



CONNECTING POINT

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

THERE'S STILL HOPE FOR AMERICA



[Psalm 144:15](#), David wrote, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." Truly America is the most blessed nation on the face of the earth. Even with all our problems and challenges, difficulties and disappointments, America continues to be the single most blessed nation on earth. Why? One primary reason: **Almighty God**.

But you wouldn't know it if you've been watching the news lately.

Remember the day we experienced the most deadly terrorist attack on American soil in our nation's history ... September 11, 2001? Remember that horrifying day, 21 years ago, and the impact it had upon our nation? If you take a moment to reflect, you'll remember a different America than the one being portrayed in the media and being betrayed by so many of our present politicians and pundits.

Let me declare as loudly and boldly as I can, I'm proud to be an American! Sure, we've got our detractors. There are those who despise us and those who chastise us. But I'm still proud to be an American!

There are those who hate America and those who want us to forget our nation's foundations and the faith of our forefathers. Unbelievably, there are even those who want to burn our flag and try to bury our future. I say to those individuals, get a one-way ticket on the next flight out and don't bother coming back. It's the absolute height of hypocrisy to enjoy our freedoms, benefit from our blessings, reap the rewards of the sacrifices of others and then, take shots at this great country.

There are many reasons why I love this great country called America.

One, because of our PAST. 53 of the 56 men who crafted our Constitution indicated an adherence to orthodox Christianity and personal support of what the Bible taught. In fact, some of those same men were responsible for establishing the **American Bible Society**, **The American Tract Society** and **The Philadelphia Bible Society**. The founders of our nation were not neutral toward Christianity and most certainly were not hostile towards Christianity. America was founded by people who were passionate about worshipping God. That passion still exists despite what you might have heard from the media or from the vocal minority who are desperately trying to rid America of any influence from God, the Bible or Jesus Christ.

Two, because of our PRINCIPLES. We've been a great nation because we were founded on the greatest principles of all time — the Word of God. All of our country's original documents were based upon Scripture. For example, did you know the separation of governmental powers was taken from [Isaiah 33:22](#), "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; it is he who will save us." From that verse our forefathers established the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government.

Three, because of our PEOPLE. We have the greatest people on the planet. No other nation can boast the diversity of people who make up the United States of America. What other country has produced individuals like Billy Graham, Zig Ziglar, Mary Kay Ash, Colin Powell, Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Michael Jordan, James and Shirley Dobson, Condoleezza Rice, Sam Walton, Truett Cathy, Bill and Gloria Gaither, and so many more.

Sure we've got O.J., Robert Blake, Charlie Sheen, Casey Anthony, Warren Jeffs, Harvey Weinstein and numerous other fruits and frosted flakes. But by and large America is full of the greatest people on earth, and our welcome mat is still out to every person in the world. Our Statue of Liberty welcomes everyone to our shores with these words: **"Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door."**

Four, because of our PLACES. No other nation has the natural beauty and abundant resources America has. From the Rockies to the Smokies and beyond, our magnificent, majestic mountain ranges, endless miles of mesmerizing beaches and numerous natural wonders like the Grand Canyon, the mighty Mississippi and so much more. This country is definitely America the beautiful.

Five, because of our PRIVILEGES. We are the most privileged nation on earth. If you don't believe it, take a trip anywhere in the world. When you get home you'll agree. We have the greatest privileges and freedoms of any nation on earth. Do you realize how wonderful it is to live in a democracy where you have the right to vote? We have the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, the right to bear arms and the right to a public assembly. There aren't barriers keeping us from leaving our cities and states, no armed guards lining the roads. We have the freedom to do almost anything we want, almost any time we want to do it, and we don't live with the fear most nations have to live with on a daily basis.

Six, because of our PERSEVERANCE. Unlike other countries and cultures who wimp out when the challenges get too tough, the price too high, and the work too demanding ... Americans have never given up and never will! Our first president, **George Washington**, didn't give up and now, over 230 years later, in spite of difficult days and trying times, we're still not giving up! We've had more than our fair share of setbacks like **The Civil War, Pearl Harbor, Vietnam, and September 11**. But each time, we've bounced back stronger, more resolute, and more determined than before. There's not a nefarious nation, devilish dictator or insane insurgent who is any match for the United States of America.

