

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of several large, dark teal leaves. The leaves are covered in numerous small, glistening water droplets, giving them a fresh and vibrant appearance. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the leaves and the clarity of the water.

S.O.A.P.

SCRIPTURE | OBSERVATION | APPLICATION | PRAYER

# 40 DAYS THROUGH THE BIBLE.

A SIMPLIFIED GUIDE FOR ANYONE  
CURIOUS ABOUT THE BIBLE.

# THE STORY OF GOD

AND HIS ENDLESS LOVE FOR THE HEARTS OF HIS CREATION.

What you hold in your hand right now (*either digitally or physically*) has been a labor of love with Jesus at the center and **you** on our mind. I'd love to take credit for this idea, but it's really the faithful seekers of Truth at Crossbridge who continued to ask for a simplified guide for themselves and their friends who are curious about the Bible.

I completely understand how overwhelming the Bible can be, especially if you just started reading it or you're walking someone new through it.

Where do you start in a huge book made up of 66 individual books, written by numerous different authors with different jobs, who all lived thousands of years apart in a culture so different from ours?

**So instead of just starting on page one, we selected 40 chapters** we believe help tell the story of God and His endless love for the hearts of His creation, humanity.



-Pastor Jimmy Donaruma

## Over the next 40 days...

You will be led by men, women, teens, grandparents, life group leaders, elders, staff, and pastors from our church. Each day will look a little different and we're excited for you to experience these different perspectives!

## If you are familiar with the story of God...

If you are like me, someone familiar with the story of God, I hope this will be a refreshing tool you can use to help those around you searching with questions. Don't miss the chance to invite someone new to the Bible to read with you! May you remember how life giving the Word of God is!

## If you are new to the Bible...

If you are new to the Bible, I hope this will help alleviate some of the fear you might have. I believe you're about to step into a life changing story and I hope you discover how deeply you are loved by your Creator.



# Wherever you are in your faith, I want to suggest 4 tips to help you get the absolute most out of your time.

## 1. Aim for a routine place & time

A regular routine can make or break you. Find a place where you won't be interrupted constantly and choose a time that works best for you on most days of the week. I use the mornings, some use their lunch breaks, others read before going to bed. No time is more holy than another, just pick a time and place you can look forward to each day and guard it!

## 2. Use another translation if you're confused or stuck

While I study using the NASB or ESV, I tend to lean towards the NLT or NIV, and jump into MSG when I'm really lost. Feel free to explore different versions!

## 3. Join a Life Group for help & encouragement

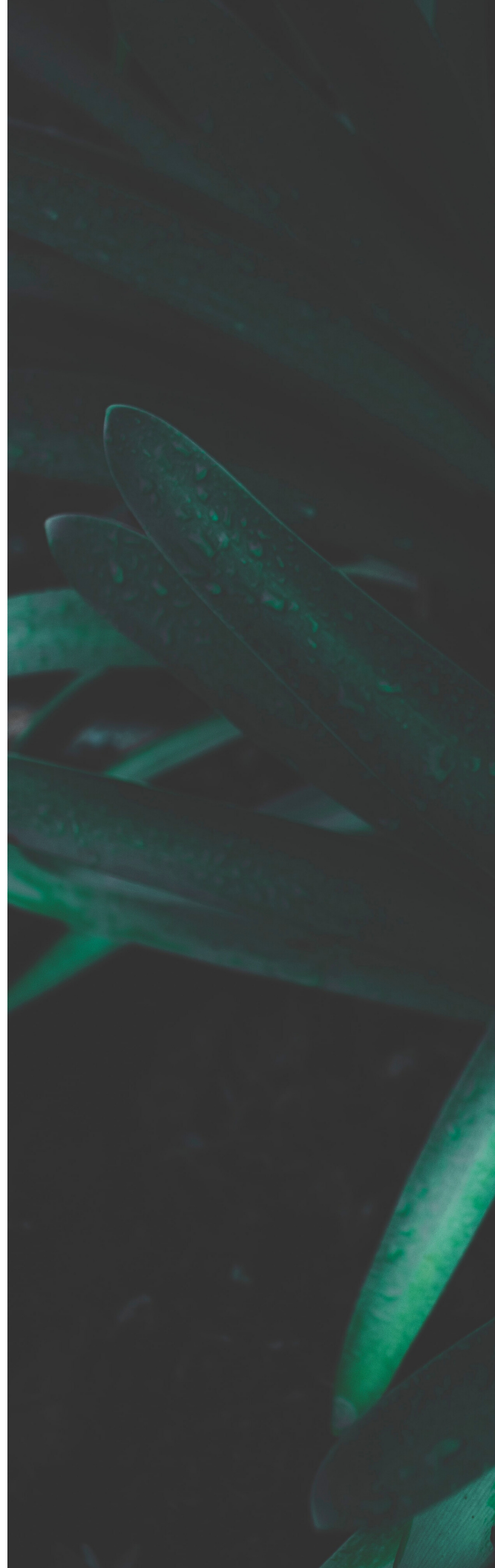
Having questions is normal, everyone has them! Life Groups are a safe place to ask your questions and hear what others are getting out of the chapters.

