



EIGHTH GRADE

Discipleship Essentials Pathway

DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS PATHWAY

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System Map

LEGEND

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- College



Discipleship Essentials Pathway

Detailed Overview

Elementary Schoolers

- Kindergarten: The Bible
- First Grade: God
- Second Grade: Humanity
- Third Grade: Jesus
- Fourth Grade: Salvation
- Fifth Grade: Spiritual Growth

Middle Schoolers

- Sixth Grade: The Holy Spirit
- Seventh Grade: Identity in Christ
- Eighth Grade: Holiness

High Schoolers

- Ninth Grade: Evangelism and Missions
- Tenth Grade: The Church
- Eleventh Grade: Stewardship
- Twelfth Grade: Apologetics

College Students

- Freshman: Spiritual Design & Health
- Sophomore: Relationships
- Junior: The End Times
- Senior: Work

Introduction

Note: You may be a student going through this Pathway on your own. That is awesome! If you would like, continue through the Pathway on your own; but you may also consider doing so with a small group leader, friend, or mentor. This is also an opportunity to invite someone in your family to study with you. Feel free to reach out to the Student Ministry Team for help or guidance as you walk through your own discipleship journey.

To be a follower of Jesus means that we are to lead others to follow Jesus, too. Contrary to the spirit of the famous “The Buck Stops Here” placard on President Harry S. Truman’s desk, Jesus’ desk placard might have said something like “You’re One Link in a Long Chain.” You don’t have to disciple anyone alone; you’re an essential part of the process. To be a *disciple* of Jesus is to be a *discipler* of others, just as Jesus told us in what is known as the Great Commission:

Then Jesus came to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end.”
– Matthew 28:18–20

Often, when we think of people discipling to fulfill the Great Commission, we think of men and women discipling other men and women at coffee shops, a collegiate minister discipling students at the student union, or perhaps a church staff discipling its members on the church campus. All of that is true, of course, but one of the most important places for discipleship is our homes. As a Christian, God has called you to disciple others; as a Christian parent or guardian, He has called you to disciple your children. This is the central point of what God told His people, the Israelites, through Moses:

“The commandments I give you today must be in your hearts. Make sure your children learn them. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you walk along the road. Speak about them when you go to bed. And speak about them when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).

This is your highest calling as a parent and family—and it’s what we want to help you with through the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway*.

How to Use the Discipleship Pathway

The *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* is built on a framework of seventeen modules to be used one per year. This book includes Module 9: Holiness and is designed to be used with eighth graders. Modules 1–6 are to be used for kindergartners through fifth graders. Modules 7–9 are to be used with sixth through eighth graders. Modules 10–13 are to be used with ninth through twelfth graders. And finally, Modules 14–17 are to be used with college students. Throughout the seventeen modules, you will have the opportunity to engage with the core doctrines of the Christian faith and explore many practical aspects of following Jesus.

Each module contains twelve units, one for each month beginning in August and ending in July of the following year. Here’s how to use the *Pathway*:

The First Week of August

STEP ONE

Choose a day and time when it is easiest to block out about fifteen minutes for a family devotion each week. Many families find dinner time or bedtime as the ideal times for family devotions. Of course, if you already have a regular family devotion time, that would be the best time to choose.

STEP TWO

During your family devotion time in the first week of August, open the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* book to August’s content.

STEP THREE

Begin by reading the catechism to your family. A catechism is a method of instruction based on a question-and-answer format that has been used throughout church history. The catechism provides the main idea your family will focus on for the month. You may notice definitions or further inspections provided. These are provided to help your child learn these important terms or dive deeper into the topic.

STEP FOUR

Next, read the Bible story to your family either from the *Pathway* book or from a Bible. The NLT is used in Modules 7 through 13.

STEP FIVE

Now, it is time to read the devotional to your family. Discuss the standing discussion questions.

STEP SIX

Next, find the memory verse and prayer prompt for week 1. These will provide your focus for the rest of the week. Begin by reading the memory verse a few times, inviting your eighth grader to say as much with you as they can. Then, close your devotional time in prayer, using the prompt as a guideline for what to pray about. Of course, you can pray about more than that, but be sure to at least pray about the topic provided.

That's it! You're done.

You will notice that each unit concludes with a next step, challenging thought, or reflection questions. If you choose, you can use these during the week and on the rest of the family devotion days of the month.

During the week, look for opportunities to talk about the main ideas of the catechism, Bible story, and devotional you covered. This is in the spirit of Deuteronomy 6:7, which calls us to talk about God throughout the day in our homes. The goal is to help your child keep God at the top of the mind and deep down in the heart. Also, continue working on memorizing the memory verse and praying for the topic of the prayer prompt.

The Second, Third, and Fourth Weeks of August

STEP ONE

During your family devotion time on the second, third, and fourth weeks of the month, go over the catechism again, perhaps inviting your child to memorize it too, along with the memory verses.

