

BE
WITH
JESUS



DISCIPLESHIP
BOOKLET

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3. What is the Scripture “able” to make us wise to understand and experience (v. 15)? How does this influence our understanding of the Bible’s ultimate purpose and how we should focus as we read?

Read Matthew 4:4

4. What do you think it means to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God? What does this look like practically?

5. Is there a time in your life you can reflect on when God's word powerfully gave you life, encouraged you, convicted you, transformed you?

Read Psalm 1:1-4

6. What is the pattern of a righteous person's engagement with God's word?

WHEN SHOULD I READ?

It is helpful to pick a consistent time and make it a goal to get alone with God for daily study. This is the pattern laid down from Psalm 1! Though it does take time to read and meditate on the word, daily consistency is more important than “how much” we read.

Reflect on this quote from British preacher John Blanchard regarding the importance of the daily discipline:

Surely we only have to be realistic and honest with ourselves to know how regularly we need to turn to the Bible. How often do we face problems, temptation and pressure? Every day! Then how often do we need instruction, guidance, and greater encouragement? Every day! To catch all these felt needs up into an even greater issue, how often do we need to see God's face, hear his voice, feel his touch, know his power? ...Every day!

7. What excuses do you have for not being in the word regularly, and how will you overcome these excuses by faith?

8. What have you found to be helpful in your own life when it comes to being disciplined in the Word?

HOW DO I CHOOSE WHAT TO READ?

Bible reading plans are essential! Being able to open the Scripture each day with a plan provides confidence, consistency, and convenience for cultivating the discipline. There are many bible reading plans available online, through Bible apps, and on our discipleship resources page: <https://www.highview.org/discipleship/resources>

HOW CAN I LEARN TO APPROACH AND INTERPRET GOD'S WORD RIGHTLY?

S.O.A.P Journaling is one of many strategies that is helpful in developing discipline in this area. Journaling is helpful for several reasons: 1) It prompts a healthy approach to biblical interpretation, 2) Helps a person slow down and read thoughtfully, 3) Provides a means of accountability with other believers.

S – Begin by writing a small S, at the top left of your journal. The S stands for **Scripture**. Beside the S, write out a verse or set of verses that stand out to you in the passage you are reading.

O – Next, write an O, which stands for **observation**. An Observation is what you observe the author to be communicating the text. In Biblical interpretation, it is imperative we read and receive what is written and that we ask: “What does this say, and what does this mean?”

Every passage in the Bible has meaning and purpose! All Scripture was written by authors under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and each author wrote with intention and purpose in mind. Therefore, it is critical in reading the Bible that we aren’t primarily asking, “What does this mean to me?” or “How does this make me feel?” but rather we are seeking to understand what truth(s) God is revealing to us through the author. Understanding a passage’s meaning must precede making life application.

Here are some helpful questions for making observations of a passage’s meaning:

- What is the author saying?
- What is happening in this story? Who is involved?
- What does this passage teach me about God?
- What does this passage teach me about man and sin?
- How does this passage connect to other passages in the Bible?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an example to follow?
- Is there sin to avoid?
- Is there a promise to claim?

A – Next, write an A, which stands for **Application**. An application is how you plan to apply, obey, and respond to what God is saying in the passage. After discovering a passage’s meaning, then we can ask the question, “How should I respond to Jesus in light of what I have discovered?”

The Application portion of the journal is where you write down how you are being convicted to respond to the Lord. Here are helpful questions below to help guide your application of the text:

- What is your biggest takeaway?
- What do I need to do differently today considering this passage? How must I change?
- What do I need to believe as a result of what God reveals in this text?
- How does this passage lead me to worship God?
- Is there sin I need to confess after reading this passage?
- How does the grace of Jesus help me to become this?

P – Next, write a small P, which stands for **Prayer**. It is important to pray and ask God to give you the power to obey what He is saying in the passage. Spend time praying through what God has shown you. Some of our best times in prayer will flow out of what we have read from the word!

NOTES

DISCIPLINE #2: MEMORIZING GOD'S WORD

Memorizing scripture is a richly rewarding discipline in the life of a disciple of Jesus. We want to saturate our hearts and minds with God's word. Scripture memorization gives us power to obey Jesus during temptation. When the words of Christ are on our hearts, the Holy Spirit can remind us what to say as we witness to a person or as we minister to a discouraged friend. Knowing the word helps us stand firm in God's truth when our faith is challenged, and it brings life in the darkest days of discouragement.

Read Joshua 1:7-8 and Psalm 119:9-16

1. What do each of these passages uniquely teach us about the importance of memorizing God's word? Read each passage individually, and take note of the benefits and necessity of God's word being on your heart.

Read Romans 12:1-2 and Colossians 3:9-10

2. What do these passages have in common?

3. How does “renewal” (life-transformation) take place in the life of a believer? (for help, see also: John 17:17)

Read Matthew 4:1-4

6. What do we learn from Jesus' example?

7. What kinds of passages do you need to look up or memorize to battle the particular sins you fight against? What passages have been helpful in the past in your fight against sin?

Because “renewal” comes through the knowledge of God in His word, knowing his word is essential! We cannot change in our own strength, but only through knowing and believing his word. Memorizing scripture takes time and can be challenging, but God is pleased when we delight to meditate on His word. Pray that God would help you put His word in your heart.

HOW DO I MEMORIZE?

Having a method for scripture memory is effective. Repetition is key to locking in verses for memory. Your method should include initial repetition to memorize the verses and regular review to keep the verses. There are many Bible memory apps (“Bible Memory,” “Remember Me,” etc.) that can be downloaded at the app store that are incredibly helpful and user friendly.