## 4. Show yourself grace

If you miss a day, don't stress out, just jump back in on whatever day we're on.

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I believe the next 40 days could be one of the most transformative times of your life as you invite the Holy Spirit to guide you personally and in community. I can't wait to hear what God says to you!



# LET'S START WITH JESUS.

## Day 1



-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

### John 1 | In the beginning was the Word.

- What do verses 1-4 tell us about Jesus? How does this help you understand verse 14?
- How does God view those who believe in and accept Jesus according to verses 12-13?
- How does John the Baptist explain his role in God's story (verse 23)? What Old Testament prophet is he quoting?
- Why do you think Jesus was baptized? Is this something his followers are called to do today? Why or why not?
- Describe the first followers of Jesus and where they came from. Have you ever asked the question in verse 48?

## Day 2



-Guided by Becky Frey

### Luke 2 | The Birth of Jesus.

- Read verses 1- 6. Take some time to ponder what the trip must have been like for Mary and Joseph to walk 7-10 days while Mary is 9 months pregnant over hilly, desert terrain.
- The shepherds were the first to be told of Jesus' birth. What significance does the angel going to the shepherds have for Jesus' future ministry?
- Verse 18 says Mary "*kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often.*" How do you think these things impacted Mary as she parented Jesus as a boy and once he entered into ministry? Do you think she told Jesus about these things or kept them quiet?
- In verse 41 we are told that "*Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the passover festival*", which is one of the festivals God ordained to help his people remember all that HE has done for them. What are traditions or activities that you or your family do to help you remember and celebrate all that God has done and is doing in your life?



**Day 3**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Matthew 5 | Essential teachings from Jesus.**

- Why do you think Jesus started with verses 3-12? Why do they seem so countercultural to us today?
- How does Jesus view “the Law” according to verses 17-20? Why is this important?
- Jesus reminds his listeners 5 times about what they’ve heard (understood) and then gives them an updated/new command. Underline the updated commands Jesus gives.
- How do you think the listeners felt about these updated commands?
- Which of these 5 updated commands seems most difficult for you?

**Day 4**

-Guided by Pastor Wil

**Matthew 6 | Teach Me To Pray.**

- **Re-read verse 1.** Jesus gives a warning to watch out from making good deeds about us or we will lose our reward in heaven. Why would Jesus tell us to guard ourselves about this?
- Take a look at verses 5 and 16. Jesus says **when** we do these things.
  - What would you say your prayer life is like?
  - Have you ever fasted? (*abstaining from food for a period of time to devote to God and prayer.*)
  - Why do you think people would shy away from this practice?
  - Why would believers fast today?

**Day 4 continued...**

- **Reread verse 21-23.** What do you think Jesus means by this?
- Jesus talks a lot about not worrying and trusting God instead. That's easier said than done.
  - How does that play out in life?
- What would you say the theme of this chapter was?

**Day 5**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Matthew 7 | Let this be the Start of a Firm Foundation.**

- How serious do you think Jesus was about judging others in verses 1-6? What exaggerated illustration does he use to prove his point?
- What do verses 13-14 reveal about following Jesus? What do you think this means for us today?
- Explain how Jesus instructs us to determine if someone is a “sheep” or “wolf” according to verses 15-19. How does verse 20 make you feel? What do your actions reveal about you?
- Who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven according to verse 21? How does this set-up verses 24-27?
- What is the difference between how you and those listening respond to Jesus’ teaching?

# THE BEGINNING.

## Day 6



-Guided by Pastor Wil

### Genesis 1 | Creation.

- What stands out to you while reading this chapter?
- What did God create each day?
- What is the major difference between when God created human beings versus everything else?
- What does God say about His creation?

