not mean they literally needed to eat His flesh and drink His blood, but that it would be through the sacrifice of His flesh and the spilling of His blood that they could be saved. One of the obstacles for the Jews in this was that God was clear about not eating human flesh or drinking any blood, so His statement not only confused but offended them. Yet in a short time, Jesus would be eating His last Passover supper with His disciples... turn to [Matthew 26:26-28](#), what does Jesus call His body and blood here?

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Many of Jesus' disciples left because His teachings were too difficult to understand. Belief doesn't always mean we will understand the lesson, at least in the moment, but it will come through faith. The twelve likely didn't understand yet none but Peter seemed to understand what was necessary – what was it?

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Chances are they wouldn't put two and two together until that night of the first communion, and even then, it probably wasn't a complete understanding. But that's often how Christianity works – as we are faithful, more is revealed, and we need to be ok with this.

### What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

In verse 70, what did Jesus tell His disciples?

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Every Christian has been chosen with a purpose and role in God's kingdom. Yet we can go through life never fulfilling that purpose due to lack of understanding or focusing on what's right in front of us. Do your immediate or physical needs ever hinder your pursuit of spiritual fulfillment? Does a lack of understanding ever hinder your faith in God or belief in His words? What can you do to practice trust in Jesus' words?



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How can you look beyond the temporal into the eternal?

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Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 3

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

**Memory Verse: Luke 9:23**

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

**Today's Reading:** [Luke 9:57-62](#)

**Going Deeper:**

It is not a uncommon desire to "get things in order" before we decide to make a full commitment to following Jesus. What are some things, goals, or situations people may want to accomplish before making this commitment?

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Have you ever done this? Why do you think people want to do this?

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There is a strange phenomena that once we become a Christian all our plans disappear or that we will no longer have fun or be able to accomplish any goals – but that couldn't be further from the truth! Yes God may have plans for us we didn't expect, and our desire may change to reflect His more, but we don't stop living!

In today's passage, Jesus is again pointing out some of the challenges we face and the sacrifice it takes to be His disciple. To the man in verse 57, what did Jesus tell him in verse 58?

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Much of Jesus' ministry included traveling and staying in other's homes or setting up camp. He isn't necessarily saying He had nowhere to stay but that He (and we) are temporary citizens in this world, and we shouldn't become attached to it. How do you view this?

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Take a moment and examine if you are attached to this world and your possessions.

In the remaining verses, what did the two men want to do before following Jesus?

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What was Jesus' response?

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These two statements are very interesting... to the one who wanted to bury his father, Jesus didn't prohibit him from doing this but rather redirected his focus. As to the one who wanted to say goodbye to his family, Jesus didn't prohibit him either but called attention to and warned that we can be tempted to "look back" or miss certain people or things in our life to the detriment of our faith. The example of the plow was one the people would have understood. When plowing a field with oxen, the plow must be driven or held straight otherwise the ox will wander all over potentially causing damage.

His passage is not saying that our family is not important but that there will be times we will be required to make some very hard choices. Following Jesus may mean we have to choose Him or family, especially if it's unbelieving family. In another encounter, Jesus taught the importance of how we are to view this, turn to [Matthew 12:46-50](#), what takes place in these verses?

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Who does Jesus say is His mother and brothers?

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Again this is not a rejection of the importance of biological family but the new family we have in Christ and that Christians are to stay focused on the mission – sharing the Gospel.

**What's the Main Point?**

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### Personal Application:

We may be tempted to think that we can be Christian while waiting or delaying a full commitment to Him in order to accomplish our goals first. If this is done, we are shortchanging ourselves from the blessing of God's direction and wisdom in each thing/area we are working toward! Do you want God to guide you in the process of earning a degree or after? Do you want God to guide you in the process of looking toward marriage or after? Do you want God to guide in the decision to buy a home or after? To "add" God after is a lot like trying to add an important ingredient after the cake is baked! If you are in the process of making some life altering choices, how can you make sure you are pursuing and listening for God?

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If you have chosen a full commitment to follow Christ, how has it changed your perspective of life and relationships?

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If you haven't yet made this decision, what can/should you do to take that leap of faith?

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If you or someone you know is struggling in this, we are here to help. You can make an appointment by calling the office at 760-384-3333 Tues – Thurs, 10a-4pm.

Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

## Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

### Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Today's Reading: [Matthew 19:16-30](#)

### Going Deeper:

Today is yet another lesson in priorities and a true commitment to follow Christ. A rich young ruler asks Jesus a question... what was it?

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In verses 17-20, what does Jesus tell him?

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What was the young ruler doing that was good?

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What very wise question does the ruler ask Jesus at the end of verse 20?

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This was the perfect question! However, he wasn't prepared for what Jesus was about to tell him. What did Jesus tell him to do in verse 21?

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How did the ruler respond in verse 22?

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Along with life goals, plans, and family or friends, money can be one of the greatest obstacles to real faith. In the following verses, what is the conversation between Jesus and the disciples?

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What does Jesus say about money?

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The Bible warns us in several places about this battle – a person can’t serve two masters, God and money for he will hate one and love the other ([Matthew 6:24](#)). Additionally, the apostle Paul teaches us that it is the love of money that is the root of all kinds of evil ([1 Timothy 6:10](#)) – love of money and the focused pursuit of it, status, and the sin of never being satisfied has cause damage to marriages, families, and our relationship with God. When money, possessions, and status become our god, can we be a true follower of Christ?

What is the Main Point?

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Personal Application:

Do you have the courage to ask Jesus, “what do I still lack?” When God answers you, will you obey and follow? If you are unwilling, what does this mean for your faith and eternal future?

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If you *are* willing, what does this mean for your faith and eternal future?

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Friday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

Day 5

As you begin today’s study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Luke 9:23

And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Today’s Reading: [Mark 5:1-20](#)

## Going Deeper:

Drive around any city, including Ridgecrest, and you will quickly find someone who is homeless or appears homeless. Some stand on street corners holding signs asking for help but there are those who are screaming at no one, flailing their arms, dirty and disheveled and we often avoid eye contact with them. The assumption is that it is a result of years of drug abuse or mental health disorders and because we see them so often, they become part of the scenery, and we get used to their presence. In today's passage, how is the demon possessed man described?

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Based on this passage, do you think the town's people got used to his presence? When we feel helpless to change a person's situation we simply fall back on a "as long as they're not hurting anyone" position and go about our business. But they are hurting...

Jesus knew this man needed healing and only He could do it. However, did you notice the man didn't ask to be healed? How did this encounter between Jesus and the demonic go?

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Why do you think Jesus asked his name?

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It is important for us to know that Jesus likely knew very well who the demons were but needed to reveal to His disciples as well as the onlookers the severe nature of the situation - that they weren't simply dealing with a crazy person. When the man was found healed, how did the town's people respond?

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Why in the world would they be afraid of this wonderful miracle?

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It is said that we fear what we don't understand – and that can be true, even what we don't understand is wonderful and miraculous. There have been many people who have been healed of addictions and sinful lifestyles through the healing power of Christ who are then rejected by friends and family – why does that happen?

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The Bible tells us that people love the darkness rather than the light and that light exposes darkness ([John 3:19](#), [Ephesians 5:13](#)), so it can be that the light in a person transformed by Christ makes them uncomfortable. Sadly, many find it easier to be around a person who is trapped in sinful living than one who has been freed.

When the man (you notice we are never told his actual name) was freed from the demons, what did he want to do (vs 18)?

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What a beautiful transformation! When he was possessed by multiple demons, he was compelled to bow to Christ knowing His authority but feared Him and wanted to be left alone. Now he is compelled to bow before Christ out of love and a grateful heart and wants to stay with Him. It is possible he simply wanted to leave the place that reminded him of his torment, but it is also possible he clung to Jesus out of fear the demons would come back. What does Jesus tell him to do?