Seven, because of our POSSIBILITIES. The sky's the limit in America. You know why? Because nothing is impossible with God. Our country has had our hands in God's hands for all these years and that has been the secret to our success. People still believe the greatest dream in the world is the American dream. In this wonderful country, you can become anything you want if you're willing to work hard at it. The possibilities for anyone are absolutely mind-boggling, because this is a country that encourages her people to be their best, do their best and achieve whatever their minds can conceive. The last four letters in American are **I CAN!** If we keep our eyes on Jesus, our feet planted firmly on the Bible, and our faith in God, there is absolutely nothing we can't accomplish individually and as a nation.

Eight, because of our PROVISION. America has 5% of the world's population, yet 40% of the world's wealth. But America has never been stingy. America is a nation of perpetual generosity. Without question we are the most generous nation on earth. There is no rival to America's heart and America's hand when it comes to helping others. We are always the first to respond and the last to leave when other nations are hurting or have asked for our help. America has always given and continues to give to help others. That's the American way!

Nine, because of our PROTECTION. We have the most phenomenal armed forces in the world. **The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, National Guard, and Coast Guard** are the best trained, best equipped, best performing, most effective soldiers who have ever lived. They are courageous, yet compassionate. Fearless, yet fair. Tough, yet tenderhearted. You and I can sleep at night without fear because there are soldiers who don't sleep, protecting our freedoms here at home and across the world. It's no

accident so many other nations have asked America to protect them as well — which we have done for free for many years, in many cases.

Ten, because of our PATRIOTISM. The vast majority of Americans are undeniable patriots who would give up everything they've got: their kids, their cash, everything they have, everything they care about, even their own lives, to defend our freedoms. Sure, there are a few who won't stand with our troops abroad or here at home because of their own self-serving, self-preserving agendas. But the overwhelming majority of people here in this country love America. Very few can sing **God Bless America** or put their hand over their heart during the National Anthem without getting a lump in their throat, because we know our freedoms aren't free. Someone paid a price for our privileges.

Eleven, because of our PROMISE. What country holds the promise America holds? What country has the ability to help so many and do so much? What country has the capability of leading the world morally, financially and spiritually? Even with all the challenges before us, America has the most promise of any nation on earth. But our promise depends upon God's providential blessing.

The tallest monument in Washington, D.C. is **The Washington Monument**. There's no building taller than that monument. From the top of that magnificent granite and marble structure, visitors can take in the beautiful panoramic view of the city with its' division into four major segments. From that vantage point, one can also easily see the original plan of the designer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant ... a perfect cross imposed upon the landscape, with the White House to the north, the Jefferson Memorial to the south, the Capitol to the east and the Lincoln Memorial to the west.

On the aluminum cap, atop the Washington Monument in Washington D.C., are displayed two words: **"Laus Deo."** No one can see these words. They are only visible from above. These words have been there for many years; they are 555 feet, 5.125 inches high, facing skyward, overlooking the 69 square miles which comprise the District of Columbia, capital of the United States of America.

"Laus Deo!" Two seemingly insignificant, unnoticed words. But purposefully and very meaningfully placed at the highest point over what is considered the most powerful city in the most successful nation in the world.

Construction of this giant obelisk began in **1848**, when **James Polk** was President of the United States. In **1888** the monument was inaugurated and opened to the public. It took 25 years to finally cap the memorial with **two words in Latin**, composed of just four syllables and seven letters. What do they mean?

Very simply they say, **"Praise be to God!"**

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 144:15).

Blessings,

Pastor David

Continue in What You Have Learned

Read 2 Timothy 3:12-17 (ESV)

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Reflect

According to today's passage, where does Scripture originate and what is its purpose in the life of every Christian?

Imagine that you know that you are in your final days here on earth. Who would you want to communicate with before you go? What would you tell them?

When the apostle Paul knew that he was in his final days, he took the opportunity to send his last words to Timothy in the form of a letter. That letter is what we now call 2 Timothy. He hoped he would see Timothy again face to face before he died but he was not certain he would get that chance. When Paul penned these words, which read like his final will and testament, he was once again in prison in Rome (A.D. 67). Only this time, he didn't seem to think he'd be released. His words in [2 Timothy 4:6-7](#), indicate that he was expecting to soon be executed: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Church tradition holds that Paul was martyred during Nero's reign in Rome.