STEP TWO

You do not need to read the Bible story or devotion again, but of course, you can if you want.

STEP THREE

Spend more time working on the memory verse.

STEP FOUR

Close your time in prayer, once again using the prayer prompt as your baseline.

The First Week of September

Once the calendar flips to September, it's time to move on to the next unit, repeating the process. Then, once July arrives, it will be time to get Module 10 to begin using that next August.

A FEW FINAL TIPS

If you have multiple children going through different modules, that's awesome! As a family, go through the lesson with the youngest child in the first week, and move to the second youngest the next week, and so on. As you move to the new lessons, review the others together as needed, and turn your prayer prompts into a prayer list!

If you miss a family devotion one week, that's okay! Give yourself grace and pick back up next week. Consistency over the long term is the key to family discipleship.

As you and your family grow more comfortable using the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway*, try to encourage your child or student to ask questions. Dialogue is always better than monologue when it comes to discipleship.

If you are just starting your journey using the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* with this Module, you might consider using what you have missed during Christmas break, Spring break, or the summer as a short-term intensive, covering one unit per day instead of per month, and forgoing memorizing the memory verses. Of course, there's also nothing at all wrong with starting right where you are and moving forward without ever looking back!

If you already have a family devotions plan, or if you find one along the way, feel free to couple it with the *Pathway*. Do both on the same day, or perhaps choose a second day to stretch your discipleship efforts further throughout the week.

The *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* doesn't provide you with all the answers about our faith, but it should give you a solid framework from which you can explore additional questions as they come up.

The Gospel Message

In the beginning, God created the universe (Genesis 1:1). He formed light and darkness, land and sea, fish and birds, plants and animals. But on the final day of creation, He saved His best work for last: He made people. God created us in His image (Genesis 1:27) and designed us to love, trust, worship, and follow Him.

However, God didn't force us to love Him; He gave us a choice. We can choose to trust and obey Him, or we can go our own way. When we choose to go our own way instead of God's way, that's called sin, and sin breaks our relationship with God. The Bible tells us: "Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory" (Romans 3:23). The bad news is that our sin separates us from God, and we cannot fix this problem alone. We need help.

The good news is that God, in His great love, made a way for us to be forgiven through Jesus. God sent Jesus, His one and only Son, to live a perfect life and take the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross (John 3:6, 2 Corinthians 5:21). But He didn't stay dead. On the third day, He rose again, defeating sin and death so we could have new and eternal life in Him. Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves.

God now offers each of us the opportunity to be restored to a right relationship with Him. This requires us to turn away from sin and choose to put our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. The Bible tells us: "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9). We trust Jesus as Savior, because His death in our place is the only way we can be forgiven for our sins. We trust and follow Jesus as Lord, meaning we use our lives for Him above all else. When we trust Jesus, we receive forgiveness and are saved from the power and punishment of our sins.

If you're ready to follow Jesus, here's what you need to do:

01

Admit that you are a sinner in need of forgiveness.

02

Believe that Jesus is God's Son, who died for your sins and rose again.

03

Confess Jesus as your Savior and Lord, choosing to follow Him daily.

The following is an example of what to pray if you are ready to put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior and Lord today. The words themselves aren't special. It's your heart behind them if you believe it.

Dear God,

I know that You created me in Your image to love, trust, and follow You. But I confess that I have sinned against You. I have chosen my own way instead of Yours, and my sins have separated me from You. And I know that I cannot fix this problem on my own.

Thank You for loving me so much that You sent Your Son Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I believe that He paid my punishment, and I believe that He rose from the dead, defeating sin and death so that I could have new life in Him.

Today, I turn away from my sin and I surrender my life to You. I ask for Your forgiveness and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Please change my heart, help me to follow You daily, and give me the strength to live for You.

Thank You for Your love and the gift of salvation.

In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

EIGHTH GRADE

If you just prayed that prayer for the first time, don't keep it to yourself, share it with someone! Tell a parent, guardian, pastor, or trusted Christian friend. They would love to celebrate with you, encourage you, and help you to take your next steps in following Jesus.

What is Biblical Purity?

What is biblical purity?

When the Bible speaks of purity, it most often means to be “free from sin.” God desires all people to be free from sin; in fact, we must be pure to be in a relationship with God. The only way to be pure, however, is through faith in Jesus Christ, who was pure and perfect in our place. Believers, then, are to pursue a life of purity in response to the example and calling of our Savior.

Bible Story

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. ² For he laid the earth's foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths.

³ Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? ⁴ Only those whose hands and hearts are pure, who do not worship idols and never tell lies. ⁵ They will receive the Lord's blessing and have a right relationship with God their savior. ⁶ Such people may seek you and worship in your presence, O God of Jacob.