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One of the most deadly things to a new Christian is to do nothing. Not only did the people of this man's town need to hear the Gospel, HE needed a mission after such a dramatic change. Think about how he needed to rebuild his life – if he didn't have direction, he could wander and even fall back into old ways ([Luke 11:24-26](#)). In verse 20, what impact did this man have on those he told about Jesus and what He did for him?

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### What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

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It is easy to see why this man would want to follow and stay with Jesus. Often when we become Christian, we want to stay close to the person who led us to Christ out of a sense of security or safety. Who was a vital part of the process of your salvation?

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There can also be many people involved but once we have become “saved” there is more to do – learn and grow – and that process might also include a few people. God's plan for each person is different – some are meant to stay where they are and tell others about Christ – others are meant

to go elsewhere to tell others about Him. Either way, following Jesus means we must know our mission – go and tell people all He has don't for you.

Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

**Memory Verse: Luke 9:23**

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

**Today's Reading:** [Matthew 7:24-29](#) – [Matthew 8:1](#)

**Going Deeper:**

Following Jesus consists of two main ingredients... hearing AND doing.

As you read today's verses, put yourself in the moment. Jesus is finishing what is known as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and the greatest sermon ever given. In the Jewish culture it was common for Jewish rabbis to preach and teach the scriptures openly, often quoting other notable rabbis they had learned from. But Jesus was different – so different that enormous crowds were following Him everywhere to hear and see Him. According to today's verses, what made His teachings so different?

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Jesus taught with authority... because He HAS authority! He wasn't changing scripture but taught the true meaning of God's word and He taught all who were willing to hear. But not all those who hear, DO. Turn to [James 1:22-25](#) and [James 2:14-26](#), here, Jesus' half-brother James has much to say about this. What does he say about the need to act upon what we hear?

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For all the people who followed Jesus around to hear His teachings, very few actually followed Him. We are reminded from day one that the word "follow" means to join Him in what He is doing. This



joining requires setting down our lives and taking up our cross daily – so faith in Christ and following Him is active not passive. According to James, if a person says they are Christian but does not demonstrate through works (serving God and others) their faith is dead. Think of it this way... if a person goes to school to become a chef, but never works in a restaurant are they really a chef? If a person gets a degree in criminal law but never has clients or goes to court, are they really a lawyer? Our world is bent on titles... whether the title is for work, church or even a disease, but titles are pointless unless there is the practical use and evidence.

### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

Hopefully we have learned this week there is a difference between following Jesus around and following Jesus. It often requires some hard choices and sacrifice, and we have been encouraged to take a good look at where we stand in this. Today your challenge is to determine whether you are a hearer only or also a doer. Is your faith active or passive? Can people tell you are Christian without you having to say anything?

## Week 3



August 25<sup>th</sup> – August 30<sup>th</sup>

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Today's Reading: [1 Corinthians 1:18-31](#)

### Going Deeper:

When the apostle Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth, the city had a rich and well known history and reputation. It was a prosperous city known for business and athletics (every two years holding the Isthmian Games), pottery, and what was called "Corinthian brass"; – a mixture of gold, silver, and copper. It was also known for its worship of Greek gods and goddesses, think Poseidon, Hermes, Aphrodite... but Corinth was most noted for its sexual immorality and partying. The term, *Korinthiazomai*, was often used to describe a person and the word literally means to be sexually out of control! Although Corinth was a bustling city of commerce and intellect, it was morally corrupt.

This environment and way of life was causing conflict and division in the church, so Paul writes this letter to instruct and encourage these new Christians who were influencing and being influenced by the culture around them. Because many of them came from a religious system of multiple gods and goddesses, some of the new Christians took the habit of pledging allegiance to a particular apostle of Christ (see [1 Corinthians 1:12](#)) "following" this one or that one.

If you think about it, we are not so different today. Our nation is prosperous and filled with all kinds of industry. We have the arts, science, top educational institutions, medicine, religious variety, and philosophy – yet for all that, we are as morally corrupt as the Corinthians were. Spending a lifetime shaped and influenced by our current culture can make it difficult to see the Cross of Christ, and in the same way the Christians of Corinth chose certain apostles to follow, many Christians today do the same thing... following a famous or charismatic preacher. What is the danger of doing this?

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As you probably noted, placing our faith in a pastor or teacher makes them god and those who follow prone to false teaching.

Paul teaches us who, what, and why God chose the Cross for salvation. In today's reading, why did God choose the Cross?

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How do some people respond to it?

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Who did God choose to preach the Gospel?

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Why did He choose this path?

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### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

God has done all He can to simplify the message of the Cross, but its simplicity has become a stumbling block to those who trust in works, knowledge, or wisdom for salvation. This doesn't mean we must dump our brains out to follow Jesus, but that it is not by human knowledge or effort that we are saved. Once we come to saving faith in Christ, knowledge and wisdom, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can help us understand the things of God. Have you ever tried to rely on knowledge or wisdom for salvation? If you have, has it ever become a hinderance? In what way?

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In our culture this would be called, "putting the cart before the horse". Are there any other things of this world that are a hinderance or distraction to truly following Jesus? This week we will get to know some of Jesus followers, and you will notice they were all very real people with real differences and real issues. They were not highly educated people but normal working folks from a variety of places. If you have been watching The Chosen series, you have seen how these differences impacted their relationships with each other as well as Christ and how they grew into a diverse family.

Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Today's Reading: [Matthew 4:18-22](#), [Luke 5:1-10](#)

### Going Deeper:

What we know of the disciples of Jesus is taken from documented events in the Bible as well as other hints and clues as we walk with them through the gospels. However, in many cases what we know is relatively little. Why do you think the gospel writers left out so much of themselves?

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The answer may be a little too obvious – the gospels are about Jesus and His ministry – but God does want us to know something of the men and women chosen to be His disciples so Christians today and throughout history could have hope in knowing God uses imperfect people for the greatest mission of all time!

As you read through today's passages, who did Jesus first call to follow Him?

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What were they doing?

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What was their response?

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At first glance it may appear that this was the first time Simon (Peter), his brother Andrew, and James and John ever heard or met Jesus, but this would be an incorrect assumption – turn to [John 1:35-42](#), in this passage we come upon John the Baptist who also had followers. What did he exclaim in verse 36?

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Who was one of the followers mentioned in verse 41?

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Who did he go get in verse 42?

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We see that Andrew and Peter were both versed in the scriptures and prophecy of the coming Messiah. Going back to today’s scripture in Matthew and Luke, these four men had heard about Jesus and when invited to follow Him, they did. Was there any hesitancy in following Jesus? What kind of faith and courage do you think it took for them to do this?

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Do you have this kind of faith and courage?

There are a couple of things to consider here. First, we must again deal with the fact that at first glance it seems these men walked away from everything – which they did, but it is also important to note that Peter was married and also cared for his mother-in-law (See [Luke 4:38-39](#)). Does it seem realistic that Jesus would require Peter to abandon his wife and mother-in-law? It’s possible that Peter and Andrew continued to work to support their family during this time otherwise they would technically be breaking the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment. It is also taught that James and John’s father was wealthy enough to have hired hands for the fishing business so they also would be able to follow Jesus without abandoning Zebedee.

Based on these verses alone, what can you discover about these four men?

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In what way can you identify with them?

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**What’s the Main Point?**

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## Personal Application:

Of all the disciples, we know most about Peter and John. Peter was a natural leader and often impulsive, but God used these traits to mold him into the leader of the first century church. John, often noted as the youngest of the twelve and the one identified as the beloved disciple, was also somewhat impetuous. He and his brother James were eager to exercise any power they could (on Jesus' behalf of course) and earned themselves the name "sons of thunder" ([Luke 9:54](https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Peter.html) and [Mark 3:17](https://www.gotquestions.org/twelve-apostles-disciples-12.html)). Take some time to go to these links and get to know these disciples better. As you do, note how their personalities, strengths, and weaknesses all worked together. How does this encourage you?