Paul addressed his letter to "my beloved child," reinforcing the fact that Paul thought of Timothy as his spiritual son. He assured Timothy that he was still praying for him and that he wished he could see him. He expressed how grateful he was for Timothy's "sincere faith" and credited his mother and grandmother for instilling that faith in him ([2 Timothy 1:5](#)). He urged Timothy to have courage and to not be ashamed of the Gospel but instead be willing to "share in suffering for the gospel" ([2 Timothy 1:7-8](#)). Above all, he charged Timothy to "guard the good deposit entrusted to you" and pass the Gospel on to trustworthy individuals who would in turn pass it on to others ([2 Timothy 1:14-2:2](#)).

Next, Paul used three analogies to explain Timothy's mission. First, Timothy should be like a good "soldier," single-mindedly and dutifully focused on pleasing his commanding officer, Jesus Christ ([2 Timothy 2:4](#)). Second, Paul instructed Timothy to be like a determined athlete who competes according to God's rules so that he is not

disqualified from receiving the prize ([2 Timothy 2:5](#)). Third, he encouraged Timothy to be like a farmer who works diligently with the hope of delayed gratification by receiving the first share of his crops when the harvest finally comes ([2 Timothy 2:6](#)).

Paul urged Timothy to "Remember Jesus Christ" ([2 Timothy 2:8](#)). He urged Timothy to set his mind on the truths of His Gospel. After all, that is why they were suffering! They were suffering for the sake of the Gospel and in the hope that more would be saved as God's Word went forth into the world. No matter how difficult the suffering or how horrible the persecution, Timothy needed to remember what and who he was fighting the good fight for. Timothy also needed to: "do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" ([2 Timothy 2:15](#)).

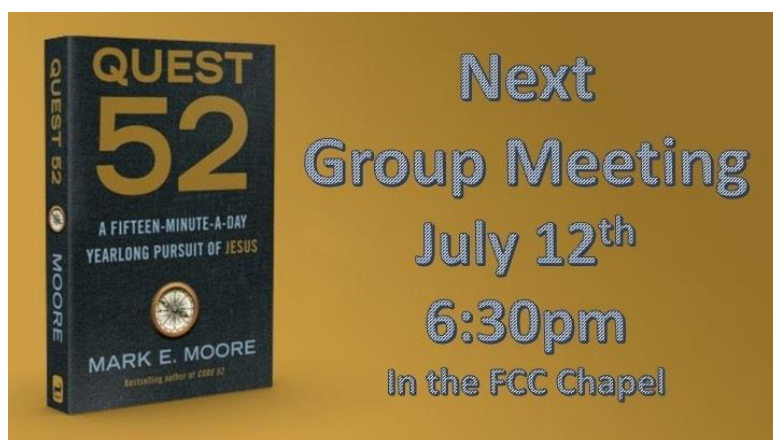
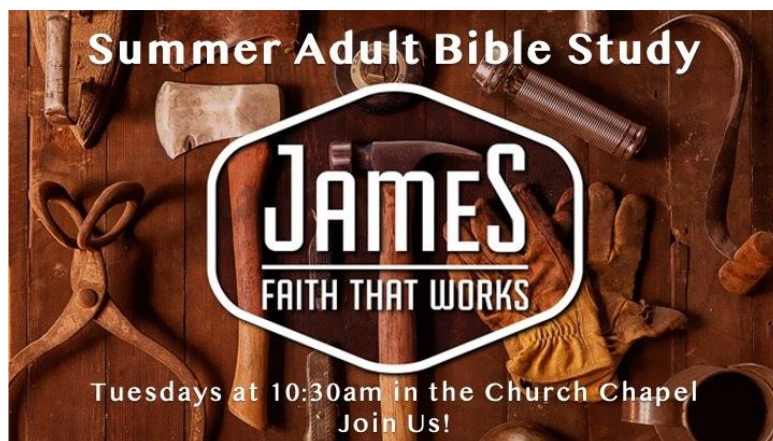
Holding fast to Scripture and faithfully preaching sound doctrine was of utmost importance because Paul warned that times of difficulty were coming. During these times, people would engage in all kinds of evil and immoral behavior because they would be lovers of self and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God ([2 Timothy 3:1-7](#)). He wrote: "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths" ([2 Timothy 4:3-4](#)).