Here is one example below of a Scripture memory method:

INDEX CARD METHOD:

1. **Read** the verse aloud 10 times. Begin and end with the scripture reference. Each time you read the verse, place emphasis on a different word in the verse or passage.
2. **Recite** the verse aloud 10 times. Begin and end with the scripture reference. If you get stuck, it’s okay to look at your Bible.
3. **Record** the verse on an index card. Write the scripture reference on one side of the index card. Flip the card over and write the verse word-for-word on the opposite side. Review the cards throughout the day.
4. **Review** your index cards regularly. Choose a specific day to review all your memorized verses so as to keep them in your memory.

HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT TO MEMORIZE?

There are many reasons to choose a verse or passage for memory! As you are choosing verses for memory, here are some helpful questions to ask: Was the verse particularly convicting or transformative for you in fighting sin? Does the verse help you prepare to effectively share the gospel with others? Is there a promise in the verse that has encouraged you or gives you strength? All Scripture is breathed out by God, therefore all Scripture is worth writing on our hearts.

NOTES

DISCIPLINE #3: PRAYER

“When faith ceases to pray, it ceases to live.” – E.M. Bounds

God has granted us access to his presence, power, and grace through prayer. We can enter His courts and directly communicate our thanksgivings, anxieties, desires, and doubts. Prayer is a necessary discipline for intimacy with God in the life of a disciple—it is communication with our heavenly Father. We are dependent on God to give us His power, provision, and help for everything in life. Because faith is revealed in drawing near to God (Heb. 11:6), prayer is one of the ultimate markers that faith exists in our lives!

Read Hebrews 10:19–22

1. How do we have access into the presence of God in prayer?

2. Because of the access we have, how should we approach God’s throne?

5. Why do you think we so often treat prayer more like a transaction rather than communion with our heavenly father?

Read Philippians 4:5-7

6. As you read this passage, what are you convicted of in your life that you should devote to prayer?

WHEN SHOULD I PRAY?

The Scripture says that we should “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17), so we should seek to keep our minds always directed upon the Lord!

Yet, it is very important that we have a planned time to pray. Planned times of prayer will lead to spontaneous prayer! King David, the prophet Daniel, and Jesus himself had a pattern in their lives of “getting alone” with the Lord in a devoted time of private prayer.

7. What do you find particularly difficult about prayer?
How do you need to overcome this by faith in Christ?

8. How can you practically partner with others in the church to strengthen your pursuit of prayer?

DISCOURAGEMENT AS IT RELATES TO PRAYER

It is often the case that believers neglect prayer because they have had experiences where they struggled to pray or stay focused in the past. Many feel guilty when prayer times do not go as they think they should.

We need to be encouraged and reminded that even our feeble attempts at prayer are covered and empowered by Jesus' grace! It is not our ability to focus, the strength of our words, or the length of our prayers that are pleasing to God. FAITH is pleasing to God, because faith is about reliance on Christ rather than oneself. Be encouraged in this—if you draw near to the Lord in prayer, no matter how much you may struggle, you can be confident that he is pleased that you are drawing near to him in faith (Heb. 11:6).

HOW SHOULD I PRAY?

In developing the discipline, consistency is more important than the amount of time devoted. While we do want to see growth in the amount of time we are spending with God in prayer, it will grow naturally through day-to-day consistency.

Listed below are a few different approaches to prayer that are helpful in developing the discipline. Don't be overwhelmed—it is not necessary to follow or complete one of these "methods" every time you pray. But be encouraged to utilize different focuses and strategies as you come before God. These are helpful in prompting our minds to pray according to God's word.

#1: A.C.T.S METHOD

A - ADORATION

Pray in worship and adoration to God for who he is!

C - CONFESSION

Confess sin and recognize your need for Jesus and His grace.

T - THANKSGIVING

Offer thanks to God for who he is and all the things he has done.

S - SUPPLICATION

Ask God for needs in your life and for those around you.

The A.C.T.S method flows out of the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6. These elements capture the focuses of Christ as he taught his disciples to pray.

#2: PRAYING THE SCRIPTURES

One of the best approaches to prayer is to simply respond to what you are reading in God's word. As the Scripture convicts you, encourages you, or brings to light something new, call out to the Lord in response! Pray according to what you are reading in the Scripture—let Him guide your heart and mind in prayer. The best prayer times flow out of response to what God has spoken to you in his word.

NOTES

DISCIPLINE #4: EVANGELISM

Jesus saves us, transforms our lives, and fills us with His spirit to send us into a lost world to proclaim His good news. God gives us power to be His witnesses in evangelism. Matthew 28:18 says that “all authority” has been given to Jesus and Jesus tells us to “go and make disciples”. This is the authority with which we go – Jesus’ power. The message of the gospel itself is God’s power to save those who believe. If we are faithful to share the gospel, we are successful in evangelism. Our job is simply to open our mouths; God’s role is opening hearts.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

1. What kinds of fears and doubts do you have as it relates to this command?

2. What truths are communicated in this passage that should ground your confidence to carry out this mission?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:10–20

3. List all the motivations found for evangelism in these verses.

Evangelism is the communication of the gospel. Our aim is to tell people about Jesus, to help them understand the Gospel, and to invite them to accept Jesus as savior by responding in repentance and faith.

**WHAT COMPONENTS OF
TRUTH MUST BE PRESENT IN
A GOSPEL PRESENTATION?
(GOD, MAN, CHRIST, RESPONSE)**

The gospel is truth that must be heard and understood. A person must understand who God is, who they are as a sinner, what Christ has done for them, and how they must respond considering the gospel message. Apart from hearing and understanding, a person cannot believe!