## Day 7



-Guided by Jeremy Humble

### Genesis 3 | Sin Changes Everything.

- Read Genesis 2:17 and re-read Genesis 3:3. What's the difference? Why do you think she added on to God's instruction?
- In Genesis 3:5, the serpent tells the woman that if they eat the fruit, they will be like God, knowing good and evil. What do you think this means? Why would that be desirable?
- What is the reason the man gives God for why they were hiding? Why would that be a reason for hiding from God? What are some of the reasons you hide from God?
- Who does the man blame? Re-read verse 6. Where was the man when the woman took the fruit and how does that impact the man's attempt to blame others?
- What does God do to punish man and woman? How has the relationship between God and Man changed forever? How do you think the man and woman feel about the new path of their lives?
- Why do you think it is only after this that the man and woman are named? If you had the chance to name your partner, what would you name them? (Tread carefully!)

**Day 8**

-Guided by Faith Ralph

**Genesis 6 | Beginning of Noah.**

- In Genesis 1 God declared His creation “very good.” In Genesis 6, it says God regretted creating humans? Why?
- What made Noah different from the other people around him?
- In Genesis 3, we learned that God was walking through the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day. Genesis 6:9 says that Noah walked faithfully with God. What do you think it means to “walk with God” today?
- What new boundaries does God set for humanity in this chapter? (see vs. 3) What old boundaries does he decide to “break”? (see verse 17) What “boundary” does God promise for the future? (verse 18... *this will be explained more in Genesis 9*)
- What can Noah’s construction of the ark teach us about obedience?
- Challenge: If you’re up for it, pick one of the following activities.
  - **Go on a walk “with God.”** As you walk, reflect on what this means in your daily life/routine.
  - **Draw the ark.** Either a scale model by using the dimensions mentioned in Genesis 6 or a more artistic version by looking online for instructions.

**Day 9**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Genesis 12 | The Call of Abram.**

- How big of a risk was it for Abram to obey what the Lord commanded in verse 1-3?
- What major promises does God make to Abram in verses 1-9? What is Abrams' response to them in verses 4-9?
- What does Abram think is his biggest issue approaching Egypt?
  - What does his crazy request to his wife Sarai in verse 13 tell about his priorities?
- How do you think Sarai felt throughout verses 10-20?
- How does God feel about all this and how does He respond?
- Abram received great promises from God in verses 1-9 & then took control in verses 10-20. Why do you think he did this? When have you tried to take control of a situation and it didn't turn out like you expected?



# WHEN LIFE GETS MESSY.

## Day 10



-Guided by Mary Beth Zieger

### Genesis 22 | Faith Tested.

- This chapter opens with the phrase “Some time later”, reminding us Abraham has been in relationship with God for years. Reflect on your time walking with Jesus and list some highs & lows that might be part of your “some time later”.
- When God calls Abraham in verse 1, how does Abraham respond? How do we respond when God calls us?
- As a parent or a child, this chapter can be incredibly hard to read! What different thoughts/emotions do you think Abraham, Isaac, and the 2 servants had on their 3 day journey in verses 3-4?
- What pronoun does Abraham use to describe who will come back after the sacrifice? Does this give you any insight into Abraham's faith?
- In what 2 ways does the Lord provide for and bless Abraham on the mountain? Has your faith ever been tested to such an extreme where you learned something new about yourself and God?
- Remember God's covenant to Abraham from yesterday. Between chapter 12 & 22 (some time later) Abraham believed in God's promise but did not always believe in God's plan to make that promise come true. How does this chapter demonstrate Abraham's growth from being someone who just trusts in the promises of God into being someone who trusts in the God who makes the promises? How can we grow in the same way as Abraham?

## Day 11



-Guided by Wil Del Valle

### Exodus 3 | Moses and the Burning Bush.

- Do you think Moses expected what he saw in verses 1-6? When you close your eyes and picture God what do you picture?
- What does God see and hear in verse 7? Do you believe God sees and hears this in your life? Why or why not?
- In verse 11 Moses expresses insecurity; How does God combat that?
- What name does God give to describe himself in verses 14-15? Why do you think he chose this one?
- Why does God tell Moses he has to perform miracles in Egypt in verses 19-20?