Paul strongly contrasts the godlessness of many in the last days with those who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus. In today's verses, he warned that yes, those who follow Christ will be persecuted and it will only get worse and worse. So, in order to endure, it is crucial that Timothy, and other believers continue on and stand firm on the sure foundation of God's Word. Scripture isn't just man-made myth, subject to the whims of culture and the desires of mankind. Scripture is God-breathed. It explains to us how to be saved. It equips us to do God's work and it transforms our lives. To say that the Bible is "profitable" or beneficial to believers in Christ is an understatement!

Friend, these may have been personal words that Paul penned to his beloved Timothy but that doesn't mean they don't apply to us as well! We are aware that the world around us is deteriorating, and it does seem to be going from bad to worse. But our mission is the same as Timothy's—continue on in the Word.

Pray

Lord, when we look out at the evil and sin in this world, it is easy to get discouraged or to become desensitized to it. But we know that You have given us everything we need to stand firm. You have given us the truth. You have given us Your Word. Help us to faithfully continue on in what we have learned by it. Amen.



Boy Scout Troop 107

Meets Every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.
First Church of Christ



Boys in 5th - 12th grades are invited to join.
For more information call (712) 225-2650

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Meets at First Church of Christ
every Tuesday & Thursday
7:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

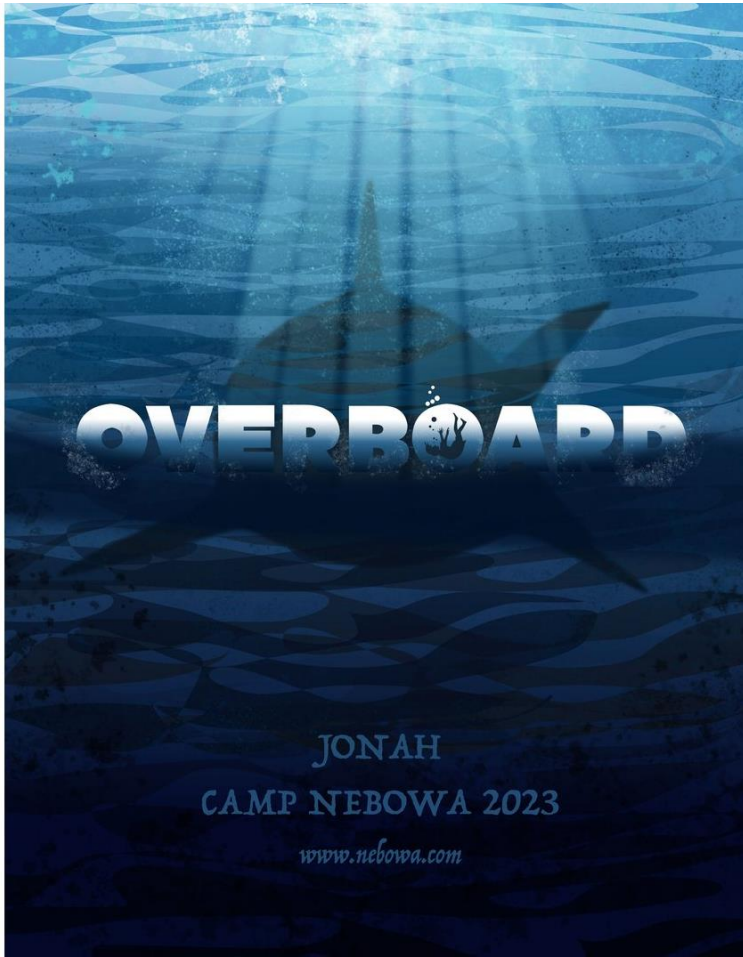
If you struggle with addiction
this is the place to be.



NOTE:

Pastor David is on vacation from June 30 – July 8, 2023. Please contact one of the elders with any special needs. Current elders are Mike Sparks, Larry Heschke, and Kirk Nelson.