God – God created us to love and glorify Him. He is loving and holy in His character. (Genesis 1:1, 1 Peter 1:16)

Man – Humans are sinful, having rebelled against God. God’s holiness demands His just wrath towards sinners through death and hell. (Romans 3:10–11, 23; Romans 6:23)

Christ – Jesus is God in human flesh. God the Father sent Jesus to save sinners by living a sinless life, dying on the cross as a substitute for sin, and rising from the dead. (1 Peter 3:18, 2 Corinthians 5:21, John 1:1–3, 14)

Response – The proper response to receive the gospel for the forgiveness of sins is repentance from sin towards God and faith in Christ alone as Savior. A person must repent and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15, John 3:36)

BEING INTENTIONAL

Personal evangelism should be intentional. It must be purposeful. We must be looking to engage lost people where we live, work, and do recreation with the gospel of Jesus.

Read Acts 17:16-17

6. How was Paul intentional with the gospel during his time in Athens?

7. In what ways can you be intentional to have gospel conversations this week?

NOTES

BIBLICAL FASTING

“If we are awakened to see fasting for the joy it can bring, as a means of God’s grace to strengthen and sharpen godward affections, then we might find ourselves holding a powerful new tool for enriching our enjoyment of Jesus” – David Mathis

THE NEED FOR FASTING

In the New Testament, fasting is never commanded. However, this isn’t because it wasn’t expected! Jesus said, “when you fast...” This language implies that Jesus assumes that those who serve him will fast. Today, fasting is one of the least practiced spiritual disciplines, as it is misunderstood by some and intimidating to others.

Read Matthew 6:16-18

1. Have you ever participated in Christian fasting? If so, share your experience.

2. Jesus speaks of rewards from the Father in response to faith filled fasting. What might this mean? Why do you think Jesus shared this detail?

3. What warning does Jesus give here?

THE PURPOSE OF FASTING

“Fasting is a temporary renunciation of something that is in itself good, like food, in order to intensify our expression of need for something greater — namely, God and his work in our lives.” – John Piper

Many people fast today for many reasons. It is important to distinguish what marks a fast as a spiritual endeavor in contrast with other kinds of fasting. Though fasting can involve abstaining from a variety of things, normal Christian fasting typically involves choosing to go without food, but not water, for the purpose of drawing near to the Lord and focusing upon his kingdom.

There is nothing inherently righteous about abstaining from food. We must not treat fasting as a way to earn God’s favor. We are accepted by God solely through faith in what Christ has done for us—through his perfect life and substitutionary death—not our own works. Fasting makes us cognizant of our weakness that we might grow in dependency in relationship with Christ.

Read Isaiah 58:1-12

4. Look first to verses 3-5. What wrong motives for fasting, or actions accompanying fasting, does God condemn?

5. Now, look to verses 6-12. List all the things you see that are righteous motivations and reasons for fasting.

Read Mark 9:14-29

6. What kinds of things should we learn from this story and Jesus' concluding words in verse 29?

Other Biblical purposes for fasting: (Adapted from: Spiritual Disciplines, by Don Whitney)

- Strengthening Prayer (Ezra 8:23; Acts 13:1-3)
 - Seeking God's Guidance (Judges 20:26; Acts 14:23)
 - Expressing Love and Worship to God (Luke 2:37)
 - To Overcome Temptation and Dedicate Yourself to God (Matthew 4:1-11)
 - Ministering to the Needs of Others (Isaiah 58:3-7)
 - Expressing Concern for the Word of God (Nehemiah 1:3-4; Daniel 9:3)
 - Seeking Deliverance or Protection (2 Chronicles 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23)
7. Do you feel compelled by the Spirit to fast for any of these purposes?

HOW TO FAST (PRACTICAL IDEAS)

While fasting, you will be hungry! Allow your hunger to direct your mind to the purpose of your fast—to draw nearer to Christ in dependency on him. When you feel hungry, let your hunger drive you to prayer. Let the longing that you have for food intensify your longing for the worship and glory of God, the salvation of the lost, and freedom from sin!

Make a Plan - What is the purpose of your fast? When will you fast? How long? (Don't just work through lunch or try to distract yourself from hunger, use that time to pray or serve others.)

Start small - Consider starting with a 24 hour fast. (e.g. 6pm Wednesday - 6pm Thursday)

Try different kinds of fasting - Personal, Group, Partial, etc....

GROUP CHALLENGE

As a group choose a 24 hour period that you and your group will fast. Also make sure as a group to identify the purposes for which you are fasting. The next time you meet discuss how it went.

NOTES

STEWARDSHIP

“The way you worship with your money and your possessions is to get them and use them and lose them in a way that shows how much you treasure God — not money.” – John Piper

God is Creator, and we are his creation. As disciples of Jesus, we realize that everything we have, including our time, talents, and resources, has been graciously given to us by God. Therefore, we desire to honor God with everything he has given us! Stewardship is the discipline of managing the gifts God has bestowed on us for his glory. Christ gave himself up for us, therefore we must be willing to surrender all for him.

Read Genesis 1:1 & Psalm 24:1

1. What area of your life do you have the most difficulty recognizing as under God’s ownership, and why?

TIME AND GIFTS

Read Ephesians 5:15-16

2. What reason is given for us making the most of our time? What do you think Paul means by this?

3. What kinds of personal adjustments do you need to make to wisely order your time for Christ's glory?

4. How should this affect the way you view church attendance, serving, and utilization of your personal gifts within the church?