**Day 12**

-Guided by Becky Frey

**Exodus 14 | Moses Crossing the Red Sea.**

- **Compare and Contrast** the different reactions of the people to the plagues in Egypt and the Israelites' departure. Pharaoh (verse 4-5)? Israelites (verse 10-12)? Moses (verse 13-14)?
- The Israelites cowered in fear when being chased by the Egyptians and longed for their days of slavery. Are there times in your life where God is calling you into freedom, but fear is keeping you from moving forward? Ask God to show you the root of your fear and refocus your attention on who God is and what he can do.
- Why do you think that Moses reacted differently than he did in his earlier encounters with God? (Read Exodus 3 for an example of Moses' earlier reaction.)
- What do you think God's purpose was in having the Egyptian army be destroyed in the wilderness? (vs 4, 17)
- In verse 25 the Egyptians realized that God was fighting for the Israelites and tried to flee. Do you find it hard to believe that God is fighting for you in difficult situations you find yourself facing in your life? Why?

**Day 13**

-Guided by Jeremy Humble

**Exodus 20 | The 10 Commandments.**

- With Moses leading the Israelites after they have been freed from Egypt, what kinds of rules/laws do you think they were following and how were they enforced? How messy do you think life looked for the 600,000+ Israelites in the desert?

**Day 13 continued...**

- God's first commandment is to have no other gods before him. Do you think he has a purpose for what he says in verse 2 right before he gives them this first commandment?
- How would these commandments benefit the fledgling nation of Israel? Why are these commandments so important for them?
- In verse 20, why do you think Moses tells the people to not be afraid but also tells them that the fear of the Lord is to keep them from sinning. What do you think could be the difference between "fear of the Lord" and being afraid?
- Are all of the commandments relevant today? If not, why? If so, how should that affect the way we live?
- Read Matthew 22:36-40. Why does Jesus say these are the two most important commandments? Why are they so important for us today?

**Day 14**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Judges 16 | Samson Deceived.***\*For background on Samson, read chapters 13-15\**

- What do verses 1-3 tell us about Samson's character? Why do you think he did these things?
- Who catches Samson's attention in verses 4-20? Verse 4 tells us he loved her, do you agree or disagree with this based on their interactions?
- How many times do Samson and Delilah lie and try to trick each other? What's the secret to Delilah's success according to verse 16?

*Day 14 continued...*

- What's Samson's punishment from the Philistines? Do you think this is just or unjust? Why?
- What is Samson's motivation in his request to God in verse 28-31? Do you think this was rooted in justice or revenge?
- How does the situation you're in impact the motivation behind your prayers?

**Day 15**

-Guided by Kim DeStratis

**1 Samuel 17 | David & Goliath.**

- Re-read 1 Samuel 17:4-7, then go back a few chapters and read 1 Samuel 9:2. Both Saul and Goliath were physically imposing, but Goliath took pride in being a giant among men while Saul has allowed fear to tarnish his self-worth and identity as God's anointed king.
  - In what ways can pride and fear be healthy emotions? How does David's confidence later in this chapter differ from Goliath's?
- After 40 days of taunting, what is the reaction of Saul and his army in verse 24? How can hearing the same thing for 40 days impact you? How does David offer a fresh perspective in verse 26? What areas in your life could use a fresh, Godly perspective?
- Why, in verse 28, do you think David's older brother responds to him asking questions about Goliath by getting angry with him? Can you relate to his reaction? Do you think he was justified in feeling this way?
- What do Saul (verse 33) & Goliath (verse 43) see when they look at David? Have you ever doubted someone because of your perception of them? Have you ever been the one doubted? Are there any areas that your doubt about your own abilities is keeping you from being used by God?
- In verse 37 David tells Saul *"The Lord who rescues me from the claws of the lion and bear will rescue me from this Philistine!"*. David was confident that the Lord was with him, yet he still prepared for the fight against Goliath. How was David's preparation both wise and intentional? Read Ephesians 6:13-17, in what ways do you need to prepare yourself better to be used by God?



# GOD IS BIG.

## Day 16



-Guided by Sharon Del Valle

### Job 1 | Making Sense of Suffering.

- Verse 1 describes Job as a blameless man. Consider this word for a moment. *Blameless* does not mean sinless, but living in a way that does not offend God. Could you attribute this word to your own life? Why or why not? What is keeping you from living a blameless life?
- What accusation does Satan make against Job in verses 9-11? How do trials and suffering destroy a superficial faith? How do they strengthen real faith?
- We know the reason for Job's suffering from the conversation between God and Satan in verses 6-12, but Job had no idea why such loss and sorrow had come upon him.
  - Ultimately, Job never finds out why he endured such suffering. Like Job, you may not understand why you are enduring hardships in your life. Why is it so tempting to believe God doesn't care when we don't have all the answers?
- Job did not hide or suppress his overwhelming grief (Job 1:20-22). His emotions show that he was human and deeply loved his family. It's not wrong or inappropriate to express grief as Job did. If you have experienced a deep loss, disappointment, or heartbreak- don't hide your emotions. Admit your feelings to yourself and others. It's okay to grieve.
  - Take a moment to meditate on the words of Jesus from The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:4: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."
  - Let those words settle into the depths of your soul. Are there any wounds (past or present) that you have neglected to grieve? Confess your grief and trust the words of Jesus that you will receive comfort in exchange for your transparency.