— Psalm 24:1–6

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

AUGUST

Devotion

Many believe that David wrote this Psalm right after taking the throne of God's people, Israel. When David became king, one of the first things he did was bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6). Previously, after the Philistines captured it and then returned it, it

was stored away from the people in the house of Abinadab. Before that, it had been kept at Bethel and Shiloh. Finally, God's presence was with the people in Jerusalem, Israel's capital city.

As David worships God, he writes the words of Psalm 24. In them, he praises God and declares that no one will ever reach the heights of God's glory and power. David knows that he is a sinner—he is impure—and that he has no right to be in God's place or even to have a relationship with God. This is an incredible statement! In fact, knowing that we don't deserve a relationship with God *is* the key to living in purity.

God requires that His people be pure—to be free from sin. God wants us to be perfect as He is perfect. But we cannot be. We sin, and as a result, we forfeit our relationship with God. David understands that he doesn't deserve God's presence, he doesn't deserve to be king, and he doesn't deserve to be able to worship God. But he does worship God and asks God to purify his heart. David knows that God must one day give him a pure heart, and meanwhile, he seeks to do his best to live in purity, even

when it's a struggle (read Psalm 51:10–11, after David sins against Bathsheba). And David has this exactly right.

As followers of Jesus, God has given us a pure heart; He has made us pure. We are cleansed of all our sins through Jesus' sacrifice in our place. Our sin stains have been made as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). We have a relationship with God through Jesus' perfection, not our own. We don't deserve it, but we have been washed by the gift of Jesus' blood. And because of that, we worship and seek to live in purity, aligning our practice with how God sees us. Because we have been made pure, we devote our lives to God and do our best to live apart from sin. And when we mess up and fall back into impure lives, we run to God's presence, thank Him for His ever-present, inexhaustible forgiveness, and ask Him to lead us back into purity.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

"God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God." — Matthew 5:8

Prayer

Thank God for giving you a new, pure heart when you trusted in Jesus.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. — Psalm 51:10

Prayer

Ask God to keep your heart pure and clean, centered on Him and His goodness.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? Only those whose hands and hearts are pure, who do not worship idols and never tell lies. — Psalm 24:3–4

Prayer

Thank God for giving you pure hands and a pure heart and for allowing you to always be in His presence.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

Do not bring shame on my holy name, for I will display my holiness among the people of Israel. I am the Lord who makes you holy. — Leviticus 22:32

Prayer

Ask God to help you live in purity, reflecting the pure heart He has given you.



Further Inspection

Most people think purity refers to physical boundaries, but it goes far beyond that. Purity means pursuing a life entirely devoted to God, where we listen to His commands above all else.

Holiness and purity are similar biblical concepts. They both tell us to stay away from evil things in the world. The Bible tells us to be “holy” (Leviticus 20:26; 1 Peter 1:15–16), meaning we are not to give in to sin and instead, we are to follow God’s ways. Purity, especially in our hearts and minds (Psalm 51:10; Matthew 5:8), is being clean from evil thoughts and being fully devoted to God.



Next Steps

Pour a glass of water or milk into a clear glass. Notice how the liquid sits in the cup, clear from contaminants or discoloration.

Next, add something to the drink: chocolate syrup, food coloring, water enhancer, or something else with color. Notice how the color spreads throughout the drink.

The drink in its original form is an example of purity; it is what God requires of us to be in a relationship with Him. Sin is the additive: it goes against God’s design and spreads throughout our lives, thoughts, and actions. But when we trust Jesus as Savior and Lord, we become pure again. God sees us as perfect because Jesus was perfect for us. Now, we aim to live pure lives.

How often does sin affect your life? What sin do you struggle with the most? Discuss.

Notes:

AUGUST

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The Meaning of Holiness

What does it mean to be holy?

The Bible primarily discusses two aspects of holiness: sinlessness and being distinctly focused on living for God. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be holy as God is holy. We are to be morally pure as we live like Jesus. We are to be dedicated to God alone and not the ways of the world.

Bible Story

¹ The Lord also said to Moses, ² “Give the following instructions to the entire community of Israel. You must be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.

³ Each of you must show great respect for your mother and father, and you must always observe my Sabbath days of rest. I am the Lord your God.

⁴ Do not put your trust in idols or make metal images of gods for yourselves. I am the Lord your God.

⁵ When you sacrifice a peace offering to the Lord, offer it properly so you will be accepted by God. ⁶ The sacrifice must be eaten on the same day you offer it or on the next day. Whatever is left over until the third day must be completely burned up. ⁷ If any of the sacrifice is eaten on the third day, it will be contaminated, and I will not accept it. ⁸ Anyone who eats it on the third day will be punished for defiling what is holy to the Lord and will be cut off from the community.

⁹ When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. ¹⁰ It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God.

¹¹ Do not steal. Do not deceive or cheat one another.