Mission Moment



Awesome Sauce & Noodles



**WE ARE STILL COLLECTING SPAGHETTI SAUCE
AND NOODLES PLEASE BRING YOUR
DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH**

Camps for All Ages

Camp Season is almost here! Guess what? If you want to go Camp Nebowa this summer, and we would love for you to go, there are camps for all ages including adults. First Church of Christ is offering to pay half of your camp fees in 2023. You simply register online to the camp of your choice at www.nebowa.com and enter the discount code **cherokee50** on the check out page. We want everyone who wants to attend camp to have the best opportunity possible to go. If you have any questions please contact the church office at 712-225-2667



Many Ways to Give at First Church of Christ



In Person

We love to see you!



Mail

First Church of Christ
772 N. 2nd Street
Cherokee, IA 51012



Our Ap

Text FCCGIVER to
1-888-364-GIVE (4483)



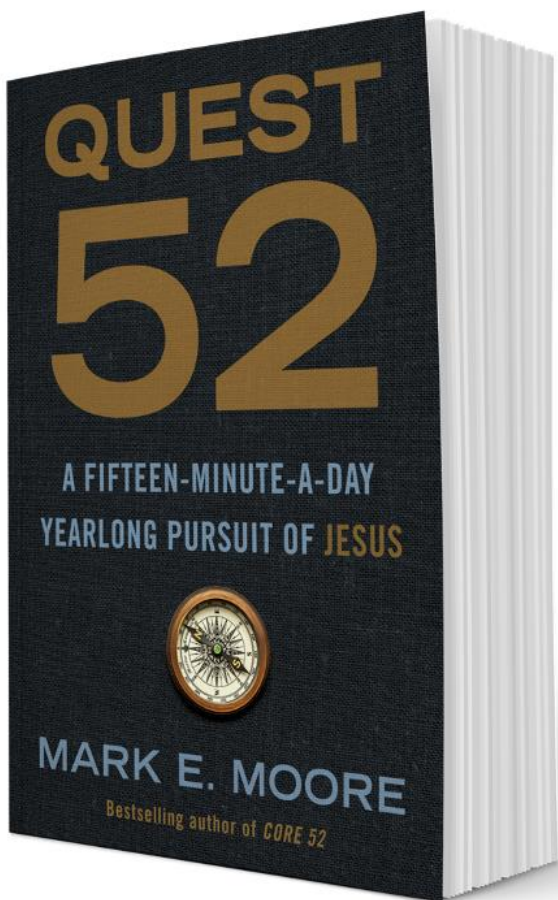
Online

www.cherokeefcc.com

Spend an entire year with Jesus.

TAKE THE JOURNEY

QUEST 52



QUEST 52 HIGHLIGHTS THE KEY MOMENTS FROM JESUS' LIFE, REVEALING HIS IDENTITY, HIS EXPECTATIONS, HIS PRIORITIES, AND HIS ULTIMATE PURPOSE.

Each week features a hand-picked Gospel reading from the life of Jesus — plus an Old Testament passage foreshadowing his coming, a New Testament story revealing his impact, an invitation to discuss insights with fellow travelers, and practical ways to practice what you've learned.

The topics address relevant issues such as:

- Does Jesus really care about your pain?
- How can you know God's call on your life?
- What does Jesus say about social justice?
- How can you hear God's voice?
- What are ways to survive these difficult days?

This quest will enhance your understanding of Jesus in ways that will forever change how you make choices, engage with others, interpret today's big issues, and even view yourself!

It's not too late to join us on the journey. To purchase a book (\$12) or to learn more, contact Pastor David.