## Day 17



-Guided by Bill Foote

### Psalms 23 | The Lord is my Shepherd.

- As a shepherd David understood the nature of sheep. Why are followers of Christ called sheep?

*Day 17 continued...*

- God promises rest, peace, and renewal for those who walk in righteousness. What is promised to those who don't?
- Instead of saying, "you will walk far away from the darkest valley" God says, "you will walk through it". How does that make you feel?
- Why is it important to feast with your enemies?
- How does anointing our heads with oil honor us?
- What would our lives look like to truly live without fear?

**Day 18**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Psalm 51 | Psalm of Confession.**

- Why do you think this Psalm has such a descriptive subtitle? If you were David (*the author*) would you include this? If you want to read about it, head to 2 Samuel 11-12.
- What is David begging for in verses 1-3? Do you think his repentance is genuine? Why?
- How does Romans 3:23 reinforce what David says in v 5?
- Is your heart in a place where you could pray verses 10-12 and mean it?
- What's David's response to forgiveness according to verses 13-15? How do you respond to God's forgiveness?
- Take 5 minutes to read this Psalm out loud as your prayer. Which parts resonate or feel forced?

**Day 19**

-Guided by Pastor Wil

**Psalm 139 | God Searches and Knows Us.**

- This is a beautiful prayer! Take time to read it out loud. What stands out to you as you read it?
- Re-read verses 7-12, God is everywhere and even darkness can not hide from Him! How does this reassure us when in times where God doesn't "feel" close?
- Verse 13 - God created you, you were knit together. When we doubt ourselves, or others we have to remember He created us. God is truly the author of all life! How should this affect how we view people around us? How should this affect how we view ourselves?
- Use verses 23-24 as a starting point for your prayer time today. Take just 5 minutes to ask God to search your heart and thoughts. Write down what comes to mind and ask for forgiveness.

# TOUGH LOVE, TROUBLED TIMES.

## Day 20



-Guided by Jeremy Kiil

### Proverbs 1 | Tweets From Solomon.

- The first seven verses of Proverbs 1 outline a major overarching theme of the book: wisdom. What does wisdom mean to you?
- Verse 7 says "*The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge.*" The world does not define knowledge this way. Why can there be no knowledge without first fearing God?
- We are warned against those who try to rope others into their sinful habits in verses 10-19. Why might people do this?
- Those who reject wisdom will not find it when they are faced with struggles (verse 28). Verse 31 says, "they will eat the fruit of their ways." Have you ever gotten mad at God because of a situation that your own decisions created?

## Day 21



-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

### Isaiah 53 | Messianic Prophecy.

- Read this whole chapter first. Why is this a controversial chapter for those who don't believe Jesus is the Messiah?
- This famous passage is quoted often around Easter. Where in the New Testament (NT) are these verses quoted?
- Take the time to study each verse and list NT verses showing where Jesus fulfills them in the margins.
- Read Matthew 11:30 & 1 Peter 5:7. How does this impact how you read verse 4?

## Day 22



-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

### Jeremiah 1 | A Prophets Calling.

- How would you feel if verse 5 were the first words you heard from God? How does this verse make you feel?



**Day 22 continued...**

- What's Jeremiah's response in verse 6? Why do you think we try to disqualify ourselves?
- Why do you think God repeats himself in vs 7-10 & 17-19?
- Who will Jeremiah stand against specifically? Why might this be significant in verse 18?
- What hope do you think Jeremiah found in verse 19? How does this make you feel?