¹² Do not bring shame on the name of your God by using it to swear falsely. I am the Lord.

¹³ Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not make your hired workers wait until the next day to receive their pay.

¹⁴ Do not insult the deaf or cause the blind to stumble. You must fear your God; I am the Lord.

¹⁵ Do not twist justice in legal matters by favoring the poor or being partial to the rich and powerful. Always judge people fairly.

¹⁶ Do not spread slanderous gossip among your people. Do not stand idly by when your neighbor's life is threatened. I am the Lord.

¹⁷ Do not nurse hatred in your heart for any of your relatives. Confront people directly so you will not be held guilty for their sin.

¹⁸ Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

¹⁹ You must obey all my decrees."

— Leviticus 19:1–19

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

SEPTEMBER

Devotion

Do you have any special dishes (or tableware, if you're fancy) in your kitchen? You know, the ones that you only bring out on Thanksgiving or when certain family members visit. The nice plates that are saved for special occasions. In Exodus 30, God tells Moses to set aside certain items in the Tabernacle (where His presence lived) for special use.

There was a table with utensils, a lampstand with accessories, an incense altar, a burnt offering altar with utensils, and a washbasin with a stand. God called them holy, meaning they were special and set apart for a specific purpose. They weren't for everyone to use at any time; they were meant explicitly for worshiping God. In Leviticus 19, God is doing the

same thing, not with objects, but with the people themselves. God sent the Israelites a special list of rules and regulations so that they would live holy and completely differently than the other people around them. God wants them to present themselves as special because their God was one-of-a-kind. Even though we are not required to follow every aspect of the Levitical law, we are still to live holy, set-apart lives because of the one true God we serve.

When God asks us to be holy, He means we should focus on Him above all else. We are set apart – not living for different things as we feel like it, but living only for God. It doesn't mean we are weird, but we should see a difference between our lives and those of non-believers. Now, it's not just our actions that matter; it goes beneath the surface. God wants to be the most important person in our lives. He wants to be our motivation. So God says,

“Be Holy” – in other words, be totally devoted to me. And that is best for us! Focusing on God and our salvation through Jesus transforms our desires and decisions, leading us to live the lives God created us for.

Holiness isn't easy, but God calls us to be holy. To have a relationship with Him, we must be holy, which is only possible because of Jesus' sinless life. We turn away from our old sinful ways because we now have a new Lord and new desires. We can't truly live for God unless we are focused on our love for Him. However, when we focus on the gospel and trust in what Jesus has done for us, our obedience to God will come naturally. So, the next time you use those special serving spoons for a big occasion, remember that you are special, too. Because we are made holy, we can live holy lives, worshipping God and turning away from sin whenever we can.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." — 1 Peter 1:16

Prayer

Ask God to help you live a holy life in response to His holiness.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. — 1 Peter 2:24

Prayer

Thank God for making you holy in His sight because of Jesus' sacrifice.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. — Hebrews 12:14

Prayer

Ask God to help you find ways to work toward holiness and peace with the help of the Holy Spirit.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

For I am the Lord your God. You must consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. So do not defile yourselves with any of these small animals that scurry along the ground. — Leviticus 11:44

Prayer

Ask God to help you turn away from sins and worldliness.



Challenging Thought

In what ways are you living a holy, set-apart life? In what ways are you living the same way the world does?

Notes:

SEPTEMBER

The Pursuit of Holiness

What is God's design for my life?

God's design for you is the pursuit of holiness. You are to be holy because God is holy. When we become followers of Jesus, we strive to live as God sees us—morally perfect.

Bible Story

¹³ So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. ¹⁴ So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. ¹⁶ For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy."

— 1 Peter 1:13–16

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

OCTOBER

Devotion

When we become followers of Jesus, everything changes. We are freed from the grasp of sin and our desires shift. We become a new creation and the Holy Spirit indwells us. Our sin – past, present and future – is removed from our record.

We are called by a new name and commanded to live in holiness. Now, even though God does not see our sin any longer, we don't become sinless from our human perspective. However, we strive to live morally pure and follow God's design for us.

Imagine a prince absconds his title and decides to live on the streets. He throws away his fame and fortune and operates as if he were a commoner. Instead of dining on the finest meals, sleeping on silk sheets, and wearing a crown on his head, he eats out of the garbage, sleeps on the hard, dirty pavement, and has a hat made out of holey rags. Sure, he could do this, but the question is a simple one: "why?"

When we become a Christian, it is now possible for us to follow God. For the first time, we clearly see right from wrong. We understand the depth and pain of our sinfulness. We feel the love and grace that God has bestowed upon us in Jesus. We know that we don't deserve forgiveness, yet we taste its sweetness anyway. The question for us is the same as the prince: why then would we choose to go back to our old sinful ways? We have seen and experienced better; let us not return to the bondage and agony of sin.