MONEY

“In a very real sense our money represents us. Therefore, how we use it reveals who we are, for it manifests our priorities, our values, and our heart. To the degree we use our money and resources Christianly, we prove our growth in Christlikeness”. – Don Whitney

Read Matthew 6:19–21

5. As a follower of Jesus, how should we think about money?

Money in and of itself is not bad, but the way we manage our money is a spiritual matter. As followers of Jesus, we must make all our decisions, including financial, based on the Word of God. The way we use our money points to what we really value and worship. Christians must faithfully manage the money that is entrusted to them and be careful not to be controlled by it. We must use that which the Lord has entrusted to us for the sake of the Kingdom!

GIVING

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-12

6. What do the words “must give” make clear to a Christian?

7. What do you need to sacrifice or adjust in your budget to worship through giving? How should the phrase “sacrificial giving” influence how you think about what giving should be like?

Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

8. Seeing this passage as an example, why do you think that giving systematically and regularly is important?

Disciples of Jesus give with a cheerful heart to the work of the Lord and the advance of the gospel. We must trust that God will always provide what we need!

We are commanded to give regularly, but we are not bound to a particular amount or percentage in giving. Based upon the instruction we can receive in the Old Testament, a solid and disciplined starting point is 10% of one's income. Each person must spend time with Christ, examine their own heart, and determine what it looks like to give cheerfully and sacrificially.

GROUP CHALLENGE

- Spend time in prayer this week and ask the Lord how you can be a better steward of your time, gifts, and resources. Come ready to discuss with the group.
- Commit to giving systematically to the church. 10% is a helpful starting point, but ask the Lord how he would have you give sacrificially.

THE STORY OF THE SON

SEEING THE STORY OF CHRIST UNFOLD IN SCRIPTURE FROM BEGINNING TO END

For many people, knowing the story of Scripture seems to be a daunting task. One can come under the impression that the sixty-six books of the Bible are disconnected and seemingly unrelated, or maybe that there is simply too much to learn to make sense of it all.

Yet, when a person sees for the first time the uncanny coherence and cohesion of all Scripture to direct our focus to Jesus, it brings such worship! When we see the primacy of Christ and his mission to save sinners from Genesis to Revelation, we begin to grasp the heart of God for our world. When we create new categories in our minds for understanding the flow of Scripture throughout history, we are enabled to make sense of it and God's working throughout the Old Testament overall. When we see direct foreshadowing and prophecy of Christ fulfilled in the New Testament, our hearts burn within us (Luke 24:32). When we see clearly that God has orchestrated all of history to bring redemption in Christ, we begin to ponder just how infinitely wise and powerful he truly is.

The purpose of this discipleship guide is to provide a simple but full framework for a person to be able to comprehend the big picture of the Bible and memorize it for the sake of teaching it to others. This guide will include ten lessons that seek to capture the basic movement of Scripture from Creation to God's restoration of all things. It will begin with the motivation for reading and understanding the Bible

with a focus on Christ, based on the words and actions of Jesus himself.

HOW SHOULD WE READ THE OLD TESTAMENT?

Understanding the Scripture in light of Christ is not merely an interpretive strategy. Jesus reveals to us in several portions of Scripture that a correct understanding of God's word will draw our gaze upon him (John 5:39, John 5:46, etc.) Study Luke 24 below to see Jesus' heart for his disciples in understanding Scripture.

Read Luke 24:13–27

1. Why was Jesus unrecognizable to these men?

2. When Jesus says, “Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer...?” What does he mean by this as it relates to the Old Testament Scripture? Can you think of any passages in Scripture which relate to this claim?
3. How does Jesus teach us to read the Bible, specifically the Old Testament Scripture, in verse 27?

4. How can we become sidetracked in our study of Scripture, losing focus on the centrality of Christ and all he has done? What do you think are some common pitfalls, and how can we avoid these?

THE MOVEMENTS WITHIN THE STORY OF THE SON

Below you will find the basic outline that will be utilized over the course of the guide. Take time to commit this outline to memory for next week. Over the course of time together you will systematically work through these five movements of Scripture. When you have finished the guide, if you have been diligent, you will be able to personally understand and communicate the overall story of Scripture.

Memorize these five words that capture the movement of Scripture:

Creation - Fall - Hope - Redemption - Restoration

NOTES

MOVEMENT I: CREATION

There is truly not a more foundational aspect of Scripture to believe than God's creation of all things. This is where the story must always begin, as it is fundamental to our understanding of God, our existence, the world, and Christ's work. This week's lesson will direct you to a few passages for discussion of creation and its implications, and it will conclude by prompting you to memorize this first movement of the story.

GOD: CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

Read Genesis 1:1-5

1. "God created the heavens and the earth." What are some critical implications we can draw from this single truth?

4. Read Genesis 2:15–17. What was the one command given to the man, and what was the consequence for disobedience?

SEEING CHRIST IN CREATION

Jesus was not only with God when the world was created, but he in fact IS God. Nothing that was made was made without him. Notice the similarities in John 1:1–5 below to Genesis 1:1–5.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:1–5

One can see the power and nature of Christ as God in Colossians:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. – Colossians 1:15-20

NOTES

MOVEMENT II: FALL

The story of mankind's disobedience and subsequent fall under the curse of sin gives complete explanation to the brokenness of our world. From this portion of history, we come into a clear understanding of our ultimate problem of sin in this life.

TEMPTATION

Read Genesis 3:1-5

1. What strategies does Satan employ in tempting the woman? How can you better guard against temptation knowing that he operates in this way?

THE CURSE

Read Genesis 3:16–19

God promised death in Genesis 2 in the case of man's disobedience, and we see this come to fruition in Genesis 3.

4. Though the curse of sin is horrific and tragic, how does the broken nature of our world provide talking points and commonality with others when sharing the Gospel? How can we utilize the truths regarding the brokenness of Creation to talk to others about the reality of sin and need for Christ?