**Day 23**

-Guided by Savannah Knapp

**Daniel 3 | Fiery Furnace.**

- After reading the chapter, try to summarize the story in 2-3 sentences.
- Circle the emotions you see in this chapter. Do they seem like appropriate responses to the offenses?
- Can you think of a time when God has shown up in your life where you "leaped to your feet in amazement" like Nebuchadnezzar in verse 24? How did your response impact your faith? How did your life look different after that?
- At the time, Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the greatest empire in the known world, and worshiped many gods. Why would he suddenly call the god of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego the "Most High God"? Read Daniel 7:14 - Do you think God listened to Nebuchadnezzar when he prayed, despite not having an Israelite background?
- Read verse 28. Without any guilt or shame, what convictions do you feel when Nebuchadnezzar says this? What are 2 things in your life that you might be serving/worshiping over God? (think: time/treasure/talents)

**Day 24**

-Guided by Jeanine Robbins

**Daniel 6 | Lion's Den.**

- Why did the administrators and satraps/high officials want to find grounds to bring charges against Daniel? What did they try to use against him?
- What was Daniel's response to the king's decree? What does that say about him?
- When King Darius had heard what Daniel had done in verses 13 and 14, how did the king respond? What kind of impact do you think Daniel had in King Darius' life?
- After the king gave the order to have Daniel thrown in the lion's den, what did the king do? What do you think he knew of Daniel's God?
- How did the king respond when he heard Daniel call from the lion's den that his God had sent his angel to protect him? What decree did he then issue?
- Why would the wives and children of Daniel's accusers also be thrown in the lion's den to be killed?
- What are some of the parallels between the story of Daniel and the lion's den and the story of the fiery furnace in Daniel 3?

**Day 25**

-Guided by Pastor Wil

**Jonah 1 | GO! But...I Hate Them.**

- Why would Jonah run away in verse 3? Are there areas in your life you've been running from God and what He has called you to do?
- Why do you think Jonah could sleep so soundly during all the chaos of verses 4-6?

# THE LIFE OF JESUS.

## Day 25 continued...

- How do the sailors respond to Jonah's God in verses 14-16? Why do you think they began to believe in Jonah's God?
  - How does verse 17 show the love of God for Jonah?
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## Day 26



-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

### Luke 8 | Parables, Family, & Miracles of Jesus.

- What types of people followed Jesus in verses 1-3?
- What two parables does Jesus tell? Why do you think he used these stories to get his point across? How does verse 18 influence how you read and listen to Jesus?
- How is the reaction of the disciples in verse 25 similar to the reaction of the townspeople in verses 35? What evokes their responses? Do you believe Jesus can still do these miracles today?
- Reread verses 40-53 and imagine yourself as different people in the story. How would you feel as Jairus? The bleeding woman? The disciples? Jesus? The messenger? Jairus' wife? The crowd?

## Day 27



-Guided by Becky Frey

### John 3 | Nicodemus Born Again.

- Knowing the Pharisees were the ruling religious leaders, why do you think Nicodemus approached Jesus at night in v 2? What 2 questions does Nicodemus ask of Jesus? What's your normal response when you don't understand the teachings of Jesus?
- God often uses the image of light vs dark to explain the difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world. In v 19, why does it say people don't all head towards God's light? Which kingdom (light or dark) do you find yourself living in most often?
- John the Baptist's followers are offended when Jesus starts drawing more attention than John. How does John feel? When we are faced with the success of others, do we celebrate them and are happy for them, or do we compare ourselves to them and allow jealousy to creep into our hearts?

*Day 27 continued...*

- How does John describe Jesus in verses 31-35?
- Read verses 16-18 & 36 again. How do these verses differ from the cultural idea that “God sends us to hell” if we don’t believe?

**Day 28**

-Guided by Pastor Wil

**Luke 15 | The Lost Chapter.**

- What is the theme of the three stories in this chapter?
- Why do you think Jesus says in verses 7 & 10 that there would be so much joy in heaven when one sinner repents?
- Read the parable of the lost sons. Which son do you resonate more with?
- Compare how the *father* responds to each son in verses 20-32. What is similar? Different?
- Compare how *each son* responds to the father in verses 20-32. What is similar? Different?
- How does this story reveal the heart of God?

**Day 29**

-Guided by Chris DeStratis

**Mark 15 | Trial, Crucifixion, Death, Burial.**

- How did Jesus respond to the accusations leveled against him in verse 5? Why do you think this surprised Pilate? How do you feel when lies are told about you and your reputation is on the line?
- What motive do you think might be behind Pilate's question in verse 14? What's the driving force behind his decision in verse 15? Have you ever made a decision against your best judgment to “pacify the people”?
- Compare Isaiah 53:7 with verses 16-33. How do you think Jesus' silence was perceived by the soldiers and onlookers? What are the last words of Jesus in verse 34? What do you think led Jesus to say this?
- Why would the veil tearing in verse 38 be significant?
- How many people witness and confirm Jesus is actually dead and buried according to verses 42-47? Why is this so important?