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<https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Peter.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-John-Apostle.html>,  
<https://www.gotquestions.org/twelve-apostles-disciples-12.html>,  
<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/who-were-the-12-disciples-and-what-should-we-know-about-them.html>

Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Day 3

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Today's Reading: [Matthew 9:9-13](https://www.gotquestions.org/Matthew-9-9-13), [Mark 3:13-19](https://www.gotquestions.org/Mark-3-13-19), [John 1:43-51](https://www.gotquestions.org/John-1-43-51), [Luke 6:12-13](https://www.gotquestions.org/Luke-6-12-13)

Going Deeper:

Today we meet three more men and the names of the remaining disciples. Let's start with Matthew... what was his occupation?

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As a Jewish man working as a tax collector for the Roman government, he would have been outcast by his friends and family. Is it possible that this is the reason he so quickly followed Jesus? We don't know how or why Matthew took this job. It is possible he was lured by the possibility of wealth as tax collectors often overcharged people and kept the extra for themselves. Maybe Matthew found money couldn't buy his happiness and left him feeling empty. Whatever the case, he left it all behind to follow Jesus. In Matthew's account, what took place at his house?

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How did the religious leaders respond?

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Next in Mark's gospel, what additional disciples are named?

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How is Judas described?

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It is sad that this man's claim to fame will forever be the man who betrayed Jesus. What we know of Judas is that he was the treasurer of the group and sold Jesus out for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus knew what Judas would do, and this can be one of those challenging places in the Bible where a person is chosen for evil. Judas was chosen from the beginning to be the one to betray Jesus ([John 17:12](#)) but it wasn't against his will. God knows all hearts and apparently Judas' heart did not belong to God. Judas is an example of someone who can follow Jesus without being a follower of Jesus, **and** his deception was undetectable to many people.

Finally, we come to Philip and Nathanael – two men who both were not afraid to tell it like it is or ask questions. How did Jesus describe Nathanael?

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How do you think Jesus knew this about him?

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Whatever it was, Jesus saw something remarkable in him and called him to follow – what was Nathanael's response?

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## What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

So far, Jesus has collected fishermen, a tax collector, a betrayer, and several other Jewish men of varying personalities and talents. Even Judas had a place in this and was treated no differently than the rest of the disciples. Like Matthew some of us have come from pretty bad situations or backgrounds – addiction, lying, cheating, etc. and have been saved by the love of Christ. Like Judas, some of us are in the church but not part of the church – not saved but going through the motions. And like Nathanael and the rest, Jesus sees and wants to use your talents and personality to advance His kingdom. What do you bring to the table? How does the very human reality of the disciples encourage you to know that you don't have to be perfect to be used by God? Is Jesus inviting you to follow Him? What is your answer? <https://www.gotquestions.org/Matthew-in-the-Bible.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Philip-in-the-Bible.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Nathanael-in-the-Bible.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Judas-Iscaiot.html>

Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Today's Reading: [John 3:1-15](#)

Going Deeper:

There are those who become a follower of Christ somewhat under the radar. This may be the case with a man named Nicodemus. What can you learn about him from today's reading?

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Beyond this passage and a few other verses, there is not much information given about Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee, which meant he was a Jewish ruler, and he was also part of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish legal counsel, and it would have been his job to question Jesus about His teachings. Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?

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Many speculate that he didn't want to be seen for fear of the Jews, but we don't really know. However, it is not uncommon for people to explore and learn about Christianity privately and without declaring it openly – is there anything wrong with that? There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that a true seeker must be open about their journey to others, in fact there is some wisdom in not making a big deal out of it and quietly learning and asking for help when needed.

What did Jesus tell Nicodemus that he didn't understand?

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The term “*born again*” literally means “born from above”, and it would seem, as Jesus pointed out, that of all people, Nicodemus should have understood what He meant. As a Pharisee, he would have spent his life studying the scriptures so although this was a phrase new to him, he should have recognized what Jesus was saying. The challenge for Nicodemus and many other Jewish people was that they trusted in their lineage as descendants of Abraham and God’ chosen people as their means of salvation.

In our time, this would be much like thinking we can go to heaven because we live in America, were baptized as a baby, went to Sunday School as a child, our parents were Christian, etc. None of these secure our place in heaven! Did you have any of these beliefs or understanding? How did it impact your faith journey or does it still?

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The understanding of being born again is a spiritual reality – people are not just flesh and blood (which is how we physically come into the world), but we are also spirit. Before choosing to follow Christ, we have the spirit of the world in us, which is directed by Satan, so to be born “again”, reborn or born from above is a spiritual birth and happens when we lay down our lives, take up our cross, and follow Jesus. The idea of the cross as the way to the Father would have been completely offensive and irrational to a Pharisee so it's easy to understand that it might take a minute for them to warm up to the idea.

## What is the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

If you are Christian, what was your first reaction when you heard about Jesus and the cross being your path to eternity?

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If you are still seeking, what questions do you have?

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Salvation is not just a “get out of hell free” card, but an entirely new beginning. [2 Corinthians 5:17](#) tells us: “Therefore, if anyone is \_\_\_\_\_, he is a \_\_\_\_\_. *The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*” This is what it means to be born again... new heart, new spirit, new mind – the old self is not just gone, but DEAD! We no longer have to obey the lust of the flesh, we have the power to resist the devil and his temptations. How does this give you hope and encouragement?

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<https://www.gotquestions.org/Nicodemus-in-the-Bible.html>

Friday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 5

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Today's Reading: [Luke 8:1-3](#)

### Going Deeper:

Among Jesus' followers were several women... women whom Jesus healed physically (woman with a flow of blood [Mark 5:25-34](#)), and spiritually (The Samaritan woman [John 4:1-29](#)). There were also women in His inner circle who were close friends and supporters of His ministry... two sisters, Mary and Martha, whose brother was Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead ([Luke 10:38-42](#) and [John 11](#)), and in today's reading, two women we only know from a few verses. Who does Luke mention?

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What was noted about them?

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Like the disciples, the women who followed Jesus came from a variety of backgrounds – rich, poor, and definitely in need of His saving grace. What makes these women unique is that they have a place in history during a time when women were seen as second class citizens. Jesus shattered all cultural barriers not only by how He treated women, but with the respect He showed them, and gave all women hope that the blessings of God's kingdom were equally offered to both men and women alike. The apostle Paul makes this clear in [Galatians 3:27-29](#) – what do these verses say about spiritual equality?

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The women who were followers of Christ also brought their gifts and abilities to support Jesus and the disciples. Mary and Martha demonstrated the gift of hospitality when Jesus would stay with them and their brother Lazarus. Joanna and Susanna supported them financially which shows the gift of giving as a way to help spread the Gospel. It is also notable that Joanna was present with Mary and some of the women at Jesus' crucifixion and burial – demonstrating their faith and devotion ([Luke 23:55-56](#) and [Luke 24:10](#)).

### **What's the Main Point?**

### **Personal Application:**

Women today enjoy freedoms and rights that the women of the Bible did not, so it was imperative that we were given the example that God's plan of redemption and grace included women. Even in the church today, it is largely women who serve and support ministry, bringing to the table a variety of spiritual gifts. In crossroads alone, how are the ways women serve? Do they have different personalities and gifting? How do they help strengthen the church? How can Crossroads support them? How can you support them? If you are a woman who serves in our church, in what way can you encourage and invite other women to serve as well? Get to know these women a little better by spending some time reading the scripture and articles about them. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Joanna-in-the-Bible.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/life-Mary-Bethany.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Martha-in-the-Bible.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/gift-of-giving-generosity.html>

Saturday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

**Memory Verse: Acts 4:13**

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

**Today's Reading:** [Acts 9:1-22](#)

**Going Deeper:**

Just before Jesus returned to heaven, He gave His apostles a commission to tell the world about Him ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)) and this is exactly what they did. The diverse group of men and women He called now have the task of carrying on His mission. Before we go forward let's take a minute to make sure we are clear on this...