In 1 Peter 1, Peter warns us against this and gives us a battle plan to win against sin and live a holy life. Peter tells us to prepare our minds

for action! Imagine stretching before sprinting – Peter says we must warm our minds up to actively live a holy life. We can't walk into our days with sleepy minds or not paying attention to the choices we make. When we think, we remember that God has given us the power of self-control through the Holy Spirit. We can now control ourselves and choose obedience over sin. Peter tells us to think and focus on our hope in Jesus. Thinking about Jesus is the power by which we live pure and moral lives. Remember, because Jesus died for us, we can have a relationship with Him and the hope of eternal life in His presence. For believers, the things that truly matter in life are completely secure. Therefore, we can concentrate on making decisions for God and others, not ourselves. We have what we ultimately need so we can focus on building a kingdom that lasts forever. We don't have to be distracted by the temptations of the world or the opinions of others. Our thoughts, energy, and attention can be directed to God. And when they are, we find that everything in our lives falls exactly where God wants them.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

Work willingly at whatever you do,
as though you were working for the
Lord rather than for people.
— Colossians 3:23

Prayer

Ask God to help you do everything
according to His design for you to
live differently than the world.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

And yet, O Lord you are our Father.
We are the clay, and you are the
potter. We all are formed by your
hand. — Isaiah 64:8

Prayer

Thank God for molding you and
shaping you into His image,
as holy and set apart from
sin and the world.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

"For I know the plans I have for
you," says the Lord. "They are plans
for good and not for disaster, to
give you a future and a hope."
— Jeremiah 29:11

Prayer

Thank God for His good and perfect
plans for you to live in holiness.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

You must be holy because I, the
Lord, am holy. I have set you apart
from all other people to be my very
own. — Leviticus 20:26

Prayer

Ask God to help you be in awe of
His holiness and to pattern your
life after Him.



Next Steps

Where are you struggling to make the right choice and live a morally pure life? Remember, you can control yourself through the power given to you by the Holy Spirit. Make a list of the old desires and choices you struggle with. Now, make another column on the other side of the page. Write the new desire or choice that you want to make instead. Pray that God would help you have the self-control to live a morally pure life, according to His design for you.

Notes:

OCTOBER

Temple of the Holy Spirit

What does it mean to be the temple of the Holy Spirit?

We are God's temple because God's Spirit lives within us. Being God's temple means we should honor Him with our bodies, thoughts, and actions. We have been called to something greater with our lives; we have been set apart for Christ.

Bible Story

¹⁴ Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said:

"I will live in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ¹⁷ Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the Lord. Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you. ¹⁸ And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

¹ Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.

— 2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Imagine being given a beautiful garden to care for. But as time passes, you forget to water the plants, pull the weeds, and protect them from the cold. What would happen? Eventually, the garden would become overgrown, the plants

would wither, and much of its beauty would fade. When entrusted with something as precious as a garden, it's essential to nurture it—trimming back dead branches, providing water, and ensuring its health.

In 2 Corinthians 6–7, Paul reminds us as believers not to partner with sin because we are God’s temple. Shortly after God rescued His people from bondage in Egypt through Moses, He had the people construct the tabernacle. This was a portable tent that was setup in the very center of the people when they camped. The tabernacle was where God’s presence dwelled with His people—in the deepest part of it called the Most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies. Later, Solomon built a temple—a permanent structure—in Jerusalem to replace the tabernacle. The Jerusalem temple became the most holy site in all of Israel, indeed, in all of the world. It was loved, treasured, and kept pure. Jesus changed all of this though. Now, His people have become the temple of God. This is why we don’t have to go to Jerusalem to worship (in fact, the temple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Roman army). We can worship wherever we are, because God is always with us.

In the same way a gardener tends to a garden, we are called to care for our bodies, the temples where the Spirit of God dwells. This isn’t just about health; it’s about making choices that honor God in all areas of life. Every word we speak, every thought we entertain, and every action we take matters because God is present within us. This means we need to be careful about who and what influences our faith. When we care for ourselves and honor our bodies as God’s temple, we not only protect our well-being, but we also reflect God’s love to a world that desperately needs to see it.

Let every word you speak, every choice you make, and every moment of prayer you offer be like tending to your own garden. By honoring God, staying pure, and encouraging unity, you are creating a vibrant, flourishing space where His presence can shine.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself.
— 1 Corinthians 6:19

Prayer

Ask God to help you remember that your body belongs to Him and to show you how to honor Him in the way you live.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said: "I will live in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people."
— 2 Corinthians 6:16

Prayer

Ask God to help you recognize anything in your life that is pulling you away from Him and to give you the strength to remove distractions that keep you from Him.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?
— 1 Corinthians 3:16

Prayer

Thank God for the unity He has given you with other followers of Jesus as the one temple of God.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. — Ephesians 2:21

Prayer

Ask God to show you ways to reflect His holiness in your words and actions, and to help you build strong, loving relationships with others.