WE HAVE AN APP FOR YOU

DOWNLOAD IT TODAY IN APPLE APPS OR GOOGLE PLAY



WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE

| July 2023 | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 |
| Children's Church | Children's Church | Children's Church | Children's Church | Children's Church |
| Sholeen Sparks | Dixie Draper | Angela Hall | Polly Fishman | N/A |
| Children's Sunday School | Children's Sunday School | Children's Sunday School | Children's Sunday School | Children's Sunday School |
| Sholeen Sparks | Dixie Draper | Angela Hall | Polly Fishman | N/A |
| Communion Message | Communion Message | Communion Message | Communion Message | Communion Message |
| Guy Fishman | Mike Sparks | David Hall | Kirk Nelson | David Hall |
| Worship Leader | Worship Leader | Worship Leader | Worship Leader | Worship Leader |
| Sharon Henkel | David Hall | Sharon Henkel | David Hall | David Hall |
| Piano | Piano | Piano | Piano | Piano |
| N/A | Eleanor Johnson | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Singers | Singers | Singers | Singers | Singers |
| Nancy Nelson | Marica Casey | Nancy Nelson | Angela Hall | Angela Hall |
| Larry Heschke | Mark Casey | Larry Heschke | Sharon Henkel | |
| PowerPoint | PowerPoint | PowerPoint | PowerPoint | Power Point |
| Braella Inman | Nancy Nelson | Braella Inman | Nancy Nelson | Braella Inman |
| Sound | Sound | Sound | Sound | Sound |
| Mike Sparks | Larry Heschke | Mike Sparks | Larry Heschke | Mike Sparks |
| Janitorial | Janitorial | Janitorial | Janitorial | Janitorial |
| Angela Hall | Angela Hall | Angela Hall | Angela Hall | Angela Hall |
| David Hall | David Hall | David Hall | David Hall | David Hall |

Attendance & Offering

| Date | Offering | On Campus Attendance | Online Attendance |
|------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 05/28/2023 | \$1,585.00 | 61 | 11 |
| 06/04/2023 | \$2,372.00 | 43 | 9 |
| 06/11/2023 | \$2,420.00 | 69 | 27 |
| 06/18/2023 | \$1,562.00 | 66 | 17 |
| 06/25/2023 | \$2,892.00 | 71 | 13 |