These verses from Matthew are referred to as The Great Commission – what does this mean?

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It may be helpful to know there is a difference between “commission” and “mission”. Here's how Google AI explains it: *“mission refers to a specific task or purpose, while commission refers to the act of assigning that task or giving someone the authority to carry it out. Think of a mission as the goal, and the commission as the authorization to achieve that goal.”* Knowing this, does this continue to apply to Christians today? You bet it does! Not only is there a mission, we have been *assigned* this mission...

A short while after Jesus sent His disciples out to this mission, we meet another man who ultimately became a devoted follower of Jesus - the apostle Paul. Today's reading shows the events of his conversion, but let's start with what he had been commissioned to do in verses 1-2... what was he doing to the Christians?

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Paul, or Saul (his Jewish name), had been given authority by the high priest, Caiaphas, to carry out this mission as the Jewish religious leaders saw Jesus and His followers (the Way) as a threat even after His crucifixion. While on his way to carry out this task, what happened?

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What specific information did Ananias know about Paul in verse 14?

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News travels fast! What about the news of what happened on the road that day? When Saul was stuck blind, were there witnesses? What was their experience in verses 7-8?

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This would have been a terrifying and powerful experience - what do you think happened to these men?

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There is no information, but we can safely assume that if they also chose to follow Jesus, they would suffer the same persecution as the rest of the disciples.

When Paul's eyesight was restored, what did he immediately do?

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What was the result in verse 22?

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Paul, being a Pharisee with tremendous knowledge of the scriptures, had everything he needed to put the puzzle pieces of Old Testament prophecy and the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection in perfect order. He was the perfect person to help the Jews see that Jesus was truly the Messiah they had been waiting for.

### **What is the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

Each person that chooses to follow Jesus IS the perfect person for the mission of telling others about Jesus. Like Paul, your past experiences, knowledge, and background all work together to reach the specific audience God will bring to you. If you are Christian, how has your past, experiences and knowledge helped you learn who Jesus is?

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How does it help you as you talk to people about Him?

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We are commissioned to tell everyone about Jesus, but we all tend to have a passion or desire to reach a certain group of people because of our own experiences. What group of people do you have a heart to reach with the hope of Christ?

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Have you done anything about it? If there is anything we can do to help, please let us know. We would love to hear your ideas! Call the office at 760-384-3333 Tues – Thurs for an appointment.

## Week 4



September 1<sup>st</sup> – September 6<sup>th</sup>

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.



Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [Luke 2:41-52](#)

### Going Deeper:

It is likely that the most prominent known features of Jesus and His life are that He was born at Christmas and He died on Easter. There is partial truth to these moments... He was born of a human virgin, fulfilling the prophecy of [Isaiah 7:14](#), and He did die a criminal's death on the Cross, also fulfilling the prophecy of [Isaiah 53:1-5](#), but the days are set by His birth and resurrection, not the other way around. Everything about Him in between these moments we can learn from the scriptures, the main focus being He is the visible image of the invisible God (See [Colossians 1:15](#)) and He IS God in every way ([John 14:7](#))! We may grasp His Godhood, but we still wrestle with His humanity. What was He really like? Did He have a sense of humor, did He get tired, angry, bored, or impatient? What questions do you have about Jesus' humanity?

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Do these questions impact your faith at all? Why/why not?

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Believe it or not, this can become as much a stumbling block to people as His claim to be God.

If you are following along with the tv series, The Chosen, you have seen how Dallas Jenkins and the writers of the show portray Jesus. What do you like about how they are doing this?

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What do you dislike?

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Do you connect with Him on a human level? Why/why not?

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It's safe to assume He had a unique personality given to Him by God the same way God gives us our unique personality and shaped by His family, culture, and love for His Father in heaven. Although these are fun to ponder, the important parts of His human character can be found in the Bible, and we will take a few days to learn about some of them. We won't have time to cover all of them, so we have provided a link below for you to read.

After His birth, we don't have any information about His childhood – what He was like as a toddler, child, and big brother, but we get some clues in today's reading. Today, we start with a young Jesus with His parents. Where were they and what was the event?

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How old was He?

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What happened when they left Jerusalem?

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Parents today would never think of doing this, but in the culture of the day, Jewish families traveling to Jerusalem for Passover would share the responsibility of keeping an eye on the children. When Joseph and Mary couldn't find Jesus, how do you think they felt?

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How do you think they felt after not being able to find Him for three days?

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Why do you think looking in the temple was the last place they tried?

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What did they ask Him?

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We don't get the full emotional aspect here, but Mary and Joseph were in panic – the words “astonished: and “distress” convey more shock and intense pain or anguish. It seems this is the first time Jesus did anything like this and His answer causes more questions. What did He ask them?

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It's funny... there comes a time in parent's lives when the child becomes the teacher and this seems to be one of those moments. Jesus wasn't being rude or sarcastic but simply pointing out that they should have looked in the temple first! There's also a note here where we see that Jesus knew who His true Father was and yet everyone around Him missed it, yet what does it say about Mary?

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How does today's reading close this portion of Jesus' youth?

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From this point on, we have no information about Jesus life as a teen and young adult. Many believe that He worked as a carpenter because His earthly father was a carpenter by trade ([Matthew 13:55](#)) and it was common for sons to learn the same trade as their fathers. It isn't until He begins His ministry at around the age of 30 that we learn more. Why do you think we don't have this information?

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### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

How do you view Jesus?

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How do you view His humanity?

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How important is it to you to know He was fully human as well as fully God?

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How does the fact that He was fully human impact Christianity?

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Take some time this week to read these articles about Jesus and note how they impact your understanding of Jesus as a person. <https://www.gotquestions.org/what-was-Jesus-like.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/was-Jesus-a-carpenter.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-childhood.html>

Tuesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> , 2025

Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [Hebrews 4:14-16](#) – [Hebrews 5:1-9](#)

Going Deeper:

Not long after God freed His people from slavery in Egypt, He gave Moses instructions for worship. These instructions included the design and building of the tabernacle (or tent of meeting) and all the tools to be used, the ark of the covenant, and the establishment of the priesthood (Exodus 25-30). God established the priesthood from Moses' brother Aaron, who was the spokesperson for Moses, and the tribe of Levi – only they were to be priests of the Lord. Their role was the care of the tabernacle, but it was only the High Priest who had specific duties – one of which was to make atonement for the sins of the people as well as himself. The most notable time for this is the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, the most solemn day for the Jewish people where they are to "afflict" themselves in repentance of sins. One of the important factors in this is that as a human who struggled with sin and temptation, the high priest could identify with those he was making atonement for... and that brings us to today's reading.

In chapter 4, verse 14, what is Jesus called?

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How is He described in verse 15?

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What does the writer of Hebrews teach in chapter 5, verses 1-4?

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The high priest was a specifically chosen man who had to fulfill certain requirements (See [Leviticus 21](#)), and it was a generational role – no man had to “apply” for it. How does Hebrews 5 explain this?

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Verse 8 makes a statement that may seem confusing to some... what is it?

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Why do you think Jesus needed to learn obedience if He was God?

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This goes back to chapter 4 verse 15 – if the priests in the Old Testament were to identify with human frailties and temptations, then Jesus as the last and true High Priest also had to identify with our frailties and temptations. This verse isn't saying that He was disobedient then became obedient, but that His love for the Father was such that He could resist temptation perfectly and not sin. He is the only one who has been able to do this and therefore He fulfills perfectly the qualifications of priesthood. He learned obedience to the point of death on the cross knowing we would never be able to accomplish this on our own.

### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

In our churches today, we have pastors who preach sermons each Sunday, in the hope that people will truly seek Christ and commit their lives to Him. However, it is a temptation for some to misplace their worship of God to the pastor. What makes this challenging is that pastors often share their

own trials and difficulties with their congregation in an effort to identify with them. Do you find this helpful in your growth as a Christian? In what way?

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Does it hinder you in any way? There is nothing wrong with pastors doing this, the problem is when we look to them as the standard rather than Christ. Take a moment to survey your own mindset in this. <https://www.gotquestions.org/high-priest.html>, <https://www.compellingtruth.org/high-priest.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Day-Atonement-Yom-Kippur.html> How does knowing Jesus can identify with your weaknesses help you in your walk with Him?

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Another challenge in looking at the humanity of Jesus is “over-humanizing” Jesus. Some teach that Jesus had been married and had children <https://www.gotquestions.org/was-Jesus-married.html> but there is no biblical evidence for that. Several years ago, the “Jesus’ wife papyrus” became a sensation as it offered so-called evidence for this. Thankfully it was discovered, fairly quickly, that it was nothing more than a forgery. We can see in this the importance of knowing our scripture well. It is a dangerous thing to make Jesus so human that he is no longer God. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/13/us/jesus-wife-gospel-forgery-sabar>, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/closing-case-gospel-jesus-wife/>

Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

Day 3

As you begin today’s study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [Matthew 14:13-21](#)

## Going Deeper:

As we learned yesterday, Jesus' humanity meant He identified in every way, and part of the human experience is emotions and feelings. Turn to [Isaiah 53:3](#), how does this verse describe Jesus?

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Jesus was a man acquainted with sorrows and grief, so many people see Jesus as sad – even the artwork of Him portrays Him as sad and serious. We know Jesus had those moments, but He is so much more than that. In today's reading, what does verse 14 say about Him?

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What was the compassion Jesus felt?

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The word compassion means, "to be moved, have pity or sympathy", so we can see that Jesus had sympathy for this large crowd of people following Him around seeking a miracle of healing. In Him they saw hope! The compassion Jesus had for these people was perfect and genuine, He wasn't looking for reward, He simply had pity on their suffering.

Today's society is so broken and morally corrupt that it is difficult to have or maintain compassion for people. The challenge is that we are so surface level – meaning, we see people afflicted by their own bad choices and often withhold compassion. The compassion Jesus had was not only for their physical ailments, but their spiritual ailments. His compassion was singularly driven by His desire for people to know Him as Lord.

Who or what group of people do you find it most difficult to show compassion?

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How do you think Jesus would interact with them?

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We don't really see in the Bible where Jesus concerned Himself with how a person became lame, blind, or leprous, He just healed, but often He gave the healed person instructions – "go show yourself to the priest", "tell others what God has done for you", "go and sin no more". It is good to have compassion on people, but we can also learn from Jesus that compassion works best when it has follow up – belief, faith, and true transformation.

## What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

Do you have compassion for those who don't know Jesus? Why/why not?

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Human suffering is not just physical affliction, trials, temptations, and bad experiences – it is first a spiritual issue. When you are faced with helping someone in need, can you see past the flesh and bad choices into the spiritual need? As Christians we often help people with a variety of needs. Sometimes all God requires is the one opportunity He presents, but more often, we can use these moments to tell others about Christ, invite them to church, offer the church for more assistance and free counseling. Is there anyone you know you can help in this way?

Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [Mark 4:33-41](#)

### Going Deeper:

From the accounts in the Bible, it seems that Jesus healed and taught the crowds and His disciples constantly. It didn't take long for people to hear about Him, and they began to follow Him in large crowds hoping to get something from Him. From what we can tell, other than [Matthew 13:57-58](#), which tells us Jesus didn't do many miracles in His home town of Nazareth because of their unbelief, Jesus didn't deny anyone when they asked a question or to be healed. How do you think this impacted Him physically and mentally?



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Most people work a 40ish hour week, sometimes more, but when we add in the duties at home and other obligations elsewhere, we can get very tired. How does this impact your ability to remain patient, loving, kind, etc.?

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Do you think Jesus struggled with this? In today's reading, Jesus had spent time teaching the crowds, but evening was approaching so they decided to go to the other side of the sea. What happened as they were crossing?

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What was Jesus doing?

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How did the disciples react to this?

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How did Jesus respond to them?

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Have you ever been so tired you could sleep through anything? This moment with the disciples shows us a few things – first of all, here we see Jesus suffering the effects of a human body... exhaustion. When we read in Hebrews 4 that He understood our weaknesses and temptations, this has to be one of them. Lack of sleep can cause many problems for us, not only difficulty in maintaining patience and kindness, but it can cause physical problems as well as faith problems. How can exhaustion tempt you to waiver in your faith? For the disciples, they were likely exhausted as well – they had been with Jesus all day as He taught and now, they were sailing across stormy seas thinking they were going to die! The physical work it took to control their boat in stormy conditions is very taxing so it's easy to see why they were worried they would sink. We can respond the same way – when we are pushed to the point of collapse, we begin to wonder how we'll make it, we worry that we will sink and find ourselves doubting that we can endure or wonder if Jesus notices and cares about our situation.

Besides being overly tired, why do you think Jesus was able to sleep through this storm?

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Trust in His Father and knowing He had a mission, He had faith – even if the boat sank, He knew they wouldn’t die. We don’t often get the details of the game plan of our lives as Christians, but we can trust in our heavenly Father the way Jesus did. This was not only an opportunity for Him to show His power over creation, more importantly it was a lesson of faith for the disciples. As long as we walk with Him, He will give us all we need to endure our circumstances and accomplish all He has for us.

### **What’s the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

When you are overwhelmed with busyness and feel like you are physically and mentally at the breaking point, how do you normally respond?

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Do you lean into Jesus more, or less? Do you read your Bible or stop? Too many people tend to stop reading their Bibles and maintaining their spiritual disciplines when life gets busy, however, when we do this, they are in danger of sinking. Have you had moments like this? If so, how did you get through it?

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When Jesus told the wind and waves, “Peace! Be still!” He was speaking to nature, but in our lives, He also tells us “Peace, be still”. We often need to stop for a moment and assess the reasons why we are struggling with busyness... if you are in a season of extreme fatigue, take a minute to list what is going on in your life. Is there anything you can set down for a while? If not, is there anyone you can ask for help or delegate to? Are you taking on other people’s problems when you shouldn’t? Are you making sure you are staying connected to Christ? Are you eating and sleeping properly? In the middle of the storm, Jesus is patiently calling us to His peace!

Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 5

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [Luke 19:37-44](#) , [John 11:32-36](#)

### Going Deeper:

If you've watched movies of Jesus, you know that He is portrayed as intense and sometimes stoic – and there were probably times when He was. But Jesus was also passionate and in today's passages, we see His passion rise to the surface. In these two scenes, what emotional response does Jesus show?

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Let's take a closer look at these...

In Luke 19, Jesus is riding into Jerusalem the week before His crucifixion – it is also known as the Triumphal entry. The disciples thought He was going to claim His throne and restore Israel to power, and the Jewish religious leaders must have had similar thoughts because they wanted Him stopped. When Jesus looks down on the city of Jerusalem, we must take into consideration that this was the central city of His people, chosen by God, and He spent His growing up years traveling to the city with His family for the required festivals. It held tradition, hope, and God's temple... He LOVED Jerusalem, but the temple had been turned into a "tourist attraction" for lack of a better term. He came to save His people, but they didn't recognize it. In verses 43-44, what did Jesus say was going to happen to the city and its people?

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Jesus is describing in detail, the prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem that did take place in 70AD.