Definition

Temple: In the Old Testament and the Gospels, the Jerusalem temple was where God's presence dwelled with His people. That changed after Jesus, though, and God now dwells with believers, individually and also as a group. Being God's temple together means that as a church, we live differently, reflecting holiness, purity, and love for one another, knowing that the Spirit of God dwells within us.



Next Steps

Consider how you take care of your temple. Choose one area—whether it's your physical health, your words, your thoughts, or your actions—and set a specific goal to honor God in that area. Write down your goal and share it with a trusted friend or mentor for accountability. In the weeks ahead, as you grow in this journey, remember that God's Spirit lives within you, empowering you to be a living, vibrant testimony of His love and holiness.

Notes:

NOVEMBER

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Holiness and My Body

Note: This text references an alleged sexual assault. If you haven't talked with your child about sex, consider having that conversation with them before continuing with this devotion.

How do I pursue purity and holiness with my body?

We pursue purity and holiness with our bodies by avoiding all kinds of sin, caring for our bodies, and caring about how we present them to others. It begins with an internal transformation of our hearts when we trust in Jesus, and continues as we commit to living righteously every day.

Bible Story

¹ When Joseph was taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelite traders, he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

² The Lord was with Joseph, so he succeeded in everything he did as he served in the home of his Egyptian master. ³ Potiphar noticed this and realized that the Lord was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did. ⁴ This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned.

⁵ From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished.

⁶ So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat!

Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, ⁷ and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded.

⁸ But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. ⁹ No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God."

¹⁰ She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. ¹¹ One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. ¹² She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

¹³ When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, ¹⁴ she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me."

¹⁶ She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said. ¹⁸ "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!"

¹⁹ Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. ²⁰ So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained. ²¹ But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. ²² Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. ²³ The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.

— Genesis 39:1–23

Devotion

Genesis 39 tells the story of Joseph, a young man who faced serious temptation but chose to honor God with his body. After being sold into slavery by his brothers, Joseph worked in the house of an Egyptian official named Potiphar. Because Joseph was faithful, God blessed everything he did. But then, Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to sin. Even though no one else was watching, Joseph refused—because he had already decided in his heart to honor God.

Have you ever been in a situation where temptation felt almost impossible to resist? Joseph knew that feeling well. Maybe you've thought, *No one will ever know, or I won't get caught*. Joseph could have thought the same thing, but he had already made up his mind to honor God—before temptation ever came.

Potiphar's wife kept pressuring him day after day, but Joseph stayed strong. When she finally trapped him alone, he did the only thing he could do—he ran! Even though he was wrongly accused and thrown into prison, God was still with him and continued to bless him.

Purity isn't just about avoiding sin. It's about setting your heart and mind on Jesus and honoring Him with your body. First Corinthians 6:19–20 reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, bought with a price, so we should glorify God with them. Your body isn't just yours; it belongs to God. That means how we care for our body and present it to others matters.

So, how do you pursue purity and holiness with your body? First, guard it! The things you watch, listen to, and think about shape your heart and your mind. Philippians 4:8 says to focus on what is pure and honorable because what we consume influences our desires. If we set our hearts and minds on the things above, we will be less likely to act on temptation.

Next, set physical boundaries. Just as Joseph refused to even be around temptation, you must be intentional about setting boundaries in your relationships. Don't put yourself in situations where compromise comes easily. Remember who you are and what you are called to: "God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away

from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor—not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways” (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5).

Another crucial step is to run from temptation. If something tempts you physically, don’t stay and try to fight it. Flee! Joseph ran to escape sin, but we often linger near the things that lead us into it. Entertaining temptation is a recipe for disaster. Second Timothy 2:22 says, “Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living.” That might mean stepping away from a toxic relationship, deleting an app, or saying no to certain situations that don’t honor God.

Finally, recognize that your body belongs to God, not you. Culture tells us to do whatever we want with our bodies, but God calls us to something higher, something better. And this isn’t just about sexual sin

or immoral behavior; it’s also about how we present ourselves and care for our bodies. Many dress in ways that draw the wrong kind of attention or indulge in habits that harm their health. But Romans 12:1 reminds us to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God” (NIV). Part of holiness is surrendering our perceived right to do whatever we please and instead choosing to honor God with the bodies He entrusted to us.

Pursuing purity and holiness isn’t about fear or rules; it’s about honoring God because we love Him. Joseph didn’t run because he feared getting caught; he ran because he loved and respected God more than temporary pleasure. If you want to live set apart for Jesus, that’s a choice only you can make. God has given us His Word to guide and direct us. Take a lesson from Joseph—set your boundaries before temptation comes. And when it does, don’t hesitate. Run.



Reflection Questions

01 What areas of your life do you need to surrender to God for purity and holiness? Are there any boundaries you need to set to help you resist temptation?