SEEING CHRIST DESPITE THE FALL

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. – Genesis 3:21

Even as early as Genesis 3, we see the kindness and grace of God in response to human sinfulness. In Gen. 3:21, God covers the shame and nakedness of the man and woman with “garments of skin.” For skins to be provided as covering, an animal would have had to be sacrificed. Thus, it seems there is a foreshadowing of sacrificial death and covering here in the very beginning. Jesus would soon come as the Lamb of God to be sacrificed for the sins of the world, in order that we might be covered with his righteousness!

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. – Romans 5:18–19

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul makes very important connections between Adam, the head of humanity, and Christ who has come to make all things right again. Just as Adam’s sin led to the curse of sin falling on all image-bearers, so has Jesus’ righteousness, his perfect record, afforded us the opportunity to be forgiven. The result of sin is the curse and consequence of death, but in Christ alone there is eternal life. Only Jesus has both paid the debt that God requires and achieved the righteousness God requires.

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 1)

THE PROMISED SON OF THE WOMAN

It is amazing to see just how gracious God is from the very beginning of Scripture. Even amid the first sin, God makes a hope-filled promise that should capture our attention. The promise found below is so important because it gives us a lens through which we begin to interpret the rest of Scripture that follows.

THE FIRST GOSPEL PROMISE

Read Genesis 3:14-15

1. Taking Jesus' instruction in Luke 24 that we should read the Old Testament in light of him, what can we understand from these verses?

WHO IS THE SON?

4. Quickly glance through your Bible at the following things in Scripture:
- The header, or caption of Genesis 4
 - The basic contents of Genesis 5
 - The Story of Noah from Genesis 6-9

With the knowledge that we are awaiting or looking for the “Son of the Woman,” does this cause you to think about these parts of Scripture differently? Why is Genesis 4 even more tragic? Why is the genealogy important in Genesis 5? What might we hope for after the flood of Noah, a descendant of the woman, in Genesis 6-9?

Dwelling upon questions such as these begin to reveal the continuity of Scripture as a story of God’s work in history.

SEEING CHRIST IN THE PROMISE

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. – Romans 16:20

Paul had a clear understanding that there is a connection between Genesis 3:15 and the work of the cross. Through his work on the cross, Jesus has provided a way back into right relationship with the Father. When a person believes in Christ, they are immediately justified and filled with the Spirit—reconciled to God. Yet, the work will not be complete until Jesus returns to judge the Earth, bringing a finality to the judgment of Satan and creating a new Heavens and new Earth. Then, peace will be finally established, and Satan will be finally crushed.

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 2)

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

As the story of Scripture unfolds, the next key individual and event in the Son's coming is the Father of Israel—Abraham. It is difficult to emphasize enough the significance of Abraham in the story of Scripture. Because of the significance of God's covenant relationship with Abraham and all that flows from it in the storyline, this lesson will be longer than the others.

Abraham's relationship with God is foundational to our understanding of salvation by faith, and the promises given to Abraham are central to our comprehension of the rest of Israel's history. Pay close attention to the things that the Lord promises to Abraham, a Son of the Woman who will ultimately be in the genealogy of Christ himself.

CALLED OUT FOR SAKE OF THE PROMISE

Read Genesis 12:1-3

1. In this call of Abram (who God would rename Abraham), list the five things that God promises.

Read Genesis 15:1-6

2. Why is Abraham troubled in Genesis 15, and what does God promise?

3. Why is Genesis 15:6 so vital and important for us as Christians? (For further optional study, read Paul's words in Romans 4)

Read Genesis 17:1-8

4. What additional promise is made here regarding the offspring of Abraham in the context of verse 6? What will come through Abraham?

5. So far, God has promised that Abraham would be a great nation, he would be blessed, all the families of the Earth would be blessed through him, and that he would be given “offspring,” a son, and that kings would come from him. How would you explain today that these things have come to pass? Read Acts 3:25-26 and Galatians 3:7-9 for help.

CALLED OUT FOR A PURPOSE

Read Genesis 18:17-19

6. Write out what God commanded Abraham and his children to uphold if the promise is indeed to come to pass. Do you think they can uphold these things?

SEEING CHRIST IN THE PROMISE

Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ. – Galatians 3:16

Paul helps us understand the theological significance of these promises to Abraham throughout the Old Testament. Jesus is the reason why all the families of the Earth can be blessed—he died for them! The question above is asked, related to Genesis 18:19, “Do you think they can uphold these things?” The answer to that question is of course, ‘No!’ Abraham would have a son named Isaac, Isaac a son named Jacob, Jacob a son named Judah, each in the line of Christ, but each who would personally fail.

Only Jesus, the offspring of Abraham, the offspring of the woman, upheld the way of the Lord—the way of justice and righteousness.

THE OFFSPRING OF THE WOMAN: FROM EVE TO THE TIME OF EGYPT

Adam and Eve

Seth

Enosh

Kenan

Mahalel

Jared

Enoch

Methuselah

Lamech

Noah

Shem

Arpachshad

Shelah

Eber

Peleg

Reu

Serug

Nahor

Terah

Abraham

Isaac

Jacob

Judah

Perez

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 3)

THE EXODUS AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUS LAW

Tracing the offspring of Abraham through Genesis, we see that Abraham fathers Isaac, Isaac fathers Jacob, and Jacob fathers Judah. God's work in history is progressing, but by the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus, Israel as a nation is enslaved to the Egyptians.

This slavery in Egypt is no accident within God's plan, for God promised Abraham that this would happen beforehand in Genesis 15. What follows in the events of the Passover, the giving of the Law, and the institution of the sacrificial system is paramount in seeing God's redemption unfold. The Lord will use each of these events to begin framing an understanding in the Israelites of his grace, his righteousness, and his justice. This lesson will focus on the biblical significance of the Passover and God's covenant with Israel on Sinai.