# FOLLOWING JESUS.

## Day 30



-Guided by Brett Anderson

### Matthew 28 | Great Commission.

- What might be some of the thoughts going through Mary and other Mary's heads as they walk to the tomb of Jesus in verse 1?
- What might be the significance of the description of the angel of the Lord in verse 3? Both literally and metaphorically?
- Why are the chief priests and elders so interested in keeping the guards quiet about Jesus' empty tomb in verses 11-15? What is their strategy?
- Read verse 17 slowly, do you think it's normal to doubt God? Where in your life do you doubt God, regardless of how small or large?
- Verses 18-20 are known as the Great Commission. What does it mean to "make disciples"? What is one way you can make disciples in your own circles today and this week?

## Day 31



-Guided by Faith Foote

### Acts 1 | Ascension of Jesus.

- In verses 4 and 5, Jesus tells the disciples to wait for the gift God had promised and that soon they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. What does that mean?
- *"They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."* Acts 1:14. What do you think they were thinking and praying about after witnessing Jesus ascend into heaven? What would you be thinking?
- *"He said to them: It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority."* Acts 1:7. Do you trust God's timing in your life?
- *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* Acts 1:8. We're called to not only hear and spread the gospel in our own towns, but to the ends of the earth. How are you living out that calling?

*Day 31 continued...*

- Judas' act of betrayal in verses 15-17 is often looked at as something we would never do as followers of Jesus. How easily would you deny Jesus if the reward was something like receiving a raise, winning the lottery, etc?
- Peter stood in front of the body of believers and had to tell them that one who shared in their ministry had denied Jesus. How does it make you feel knowing there are some in church, your small group, or your family and friends whose faith could so easily be shifted if offered the right price?

**Day 32**

-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

**Acts 2 | Filling of the Holy Spirit.**

- Why are verses 1-4 so important to followers of Jesus and the church? Do you believe moments like this still happen?
- What are the different responses to the believers speaking in so many different languages?
- Imagine yourself as Peter. "Preach" his message in verses 14-36 outloud! How does this Peter compare to Mark 14:66-72?
- What are the 3 steps Peter gives the eagerly listening crowd in verse 38? Have you taken these steps?
- How did early followers of Jesus live their life according to verses 42-46? Why do you think they did this? Are we called to do this today?

**Day 33**

-Guided by Pastor Wil

**Acts 9 | Saul's conversion.**

The story of Saul is one of redemption. This man was zealous after God and thought this "new way" of following God was wrong so he began to persecute the early church until Jesus got ahold of him.

- How do you think Ananias was feeling when he was called by God to go pray for the man who was persecuting people like him?
- Do you believe that God can change any heart?
- In verse 16 God says that Saul will suffer for His sake. That's not a very good talking point for making Saul a follower. Why would Jesus say this? Why was this important? Why would he suffer?
- What do you think about God taking Saul (the very person trying to destroy the church), and choosing him to take the gospel everywhere (verse 15-16)?

**Day 34**

-Guided by Joe Frey

**Acts 10 | Holy Spirit to Gentiles.**

- Verses 1 and 2 give a brief introduction to Cornelius. How does he live out his faith? How would you want to be described in a similar intro?
- Cornelius and Peter each receive visions from God. How were they similar? How were they different? How does God speak to his followers today?
- Reread verse 34 and James 2:1-4. How is Peter's vision about favoritism? Why is it so great that our God does not show favoritism?
- In verses 36-43, Peter gives a summary of the gospel. How would you answer if someone asked you what you must believe to follow Jesus?

## Day 35



-Guided by Becky Frey

### Revelation 22 | Jesus is Returning.

- According to verses 6, 7, 12, & 20, when is Jesus returning? Do you still believe this? How can the promise of Revelation 22 help us when we get discouraged?
- The water of life is an image that is in multiple places in scripture. How does the water of life described in verses 1-2 compare to the water Jesus talks about in John 4:14 and John 7:38-39?
- Read Genesis 2. How does the image of the tree of life in Genesis 2 and Revelation 22 give us a picture of God's redemptive story throughout the Bible?
- In verse 6, the angels tell John that everything he has seen and heard and all that was told to the prophets is "trustworthy and true". How does hearing how the Bible describes itself impact your faith in its reliability and trustworthiness?
- There are many names/images for Jesus used in Revelation 22. Which name impacts you the most? Is there one that brings comfort to you? One that inspires awe? Try praying to God using his different names this week.
  - Alpha & Omega
  - First & Last
  - Beginning & the End
  - Bright morning star
  - Bridegroom
  - Water of life
  - Lord Jesus
  - Lamb of God
  - Lord God

OUR  
MISSION.