02 Are there ways you might be leading others into temptation?

03 How can you remind yourself daily to pursue holiness? What are some ways you can honor the Lord with your body?

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. — 1 Peter 1:14

Prayer

Thank God for guiding you to His truth and changing you from who you were before Jesus.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires. — Romans 13:14

Prayer

Ask God to help you love how He made you without giving in to fleshly desires.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. — 2 Timothy 2:22

Prayer

Ask God to help you recognize your weaknesses and trust the Holy Spirit to help you turn away from them.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor—not in lustful passion

like the pagans who do not know God and his ways.
— 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5

Prayer

Ask God to help you to control your body in all ways and to live in holiness.

Notes:

DECEMBER

Holiness and My Mind

How do I nurture a healthy and holy mind and thought life?

Nurturing a healthy and holy mind means focusing on God, His ways, and the promise of eternity. It also means guarding our minds and thoughts from dwelling on the ungodly and unhelpful things of the world.

Bible Story

¹ Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. ³ For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.

— Colossians 3:1–3

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Imagine that it's a hot summer's day in mid-August and you've spent the afternoon in the sun by the pool. As you relax, a fun tune captures your attention. The sound gets louder and louder until you finally see where it's coming from. It's an ice cream truck! It's hot, and you are craving something cold and sweet. So, you grab a popsicle. But not just one... you end up eating *three*. At first, it feels like a treat, but as you head back to the pool, your belly begins to ache. What you thought was going to help satisfy you has done just the opposite. Now, you're hot and you have a stomachache.

This is how we sometimes handle our spiritual well-being. There can come a moment when we think we're making a harmless decision, but we don't always consider the long-term effects. Just as eating too many popsicles isn't best for the body, feeding our minds with things that don't honor God will lead to unhealthy thinking. Even if the consequences aren't always immediate, they will happen.

This is why Colossians 3:1–3 calls us to a higher focus. It says since

we've been raised to new life with Christ, we should set our sights on heaven. Now, God isn't suggesting that we ignore practical things in our daily lives, like hunger and thirst. Instead, He calls us to let eternity shape our thoughts and actions as we live here. When faced with moments of distraction, temptation, sorrow, and adversity, we should ask ourselves: What would it look like to set my mind on things above in this situation? That might look like spending time in God's Word. That might mean listening to worship music. That might mean talking with a good friend or trusted adult who is also a follower of Jesus. Or, that might mean spending time with God in prayer—perhaps going for a walk through His creation to enjoy His presence and focus on Him.

To stay physically healthy, we need to eat healthy. In the same way, if we want our thoughts to be pure and God-honoring, we have to feed our minds with the things of heaven, not the things of earth. What we watch, read, and listen to all shape our thoughts, and these thoughts have a lasting effect on how we see the world and make decisions.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.
— Colossians 3:2

Prayer

Ask God to help you focus on heavenly things and to shape your desires to reflect His kingdom.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads

to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. — Romans 8:5–6

Prayer

Thank God for the Holy Spirit, who helps guard your mind and fill it with peace, rather than the confusion of earthly things.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. — Colossians 3:1

Prayer

Ask God to help you keep your thoughts focused on eternal truths that will shape your life here on earth.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ. — 2 Corinthians 10:5

Prayer

Ask God to help you identify any negative or rebellious thoughts that come against His Word, and give you strength to bring them into obedience to Christ.



Reflection Questions

01 What are you feeding your mind? Consider your screen time, the content you're reading, and the advice you're receiving.

02 What boundaries can you set with negative or non-beneficial things that feed your mind?

03 What Scriptures can you treasure in your heart to combat the lies of the enemy?

Notes:

JANUARY



Holiness and My Eyes

How do our eyes affect our spiritual health?

What our eyes see, watch, and read shapes how we think and act. What we bring into our minds through our eyes affects what comes out in our lives, for better or worse. If we fix our gaze on what is good and true, we will reflect God's light. If we fix our gaze on what is sinful and harmful, our light will grow dim.

Bible Story

²² Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. ²³ But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

— Matthew 6:22–23

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

What do you *consume*? When you hear the word consume, you probably think about what you eat. If you consume too much junk food, you feel sluggish and unfocused. But if you consume something healthy, you feel energized and clear-minded. But we don't only consume food with our mouths—we also consume

information, images, and ideas with our eyes. Like food sitting in our stomachs, what we see, watch, read, and engage with lingers in our minds, even when we don't realize it. This can be great for us—or it can be terrible. It all depends on *what* we consume.

The longer you walk with Jesus, the more you realize that what you see and dwell on directly affects your spiritual health. The content you consume can draw you closer to Christ or pull you away from Him. What you allow to “sit in your mind” will shape your worldview, emotions, and decisions.

A 2019 New York Times article reported, “A wave of new social science research shows that the quality of shows can influence us in important ways, shaping our thinking and political preferences, even affecting our cognitive ability.”