In John 11, close friend of Jesus, Lazarus, had died. Jesus traveled to Bethany, where Lazarus lived and had been put in the tomb, but when He arrives who meets Him and what did she say?

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When He saw all the people weeping, how did He respond?

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Jesus did love Lazarus, but He already knew He was going to raise him from the dead. So why did Jesus weep?

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In both passages, we read of Jesus weeping, but the words used have different meanings. The word in Luke, where Jesus wept when He looked down on Jerusalem is means “to sob with grief” while the word wept in John 11 means, “to shed tears”. Why the difference?

Each situation was different and produced different feelings of sadness. Jesus wasn’t weeping for Himself, but for the loss of His beloved city – more than that the rejection of God. He grieved knowing that the people would go about their daily business ignoring the warnings and bring the destruction of the city upon themselves. We can hardly understand how this would have felt for Him. (For more history on the destruction in 70AD, go to: <https://hope4israel.org/jerusalem-70-ad-not-one-stone-left-upon-another/>). As far as the emotion Jesus felt when Lazarus died, this was more of a sympathetic response to the grief Lazarus’ family was going through. The beauty of this is that we learn Jesus grieves when we grieve, He sees our pain and tears and offers comfort. Turn to [Psalm 56:8](#) and [Psalm 34:17-19](#), what do these verses say God does with our tears and pain?

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How does this comfort and encourage you?

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### What’s the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

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How does it impact your view of Jesus to read of His passion, compassion, and sympathy for others?

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When we read that He has compassion on the afflicted and that He weeps when we weep, we can know that Jesus truly does care about us at the most basic human level.

Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Today's Reading: [John 13:34-35](#), [John 14:31](#), [John 15:9-17](#)

### Going Deeper:

When reading through the gospels, you become familiar with the style of the writer. Matthew refers more than the others to prophecy of the Messiah, Mark is short and sweet – just the facts, Luke wasn't one of the disciples but as a physician was trained in documenting details, so you find his gospel filled with certain details that show this – plus, he was a Gentile, so his gospel is directed toward them. Then we come to John, known as the “beloved” disciple or the one whom Jesus loved. This is his style... after reading the passages, what would you say the theme is?

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The real person of Jesus was one who loved, but this is a different love than what we are familiar with. This is a demonstrated love not a feeling or emotional love. In the passages today, how are we instructed to love?

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Who is our model?

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Why do you think John's gospel, as well as his letters 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John, have such emphasis on love?

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This may be a stretch here, but if the religious leaders of John's day were hyper-focused on ritual cleansings and meticulous adherence to certain laws and commandments, how much room was left for love? This is not to imply that the Pharisees were incapable of love, but the one thing that

seems to kill love is religious legalism. Is this still present in some churches today? We might also assume that although God’s word in the Old Testament speaks of His love for His creation, John had a hard time understanding the nature of His love until Jesus showed Him. It’s hard to say, but clearly the love of Christ transformed him!

**What’s the Main Point?**

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**Personal Application:**

How has the love of Christ transformed you?

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In what ways can you practice the love John talks about in today’s reading?

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If love is the earmark of Christianity, we must learn to love the way Jesus does, turn to [1 John 4:7-11](#) and [1 John 4:19](#), how do these verses teach us to do this?

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## Week 5



September 8<sup>th</sup> – September 13<sup>th</sup>

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [John 7:1-52](#)

### Going Deeper:

Do you remember when you were a child, going on a long road trip asking your parents, “are we there yet?” or “how much longer?”? When we are excited about our destination, the journey can feel like it is taking too long. On the other hand, when we are not looking forward to our destination, time seems to fly.

As the disciples continued to learn from Jesus, their excitement and eagerness to get to their destination grew – unfortunately, what they didn't realize at the time was that they misunderstood what He meant about setting up His kingdom. Thinking He meant an earthly kingdom where they would rule with Him, they frequently asked Him “when”? If you've been following along in The Chosen tv series, you know Jesus' answer... “soon”. But how soon is soon?

This week we will learn more about the timing of God's plan through Jesus as well as His plan for us and the world. In the church world, we often hear people say, “it's in God's timing”. This phrase is often applied to events, healing, situations, plans, goals – basically everything – but there is a correct and incorrect way of understanding this. There are many things that are “in God's timing”, meaning the exact date and time something will occur is only known and controlled by Him – such as the birth of a baby or the death of a person. When Jesus was born and the day He would be crucified. On the other hand, we often misapply the phrase to situations where the reality is God is waiting on us! He will wait until we have the maturity to handle whatever it is we're praying for, searching for, or looking for. This is what Jesus was preparing His disciples for as the time of His death drew near.

Today, we read of Jesus' timing. In verses 1-8, why did Jesus avoid Judea?



This wasn't a moment of fear for Jesus, but perfect submission to His Father's will and timing. It simply was not yet time for Him to die, but of course His disciples and especially His brothers didn't understand this.

Jesus did go to Judea for the Feast of Booths, but He went privately, and He certainly caused a stir among the people. As you read through the remainder of this chapter, list how different groups responded to Him.

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What seemed to prohibit them from arresting Jesus?

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Jesus used a phrase, "My time has not yet come", what does this mean?

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Jesus could have done anything at any time – He was God after all. Think back to Matthew 4 where Satan tempted Him in the wilderness. Jesus always had the power to remove Satan or change His situation, but He chose not to – why?

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From a human standpoint Jesus needed to learn obedience as a human which meant He bowed to His Father's will no matter what. Turn to [Philippians 2:5-8](#), how did Jesus do this?

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If Jesus chose to do anything other than obey God's will and perfect timing, would it have changed the outcome?

### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

Are you waiting on God for something? Take some time to pray and ask God if there is anything you are or are not doing that is hindering Him. It is important for us to understand that in most cases,

we are not waiting on God, but He is waiting on us! One way to tell if it is something you need to do is to take note if you have the same difficulties or challenges over and over again. If this is the case, chances are there's a lesson you need to learn. If God reveals this to you, what should you do to make the necessary changes?

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Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [John 8:31-59](#)

Going Deeper:

John's gospel records some of the most confrontational interactions between Jesus and the Pharisees. In today's reading, He challenges them in their relation to Abraham, the one God chose to become the father of Israel. In verses 31-33, what does Jesus tell them?

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Why did they not understand this?

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Thinking on a purely human level, the Jews thought Jesus was talking about literal slavery. But what does Jesus say they were slaves to?

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By the old covenant and laws the Jewish people relied on the system of animal sacrifice to atone for sin. There's a good chance they couldn't understand how the subject of sin even got into the

conversation! They were so focused on their reputation and so offended by Christ that they were blind to the real issue – salvation. Of course, Jesus always cut to the heart of the situation. Not only does He tell them they are slaves to sin, who does He tell them is their father (vs. 44)?

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As Jesus continues to challenge their understanding of God’s word and plan, He makes a statement they couldn’t bear to hear in verse 58, what was it?

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What did they try to do in verse 59?

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The Jews knew full well that Jesus’ saying “I AM” was a clear statement He was God. For someone to do this was a crime of blasphemy that meant a death sentence. But Jesus IS God and once again we see His time had not yet come and so He was able to avoid being stoned to death.

Even in the church today, if someone who claims to be a Christian is confronted in a sinful habit, it is not always taken well. We may not be in danger of being stoned to death, but more often than not, the one who is trapped in sin accuses the other of being judgmental and can respond defensively or even hatefully. As Christians, we are given the responsibility of helping each other if we know someone who is trapped in a sinful habit, in fact because we don’t know when Jesus will return or when we will take our last breath here on earth, we shouldn’t delay in approaching them in a loving way. This can be one of those areas we struggle with waiting on God for the “perfect” moment to say something. NOW is the perfect moment! If you are aware of it, God intends you to say something, but before you do, do your own self-evaluation based on [Matthew 7:1-5](#).