The Exodus event is what might be called an “archetypal event” of what was to come in Christ. God’s rescue of Israel from Egypt through the Passover and his subsequent delivery of them across the Red Sea (Exodus 14) is the ultimate picture of salvation in the Old Testament. God redeemed his people from slavery in Egypt just as he would ultimately deliver us from slavery to our sin by the blood of the Lamb of God. He did all this freely by his grace. What follows this is extremely important.

If you remember Genesis 18:19, Abraham and his offspring were commanded to uphold justice and righteousness if they were to receive the blessing God had promised. When God begins unveiling his law to Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai, he demonstrates exactly what justice and righteousness entail. He reveals his standards for his people, and they enter into a covenant with him to obey these commands. God will bless them for obedience to this covenant, but curse them for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28).

RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN THE LAW

Read Exodus 20:1–21

3. Here in the Ten Commandments, we see God’s standard of righteousness set forth. How is the law a blessing? How is the law a curse? Read Galatians 3:10–11 for help.

4. Will it be possible for the nation of Israel to uphold righteousness according to the law? Where would you point someone in the Bible to prove this?

SEEING CHRIST IN THE LAW

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” – Matthew 5:17

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. – Romans 8:3–4

While we could never hope to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law ourselves, Jesus came for this very purpose! He never sinned. He submitted his will to the Father perfectly in order that the faithful would receive his righteousness. Just like Abraham was counted righteous, they would be too.

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 4)

THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM AND GOD'S JUSTICE

At the close of the book of Exodus, God descends upon the tabernacle (tent) that Moses and the people built according to his commands. If one remembers the beginning of Scripture, God was dwelling with his people! God again makes his dwelling with his people here, so this is a great moment. Yet, there is a looming problem.

God has revealed his righteous standard in the law, and his people cannot keep it due to the curse of sin. The question becomes: How can a holy God dwell with a sinful people? What follows in the book of Leviticus provides explanation to this dilemma and frames an understanding for the Israelites, and us, of why we so desperately need Jesus.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLOOD

Read Leviticus 17:10-16

1. What is important about the “blood” of a creature, and what is it given for?

Leviticus 16 describes in detail what is known as Yom Kippur, or the day of atonement. Once a year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, the high priest of Israel would enter the tabernacle to bring sacrifice before the Lord on the Mercy Seat. Blood would be shed on behalf of the nation of Israel as both a recognition of sin and an act of faith in God to forgive based on sacrifice.

This shedding of blood is where divine justice was shown to take place for sin. Since righteousness was not kept, justice would need to be executed in the nation of Israel. God utilized the administration of the Levitical system to instruct his people in what it means to be made right with him. Nevertheless, animal sacrifice would always fall short as a true means of redemption.

THE NEED FOR A SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE

Read Psalm 49:7–9

(David's reflections on sacrifice and death)

4. Looking to these verses, what is David recognizing? What are the implications of this for the sacrificial system in general?

Since the book of Genesis, this study has been tracing the development of a promised “Son of the Woman.” The Son has been traced through Abraham, through his offspring, and now it has been witnessed that God has revealed to Israel both his righteous standard and his means of justice for sin. For the promises to be realized to Abraham, justice and righteousness must be upheld (Genesis 18:19). Tragically, Israel would not be able to accomplish this. Yet, in this inability, one can truly begin to see the need for Christ and his sacrifice.

SEEING CHRIST IN THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. – Hebrews 10:1–4

It is not difficult to see Christ in the sacrificial system, it was all about him! It was a “shadow” of what was to come. The author of Hebrews recognizes something that should be obvious to all—animal sacrifices never truly took away sins, and this is evidenced in the fact that they were continually offered! If a sacrifice was sufficient, it would need be only offered once. This is the beauty of Christ’s sacrifice, he was offered once to bear the sins of many (Hebrews 9:28). It is finished.

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 5)

THE HOPE OF A JUST AND RIGHTEOUS KING

After the giving of the law in Exodus and Leviticus, we immediately see a failure to obey among the people of Israel. Due to sin, Israel is judged to wander in the wilderness for forty years, and it is not until Moses passes away that the people again start making serious progress in obtaining the promised land (see Genesis 12:1–3 regarding the original promise). Joshua takes command of the people of Israel and begins leading them in conquest according to God’s commands, and the land begins to be divided according to the twelve tribes of Israel. There is a temporary rest achieved toward the end of the book of Joshua, but things begin to again spiral downward after Joshua’s death.

As time passes, the period of the judges comes and “everyone began to do what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6). Essentially, the book of Judges traces Israel’s continual bent toward sin and rebellion against God. Only when ‘judges’ were raised up that fought Israel’s enemies did they in any way submit to the Lord and have peace. The people knew they needed a leader, one who would fight for them, but they fail to recognize it is ultimately God himself they need. At the beginning of 1 Samuel, against the advice of the prophet Samuel, the people request a king for all the wrong reasons, and God tells Samuel they have ultimately rejected him as king (1 Samuel 8:7). God grants to them Saul, yet this ends sadly, for Saul shows himself to

not be a man after God’s heart. Nevertheless, we begin to see the promise to Abraham—that ‘kings shall come from you’—coming to pass.

This is where we pick up in the storyline of biblical history this week. We see God’s choosing of David to be king. He will be instrumental in God’s promises to Abraham coming to pass, and moreover, he will serve as a great picture of Christ the King who would come.