## Day 36



-Guided by Pastor Jimmy

### Romans 8 | Life in the Spirit.

- What Good News do you take from verses 1-4?
- What's the difference between those dominated by their sinful nature and the Holy Spirit in verses 5-11?



*Day 36 continued...*

- What do God's children and all creation have in common according to verses 18-25? What are we ultimately looking forward to?
- Have you ever asked the question Paul does in verse 35? How would you answer it? How does Paul answer it in verse 38-39?
- How can understanding this chapter impact how you live your life and talk to others about Jesus?

**Day 37**

-Guided by Mary Beth Zieger

**1 Corinthians 13 | Love is More than a Feeling.**

- This passage is one of the most well known in the Bible. Reread this chapter in a different version of the Bible than you normally use, allowing the slightly different words and cadence to bring enhanced meaning and discernment to your study.
- What things/abilities/actions in verses 1-3 do the people of Corinth esteemed higher than sacrificial love? What things/abilities/actions does our society esteem higher than sacrificial love today? Do you hold any things/abilities/actions in higher esteem than sacrificial love?
- How would you define love? How might our culture define love? What does love look like according to verses 4-7? Humbly ask the Lord to reveal to you any specific areas where you are less than loving. Ask for the courage to align these areas more to Jesus.
- In verses 8-10, why do you think Paul compares love to different spiritual gifts (carried over from chapter 12)? How might verse 13 encourage and inspire the Corinthian church?
- Choose 1 or 2 attributes of love (in verses 4-7) that you can actively practice in your daily life this week. This may prove harder than expected when stress hits, when you feel tired, or when people hurt you, but lean on Jesus for the strength to love like He does!

## Day 38



-Guided by Sharon Del Valle

### Galatians 5 | Live by the Spirit's Power.

- What is the warning written in verse 1?
  - Have you ever thought of your freedom in Christ as something you need to diligently protect? What threat to freedom does this verse identify?
- Some people within the church insisted on keeping “the law” in order to be saved. This letter to the Galatians was to urge them to resist anyone who suggests (even subtly) that we can earn salvation.
  - How would those closest to you describe your faith? Do they see you trying to check boxes to win God's approval, or do they see the freedom that you are accepted by God because of His grace through Christ?
- Christ came to tear down walls between people, not build them up. How can idolizing “the rules” create walls between believers according to verses 13-15?
- The whole law can be summed up in what single commandment according to verse 14? Love for God, and love for others is the response of anyone who has placed their trust in Jesus. In fact, faith expresses itself in love (verse 6). What happens when we lose the motivation to love?
  - Without love we become critical of those around us. We only see their faults and focus on their shortcomings. Take a moment and honestly assess your faith by how you're loving those around you.
- Re-read Galatians 5:19-21. What desires in this passage surprise you? Which do you need to crucify (v 24) in your own life?
- Re-read Galatians 5:22-23. Which of these qualities do you see growing in your life? Which do you need to ask the Spirit to help you grow in?

## Day 39



-Guided by Pastor Wil

### James 1 | First Words to a New Church.

- James was writing to a persecuted early church, yet he tells them they can have joy? How can someone have joy in troubled times?
- Reread verses 12-15. What do you think is the difference between testing and temptation? Where can you find these in your life? Where have you mislabeled them?
- What are all believers called to do quickly according to verses 19? Do you find this easy or difficult to do?
- Read verse 26 slowly 3 or 4 times. Do you feel as if you have control? Why would it be fooling yourself?

**1 John 3 | Love One Another.**

- What tension exists in verse 1? Why do verses 2-3 seem so important in light of verse 1?
- Sum up John's view of sin in verses 4-10. How do you view sin?
- John paints a very clear picture of the importance of loving one another. Why do you think love for one another is so important among believers?
- Why can it be difficult for us to obey (individually and corporately) verses 16-20? How can we overcome those difficulties?
- When have you felt the love John describes in this chapter? Share this story with someone today.

NOTES.



## NOTES.



"For the word of God is alive and powerful."

HEBREWS 4:12

*S.O.A.P. journaling is a simple and excellent way to both record and process what God has spoken to you. Through discussion, you may be able to look deeper into what God is speaking to you, gain new insight, and even encourage others.*

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