### **What’s the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

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Before we choose to follow Christ, we are all enslaved to sin. What has the truth of Christ freed you from? Most people don’t feel like they are slaves to the sinful lifestyle they choose, but what Jesus was pointing out to the Jews, and us, is that we are born into slavery and the only way to be freed is for the Owner of our soul to release us from bondage. We must choose to be free. There’s a part of this that is difficult and somewhat of a bitter pill to swallow... if a person becomes Christian, they will still battle sin and temptation. However, as long as they truly make every effort to resist sin, even if they stumble, they can be forgiven. BUT, if the person who says they are Christian makes no

effort to resist sin and temptation, walking open-eyed into sin, they are choosing to disobey God and are now in danger of judgement. Turn to [Hebrews 10:26](#) and [I John 1:5-9](#), according to these verses, what is the truth about ignoring or deliberately sinning after making a profession of faith to Christ?

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Take some time to look into your heart and life for any evidence of this. If you are unsure of whether an activity is sinful or not, or need help overcoming a sinful habit, we are here to help. You can call for an appointment Tuesday – Thursday 10am – 4pm at 760-384-3333.

Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 3

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [John 16:1-33](#)

Going Deeper:

As the time of His crucifixion drew near, Jesus spent more time personally preparing His disciples for His departure. Now He is beginning to openly tell them He will be leaving them, and of the persecution they will endure because of Him. According to verses 1-4, why did Jesus tell them these things?

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There are those who want to know the details of what is to come at the end, and there are those who don't. However, whether we like it or not, Jesus makes it clear we are to know what to expect when the time comes. For His disciples, it may have come as a shock to hear that not only will they endure persecution but death.

Why didn't Jesus tell them this from the beginning? Do you think they would have stayed with Him had He told them from the start they would die for following Him? This is a perfect example of God's timing and His waiting on us until WE are ready for Him to reveal His plans for us. All too soon, Jesus' hour would come, and the disciples will be tested, but Jesus gave them hope through what (vs13-15)?

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As we can see in this passage, the disciples still didn't understand everything Jesus was telling them. They never imagined that when they would be tested, they would fail the test... what did Jesus say about this in verse 32?

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This came to pass the night He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane – the disciples ran away, some followed but at a distance, and Peter even denied knowing Jesus three times, as was prophesied. These same men insisted they would die for Him! What encouragement did Jesus give them in verse 33?

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How does this encourage you?

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### **What's the Main Point?**

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### **Personal Application:**

Christians have the unique position of having the end of the story. Because of God's love for us, He gave us His word, the Bible, so we would not be surprised by the events of the end times and His return. Have you read any of this? Why/why not?

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The lesson we can learn from the disciples is that even when we have the knowledge of what will happen, it doesn't always mean we will be ready or prepared. Many people have the desire to

prepare but never get around to it. Do you remember how the store shelves looked during Covid? What happened? People panicked! We couldn't get toilet paper, flour, and many food items were out of stock for weeks. How did you fare during this time?

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Is it possible that Covid gave us a glimpse of how people will respond and what we need to be prepared for in the end days? Have you gone back to the ways things were or are you continuing to prepare? This isn't just a practical application, but a spiritual one, knowing that as we wait for Jesus, we need to be prepared to tell others about Him, invite them to church, and know that we will endure suffering because of it. If you would like more information about preparing for emergencies or disaster, go to [www.crossroads-ridgecrest.org](http://www.crossroads-ridgecrest.org) click on "Brochures and Guides" then click on "Disaster Prep Brochure". This will guide you through an easy to follow plan. You can also pick one up at the Connections Counter.

Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [Matthew 24:1-28](#)

Going Deeper:

In Matthew 23, Jesus hits the Pharisees with scalding truth about their actions and motives. The chapter is often referred to as "the seven woes". This takes place in Jerusalem and He ends with, *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"*

Reading this helps us make sense out of verse 1 in today's reading. What did the disciples do?

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What did Jesus tell them?

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Jesus knew He would be leaving them soon and although He had been telling them, they were still earthly minded. After His statement at the end of Matthew 23, it's as if they felt they had to remind Jesus about the grandeur and strength of the temple. This temple was the second temple, the first one having been destroyed in 586BC by the Babylonians, built by Zerubbabel and Ezra then expanded and enlarged by Herod, and was the center of Jewish life. It held such prominence that it was customary to swear by the temple. When the disciples "remind" Jesus of the beauty of the temple it opens the door for a lesson... He tells them, yes – take a good look at this building now because the day will come when it will again be destroyed – and it is still to this day. As we mentioned earlier, this prophecy was fulfilled almost 40 years later when it was destroyed by the Romans.

Naturally, the disciples ask Him..."when"? What else do they ask Him in verse 3?

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What's the first thing He tells them to watch out for in verse 5?

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Why do you think this was the first thing He told them?

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We've had some people in our own time claim to be Jesus – do you remember Charles Manson and David Koresh? They gained fame because of their crimes and the spectacular way they were stopped, but there are numerous others, just in the last 400 years that we've likely never heard about ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_people\\_claimed\\_to\\_be\\_Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_people_claimed_to_be_Jesus)) simply because they don't make it to the news. But they are leading many astray in the process! Reading through verses 6- 12 we can easily recognize every single one of these have been and continue to take place, however they are increasing – in frequency and intensity. There's a single sign that seems to be the most important in verse 15, what is it?

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Why is this so important and what specifically are we looking for?

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Turn to [Daniel 9:27](#), this verse that Jesus is referring to point to the circumstances in which the antichrist will come (<https://www.gotquestions.org/seventy-weeks.html>). What we have yet to witness is a peace treaty established in the middle east, the rebuilding of the third temple (which is already being prepared) and animal sacrifice once again part of Jewish worship. For more on this, <https://templeinstitute.org/>. At some point in the middle of the 7 years of peace instituted by the antichrist, he will desecrate the temple with a profane sacrifice and declare himself to be God. Many believe this will happen in our lifetime, if not very soon. What do you think?

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Why?

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What we see happening in the US is only a piece of the puzzle, we must also keep an eye on what's happening in Israel.

**What's the Main Point?**

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**Personal Application:**

Apathy and complacency in the Christian church is the death nell of her people. For some, we have read and heard this so much it has been brushed off as old news, and because there have been so many “crackpots” over the years who have made it obvious they are not Jesus returned, we hardly blink an eye when we hear about them. And that’s the problem! We are looking the wrong direction... how does verse 24 describe some of these false christ’s?

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What is the warning Jesus gives?

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Who is the elect?

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The word **elect** in Greek means, “*those who are chosen or chosen by God*”. What does this mean? This means you! This means every person who says they are Christian could be deceived, so what can you do to make sure you and your children, grandchildren, friends and family are not?



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Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Day 5

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [Matthew 24:29-44](#)

Going Deeper:

In the last half of Matthew 24, Jesus continues to tell His disciples what the signs of the end will be. What cosmic disturbances does He describe?

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Part of the difficulty in understanding the type of events we read about is whether they are natural consequences of man's abuse of the planet or supernatural acts of God alone – or both. Here is something to consider...

In 2023 the Whitehouse took a look and serious consideration at a method of geoengineering called "sun blocking", or a way to dim the sun to reduce UV and other harmful rays, in an effort to combat global warming. We have already implemented cloud seeding to produce more rain clouds, and now it looks like we're studying how to turn down the sun! There are some potential serious side effects involved with this that could impact the entire ecological system so that even Green Peace isn't on board! We may never get to this point, but it does demonstrate the arrogance of humanity to think we could control the atmosphere and environment. Whether some of the natural, cosmic, and ecological signs of the end times are human induced or a supernatural act of God, there is one lesson here – keep watch and be ready.

Another difficult aspect of this is the timing of the end. We have and continue to experience many of the sign Jesus mentions – famines, earthquakes, wars, and so on – so how do we determine if

our time is THE time? What example does Jesus use to explain this?