JULY

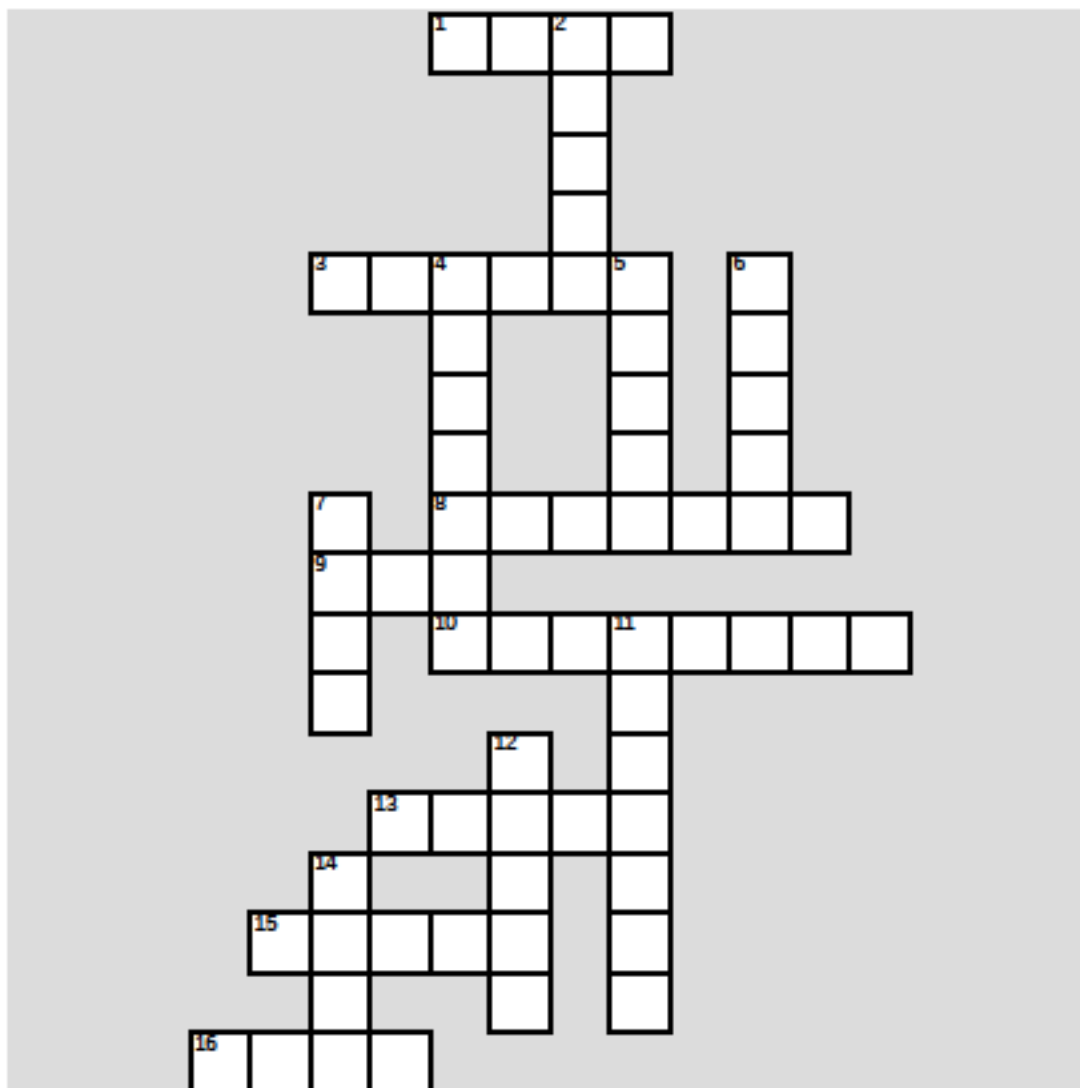
Chronological Bible Reading Plan

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obadiah; Psalm 82-83 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 23-27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 1-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 18:1-8; 2 Chronicles 29-31; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 5-8 | Psalm 48 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 9-11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 1-7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 12-13; 2 Chronicles 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 8-14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 14; 2 Chronicles 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 28-30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jonah 1-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 31-34 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 26 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 35-36 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 1-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 37-39; Psalm 76 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 5-8 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 40-43 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amos 1-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 44-48 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amos 6-9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Kings 18:9-37; 2 Kings 19:1-37; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chronicles 27; Isaiah 9-12 | Psalm 46, 80, 135 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Micah 1-7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 49-53 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chronicles 28; 2 Kings 16-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 54-58 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 13-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 59-63 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 18-22 | |



Animals of the Bible

Author: Peg Gifford



Across

- 1 Jesus fed 5000 with 2 ____ and 5 loaves of bread
- 3 Beware those in sheep's clothing as they are ravenous ____
- 8 Eden tempter
- 9 Insect of Proverbs
- 10 You are of more value than many ____
- 13 Jesus' parable of the sheep and ____
- 15 White animal in Revelation
- 16 As the ____ pants for streams of water....

Down

- 2nor cast your pearls before ____
- 4 Food of John the Baptist
- 5 Most frequently mentioned animal in the Bible
- 6 First bird released by Noah
- 7 ____ of God who takes away the sins of the world
- 11 Before the ____ crows you will disown me 3 times
- 12 Easier for a ____ to go through the eye of a needle
- 14 The Holy Spirit appeared at Jesus' baptism as this animal

Wisdom

30-Day Bible Scripture

CHALLENGE

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| Day 1 Psalms 51:6 "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom." | Day 2 Proverbs 3:13 "Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding." | Day 3 Proverbs 19:8 "He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will find good." | Day 4 Psalms 49:3 "My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding." | Day 5 Proverbs 4:7 "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding." | Day 6 Proverbs 8:11 "For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her." |
| Day 7 Exodus 31:3 "And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship..." | Day 8 1 Corinthians 12:8 "...for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit." | Day 9 Luke 21:15 "...for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist." | Day 10 1 Kings 4:29 "And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore." | Day 11 Proverbs 16:16 "How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver." | Day 12 James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." |
| Day 13 Colossians 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time." | Day 14 Psalms 90:12 "So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom." | Day 15 Luke 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." | Day 16 Proverbs 11:2 "When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom." | Day 17 1 Corinthians 2:5 "that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." | Day 18 Proverbs 31:26 "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness." |
| Day 19 Jeremiah 10:12 "He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at His discretion." | Day 20 Daniel 5:14 "I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you." | Day 21 James 3:13 "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom." | Day 22 1 Corinthians 2:4 "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power..." | Day 23 1 Corinthians 2:7 "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory..." | Day 24 Ephesians 1:17 "...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him..." |
| Day 25 1 Corinthians 3:18-19 "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God..." | Day 26 Psalms 111:10 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." | Day 27 1 Corinthians 2:13 "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." | Day 28 James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." | Day 29 Colossians 1:9 "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." | Day 30 Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." |