THE KING GOD DESIRES

Read 1 Samuel 13:13-14 and 1 Samuel 16:1-13

1. As you read both the words of the Lord to Samuel in chapter 13, as well as the events in 16, what things stick out to you that God is seeking in a person? In your own life, how do you feel called to respond?

2. As we look to Saul's failure and then to the lives of David and Solomon, what becomes clear about earthly kings and government? How should this influence the way we think about God's Kingdom?

Through much tumult, and after many years passing, David finally assumes the throne over all Israel in Judah. What follows in 2 Samuel 7 is incredibly important in the story-line. God makes a covenant with David that not only has direct ties with the promises to Abraham (as David is a son of Abraham, a son of the promise), but we gain an even greater specificity in the identity and role of the coming 'Son' that was promised in Genesis 3:15.

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

Read 2 Samuel 7:8-13

3. Look back at Genesis 12:1-3. What similarities do you see with 2 Samuel 7:9-11?

4. Look at 2 Samuel 7:12–13 and compare with Genesis 17:6–7. What similarities do you see here? What should all the above similarities reveal to us about the connection between David and Abraham?

5. Focus on 2 Samuel 7:12–13. What all can we know about what is to come from the promises that are made to King David?

SEEING CHRIST: SON OF DAVID, THE KING

(Paul's words in Acts)

Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. - Acts 13:21-23

Paul clearly articulates who Jesus is in relationship to David. He is the Son of David, the heir to the throne, who has come to be Savior and King.

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee." - Matthew 21:6-11

IMPORTANT RECAP

It is important to see the connections of Scripture so that one is aware of how God is continuing to work throughout history. First, God makes a promise to the woman and the serpent—we begin to expect and hope for a Son who will triumph over sin and death. Years later, God takes Abraham and promises that all hope in the promise of offspring will ultimately come through his lineage, and his descendants are commanded to uphold justice and righteousness. God forms Israel and demonstrates what is truly just and righteous. He gives Israel the law and institutes sacrifice to form an understanding of what will be required for Israel to be forgiven and found in righteous position before him. As history continues, it becomes abundantly evident that the people of Israel, and all people, need one who can lead them and deliver them. King David is chosen by God to rule over Israel, and David is promised that a Son will be born who will build God's house and reign forever. We know who this Son is, we know that Jesus has come as the Son of David to reign as King. Yet the story of the hope of Israel throughout history has not yet reached this point—the prophets have more to say in clarifying exactly who this Son would be.

NOTES

MOVEMENT III: HOPE (PART 6)

PROPHETIC PROMISES OF THE SON

Have you noticed how the storyline of the Old Testament functions a bit like a funnel? The promise at the beginning of Genesis is very broad and non-specific. We are only told that a Son of the Woman will ultimately triumph over the serpent. However, as history moves forward, the promises of God become increasingly more specific. Abraham is chosen and God promises the formation of a nation through his offspring, he promises kings, and he promises that all the families of the Earth will be blessed through him. Yet, Abraham was completely uncertain as to how. The sacrificial system unfolds under Moses because of sin, and this revealed the need for atonement. History progresses and the monarchy is established within Israel—kings actually begin to reign who descended from Abraham. David is anointed and is promised that a king would be born who would reign forever. All these promises would be realized through his offspring. Everything is funneling downward toward specific redemption: Christ the Son and his cross.

When the prophets begin to arise following David's reign, and the birth of Christ is coming within a millennium, God begins giving revelation that is overwhelmingly specific. In this lesson, some of the most explicit prophecies of Christ will be explored. We will view prophecies of Christ that are specifically in alignment with the promises and themes that have been in focus.

THE COMING KING

Read Isaiah 9:6-7

1. What words and language stick out in these verses based on what we have studied thus far? As you are able, connect these to past passages we have studied. (For help, see especially Genesis 18:19, 2 Samuel 7:12-13)

Read Isaiah 11:1-9

2. What characterizes the reign of this King? How do you see this fulfilled in Jesus, and how does this excite you and bring you hope?

The king described in Isaiah 11:1 is referred to as a “branch” shooting forth from the “stump of Jesse.” This is another way of saying the King would be a Son of David, for David’s father was named Jesse. Read the following passage below prophesied by Jeremiah, and see even more connections to this Branch, the Son of David, who would execute justice and righteousness as King. Jeremiah promises he will “save” his people.

Read Jeremiah 23:5–6 and Jeremiah 33:15–16

3. Do you find the name given to the Branch at the end of verse 23:6 and 33:16 to be a striking one? Why? Why does the concept of “The Lord is our Righteousness” draw such close parallels to Christ in the New Testament?

THE SUFFERING SERVANT KING

Read Isaiah 53

4. What is revealed in this prophecy regarding how the Lord will ultimately bring righteousness to his people? (See especially verses 5 and 11)

For further study of passages that speak of the Branch and promised Justice and Righteousness of the King, see: Zechariah 3, Hosea 2:19–20, Psalm 72:1–2, Psalm 89:14, Psalm 97:2.

SEEING CHRIST FULFILL PROPHECY

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. – 1 Peter 2:21–25

NOTES

MOVEMENT IV: REDEMPTION

THE JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST

Everything in history is moving to the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. When one begins to read the New Testament considering the flow of God's promises that have been shown in this study, the faithfulness of God is truly set on display.

THE KING IS HERE

Read Matthew 1:1

1. How does this first verse (and the entire chapter for that matter) take on a whole new meaning when read in context of the flow of Biblical history?