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Fig trees are frequently used in the Bible to describe things – it often represents Israel and it was a symbol of blessing (for more information on this, go to: <https://www.gotquestions.org/curse-fig-tree.html>). Fig trees have an unusual growth cycle as the fruit usually appears before the leaves. It blends in because the fruit remains green until the leaves grow while fruit continues to ripen. Additionally, fig trees can have 2 or 3 producing cycles in the year. This can be a key clue in Jesus' explanation. Based on this, we can conclude that the lesson of the fig tree might be that just as there may be unripe fruit on the tree when its leaves begin to show, we will also see the "fruit" or early signs of the end of days while there is also more to come. If the green fig is early signs, what can we expect when the leaves begin to grow?

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What can we expect as the leaves continue to grow and the figs ripen?

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Oddly enough, there are many things in life that start out with early warning signs – health issues, relational issues, labor pains, etc. – and there have been many people throughout history that thought the end was near because of the signs, yet here we are, still waiting – hoping – praying.

We don't know the exact date this will happen, in fact, what does Jesus say who does and doesn't know about this in verse 36?

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What example does He use to illustrate the way life will be?

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It's hard to imagine people were unaware of God's plan considering the Ark would have been very noticeable and Noah preached to the people. If that is the case, what was the real issue?

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What Jesus was pointing out is the very problem we have today, people are going about their business without a care or thought as to when Jesus will return. Do you think it was possible that many of the people of Noah's day believed in God but didn't believe him about the flood? Does this attitude continue today? One of the biggest signs to look for is the falling away, or great apostasy, of the church. If we're not careful, we can have the same attitude as those in Noah's day where apathy and complacency were prevalent even though so many claim to be Christian.

## What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

it would be wise to keep watch on what is going on in Israel. If the fig tree does represent Israel, then we might say that the current war they are engaged in right now is a green fig, or early fruit in the prophecies. However, Israel has always had conflict simply because they are God's people. What we are waiting for is the war we read of in Ezekiel 38-39, where Israel will be invaded from the north, which some believe is Russia (Meshech) and possibly Turkey (Tubal). That said, if we look at Israel's current conflict with the same attitude the people in Noah's day had about the flood, what are we in danger of?

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It is a fine balance between being cautious and aware but not **panicking** – how can you keep that balance?

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How can you make sure you are not passive about the signs of the times?

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What do you need to do to be ready? <https://www.gotquestions.org/fig-tree-prophecy.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/end-times-Israel.html>, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Meshech-and-Tubal.html>

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Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Today's Reading: [2 Peter 3:1-18](#)

### Going Deeper:

Today's passage was written by the apostle Peter sometime between 64 -68 AD, over 30 years after Jesus was crucified. We may need to remind ourselves that he was one of the disciples asking Jesus about the sign of His return we read about in Matthew 24. We can imagine Peter reflecting on that day as he was writing this letter. As you read verses 1-7, do you recognize some of what Jesus said?

Reading Matthew 24 can be difficult for some as it sounds rather scary, and we all have friends and family that we want in heaven with us. What wonderful hope does Peter give us in verse 9?

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How wonderful it is that God is practicing patience with us! And as we wait, what kind of life does Peter say we should live?

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What does he caution us in verse 17?

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What seems to be the instigator of this in verse 16?

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Impatience and lack of understanding is often a temptation to go our own way as we wait for Jesus – even in the process of studying the scriptures, reading Bible commentaries, and listening to other pastors and teachers on the subject must be done with caution. We should always be careful to not simply make our own interpretation or assume that “experts” in the subject are always correct. The fact is there is only one thing we need to do – what is it? BE READY!

## What's the Main Point?

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### Personal Application:

Do you find yourself growing in Christ or sliding away as you see more conflict in the world? Maintaining peace and passion for Christ can get harder as times become more difficult – Jesus calls them “birth pangs” – like the contractions a woman has when it’s time to deliver a baby. At first, they are mild and tolerable, but as the frequency, intensity, and pain grows, a woman may feel like she just can’t do it anymore – but does she have a choice? She must push through (no pun intended 😊) and so do we as faithful followers of Christ. As time goes on and trials and persecution grow in frequency and intensity, are you prepared to push through? When doing this, it is important we don’t fall prey to impatience, grumbling, and negativity. Not that we need to put on our rose colored glasses but we will never draw others to Christ in the last days if we are grumpy and divided!

## Week 6



September 15<sup>th</sup> – September 20<sup>th</sup>

Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he  
meditates day and night.

This weekend the message is an **“Ask It!”** where everyone will have an opportunity to submit a question to be answered during service. Both services, Saturday and Sunday, will focus entirely on answering your questions about God, the Bible, Christianity, or life in general. Throughout this week, please send us your questions! You can submit them to the church text phone at 760-301-4840, email to [ccc@ccc-rc.org](mailto:ccc@ccc-rc.org), or fill out an Ask It Card at the church and drop it off at the Connections Counter.

As we finish this week’s study, we are doing something a little different – we will spend some time in the Psalms, mostly written by King David, God’s chosen king over Israel, from whose family line the promised Messiah would come. However, there were others who also contributed to the Psalms; Moses, Asaph, and the sons of Korah including Heman and Ethan. There are also Psalms without a named author. The book of Psalms is a collection of poems, hymns and prayers that address multiple issues in life that we can identify with as well as be encouraged.

As you read through each Psalm and journal the sections below, simply note what God is counseling you through it and then, following the week’s memory verse, meditate on the passage and how you can apply it. Biblical meditation is not the same as eastern meditation where a person is taught to empty their mind, but rather Christians are meant to fill their mind with God’s word, focus on it and practice it. You will have two opportunities for this each day: in the morning you can start your day focused on God’s word, then in the evening you can go back to it and note how your day went and finish your day with your thoughts and heart focused on Him.

Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 1

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

### Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 4](#)

*We often go to God with our problems and call out to Him for encouragement and comfort. Much of our comfort and encouragement comes from reminding ourselves of what God has already done in our lives as well as who He is.*

### God's Counsel:

### Meditate on it:

❖ Morning:

❖ Evening:



Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 2

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 10](#)

*King David was a man of war with many enemies. There are times in our life we may feel that there are people who are against us... we can feel surrounded, or like God doesn't see our afflictions. In spite of how we feel or our limited human understanding, we can find hope because God is in control!*

**God's Counsel:**

**Meditate on it:**

❖ **Morning:**

❖ **Evening:**

Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 3

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

### Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 27](#)

*Fear and anxiety has been on the rise in our world for many years. What do you fear? What keeps you up at night? God wants to give you the courage and strength you need...*

### God's Counsel:

#### Meditate on it:

❖ Morning:

❖ Evening:

Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 4

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 47](#)

*We may have presidents, governors, and city council, but God is above them all! He has put all authority in its place but He reigns forever!*

**God's Counsel:**

**Meditate on it:**

❖ **Morning:**

❖ **Evening:**

Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 5

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

### Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 51](#)

*The enemy of our soul, Satan, will try to convince us our sin is unforgiveable. This is a lie! It doesn't matter what we have done, God's mercy and love has covered it all, but we must come to Him with a repentant heart. His mercy and grace are never to be taken for granted.*

### God's Counsel:

### Meditate on it:

❖ Morning:

❖ Evening:

Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Day 6

As you begin today's study, ask God to show you His truth through His word. As you read, listen for His voice in scripture.

Memory Verse: Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Today's Reading: [Psalm 78:1-8](#)

*God's word is a treasure that should be passed on to our children and grandchildren. Sadly this is slipping away and much of the younger generation knows nothing of God, His love, commands and the history of His people. God's truth can transform people, marriages, families and nations!*

**God's Counsel:**

**Meditate on it:**

❖ **Morning:**

❖ **Evening:**