2. What does this show you about who God is and why we can trust him?

JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS EXECUTED

Since Genesis 18:19, we have been tracking the need for God’s people to uphold justice and righteousness if the promises of Abraham are going to be realized. Israel failed again and again to do this. It was promised later through the prophets that the coming Son of David would indeed take on this responsibility as King (Isaiah 9:6–7). Jeremiah promised that the name of the coming King would be “The Lord is our Righteousness,” and Isaiah likewise affirms that this Son of David would make “many to be accounted righteous (Isaiah 53:11).” Yet, Isaiah promised that this Son of David would suffer to do so (Isaiah 53:5).

In Christ, we have complete revelation as to how all these promises have come to pass. We know how the Seed of the Woman has finally come to crush the serpent.

Jesus has established the coming of his kingdom through the righteousness and justice of his cross. Through his perfect life, he accomplished righteousness according to the law for all who would believe. Through his wrath-bearing death, he paid for sin and did what was just. Jesus is the Just and Righteous King who has brought to pass all that was promised in the Old Testament. See Galatians 3:

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. – Galatians 3:7-14

THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY OF THE SON

Jesus is **the Son of the Woman** (Genesis 3:15)

Jesus is **the Son of Abraham**, the promised King who blesses all the families of the Earth through his cross. (Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 15, Genesis 17, 18:19)

Jesus is **the fulfillment of all righteousness** according to the law of Moses (Exodus 20)

Jesus is **the ultimate, final, just sacrifice for sin** (Leviticus 17:11)

Jesus is **the Son of David, the King**, who will reign over his kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7:12-13)

Jesus is **the Coming Son, “The Lord is our Righteousness,” the Branch**, who came to suffer for our sin (Isaiah 9:6-7, Jeremiah 23:5, Isaiah 53)

NOTES

MOVEMENT V: RESTORATION

LOOKING TO THE CONSUMMATION OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Jesus' death and resurrection brought history into an entire new era. Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father and assumed his rightful role as king. However, today we currently remain in the period between Christ's first and second coming. The inauguration of God's kingdom began with the first coming of Jesus—through his cross he has made reconciliation possible between God and man (2 Corinthians 5:20). Jesus is currently building his kingdom through changing the hearts of men and women, and this will be completed upon his return. At this point, he will restore all things to himself, creating a new Heaven and Earth.

This lesson is focused upon both the restoration that is occurring now, as well as the final restoration promised at Christ's second coming.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Read Matthew 28:16-20 and 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

1. Under Christ's authority, we are commanded to be part of the reconciliation of men and women to God. How are you currently engaging in this task? Who is God putting on your heart to share the Gospel with?

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Read Revelation 19:11-21 and Revelation 20:11-15

2. In these verses, what excites you? What brings you fear? Are you ready for this day?

3. Why are justice and righteousness necessary precursors to peace?

FINAL RESTORATION

Read Revelation 21:1–8 and Revelation 22

4. Pray together as a group letting the truths of the verses prompt you. Call out for Christ to ready you for his return, to use you on Earth to lead others to him, and for him to come quickly.

NOTES

APPENDIX: COMMITTING THE STORY OF THE SON TO MEMORY

CREATION

In Genesis 1 and 2, God created everything that exists, and he created mankind to represent him on Earth. God gave man a command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and warned him that disobedience would bring death.

FALL

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve sin against God by disobeying his command, and this brings the curse of both physical and spiritual death upon the world.

HOPE

PART 1 - THE PROMISED SON OF THE WOMAN

Despite sin, God promises hope! In Genesis 3:15, God promises that a Son of the Woman will triumph over Satan. The rest of the Old Testament is about the unfolding story of the coming of this Son, Jesus Christ.

PART 2 – ABRAHAM AND GOD’S PROMISE

Years pass and mankind multiplies. God calls a man named Abraham to follow him. God promises Abraham in Genesis 12 and 17 that all the families of the Earth would be blessed through his offspring, and that kings would come from him. He commands Abraham to keep justice and righteousness if the promises are to be realized.

PART 3 – MOSES AND THE LAW

Abraham’s family is multiplied, but his descendants find themselves enslaved to the Egyptians at the beginning of Exodus. Through the Passover, God redeems his people from Egypt through Moses and brings them to Sinai where he gives his Law in Exodus 20. The law reveals God’s righteousness and what it means to live according to his rule.

PART 4 – THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM AND GOD’S JUSTICE

God begins dwelling with his people in the tabernacle, but the question arises, “How can a holy God dwell among sinful people?” In Leviticus 17 we learn that blood must be shed to make atonement for sin. Sacrifice is the way to justice and reconciliation.

PART 5 – THE HOPE OF A JUST AND RIGHTEOUS KING

As history progresses, it becomes clear that Israel needs one who will save them from their enemies and lead them to be righteous. God anoints a man named David as king, a son of Abraham, a Son of the Woman. In 2 Samuel 7, God promises David that he will have a son who will establish the kingdom and reign forever.

PART 6 - PROPHETIC PROMISES OF THE SON

As kings rise and fall in Israel, the nation falls deeper into sin and nears exile. God raises up prophets like Isaiah who speak of the coming Son of David who will reign with justice and righteousness. Isaiah writes that this king will ultimately suffer to save his people. Jeremiah promises that this King will be the righteousness of his people.

REDEMPTION

In Matthew 1:1, Jesus—the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, the Son of the Woman, is finally born. Jesus lives a righteous life according to God’s law, and Jesus dies under the justice of God for sin as a sacrifice in the place of sinners. All who put their faith in Jesus will be counted as righteous and experience the blessings promised to Abraham. Through his work, Jesus is now reigning as King.

RESTORATION

Under Jesus’ authority, the church is given the command to make disciples until the end of the age. According to Revelation 19–22, when Jesus returns, he will judge the wicked, establish the righteous, and make all things new. Mankind will dwell with Christ in peace forever!