¹ In other words, what we watch doesn’t just entertain us—it molds our hearts, our minds, and even our decisions. What we watch on Netflix, Hulu, the Internet, and social media deeply influences our thoughts and actions because those things take up space in our minds. Simply put, we become what we consume, much like the old saying: “garbage in; garbage out.”

¹ Jonathan Rothwell, “You Are What You Watch? The Social Effects of TV,” The New York Times, July 25, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/25/upshot/social-effects-television.html>.

If we fill our eyes with garbage such as ungodly shows and movies and unholy images, we simply cannot expect to live in a holy way that honors God.

However, we were designed for far more than this. We were made to know and reflect God. One of the most powerful ways we can do this is by consuming God’s Word (Matthew 4:4). When we prioritize Scripture, prayer, and godly influences, we shift our focus to Jesus. Because He is ever-present in our mind, we will become more like Him, both in the mundane moments of our day and the exciting ones. Proverbs 3:5–6 reminds us to “trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” God desires to transform us daily into a better version of ourselves—to look more like Christ. But for that transformation to take place, we must seek to consume more of Him than anything else in this world.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

I made a covenant with my eyes
not to look with lust at a young
woman. — Job 31:1

Prayer

Thank God for the ability to see
and ask Him to help you guard
what you take in.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

So we don't look at the troubles we
can see now; rather, we fix our gaze
on things that cannot be seen. For
the things we see now will soon be
gone, but the things we cannot see
will last forever.
— 2 Corinthians 4:18

Prayer

Ask God to help you look past the
troubles and struggles of today and
to fix your heart on eternity.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Your eye is like a lamp that provides
light for your body. When your eye
is healthy, your whole body is filled
with light. — Matthew 6:22

Prayer

Ask God to help you be careful not
only to turn your eyes away from
evil, but also to fix them on what is
good and true and helpful.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

I will refuse to look at anything
vile and vulgar. I hate all who deal
crookedly; I will have nothing to do
with them. — Psalm 101:3

Prayer

Thank God for giving you the
Holy Spirit who helps you
recognize what is evil to turn your
eyes away from.



Reflection Questions

01 How can you actively choose to consume more of God's truth each day?

02 How can you discern whether what you are consuming aligns with God's transformation in your life or conforms you to worldly patterns?

03 What are some obstacles you face in guarding what you consume, and how can you overcome them to grow spiritually healthy?

Notes:

FEBRUARY



Holiness and My Ears

How do our ears affect our spiritual health?

Like our eyes, our ears are conduits to our mind and heart, for better or worse. We will become spiritually malnourished when we listen to the tempting whispers of the world around us. But when we listen instead to God's voice through His Word and the Holy Spirit, we will experience God-honoring living.

Bible Story

¹ My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. ² Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. ³ Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding. ⁴ Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures. ⁵ Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God.

— Proverbs 2:1–5

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Have you ever noticed how *loud* the world is? When you walk through a store, there's loud music playing. When you go outside, you hear cars, birds, and other sounds. We're surrounded by noise—music, people, social media, and more everywhere we go. But we need to ask ourselves: What are we *choosing* to listen to? The pursuit of wisdom and purity starts with what we consume.

Here's where we need to ask ourselves some penetrating questions. Do we spend time listening to music that promotes a worldly lifestyle? Do we scroll through the words and opinions of those who don't follow Christ and put weight on what they say? Do we binge-watch shows with actions and messages that go against God's Word? Remember, the voices we allow into our ears and ultimately into our minds and hearts shape the direction of our lives. So we need to ask ourselves: Does what I listen to draw me closer to Christ, or does it actually drag me deeper into the ways of the world?

If you realize that your ears are pointing you toward the world more

than Christ, Proverbs 2 calls us to a different way. It reminds us to tune our ears to wisdom, and to seek understanding as if searching for hidden treasure. God's Word is not just good advice; for followers of Jesus, it's life. God wants us to *know* His Word, and that's only possible if we turn down the world's noise and tune in to His unchanging truth. God's Word brings wisdom, peace, understanding, and direction in a world filled with shifting opinions and endless distractions. But to hear it, we must turn down the volume of everything else.

Listening to God requires intentionality. It means opening our Bibles, meditating on Scripture, putting on worship music, or even just pressing "play" on a passage in a Bible app. It means choosing worship over worry, sermons over social media, and wisdom over entertainment. The more we listen to Him, the more we know Him. And the more we know Him, the clearer our path becomes.

God has spoken. The question is: are we listening?

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God. But you don't listen because you don't belong to God. — John 8:47

Prayer

Thank God for opening your ears to hear Him. Ask Him to help you find joy in what He says.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. — Proverbs 2:1

Prayer

Thank God for providing you with other followers of Christ—like pastors and parents—to share His good commands with you.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart. — Proverbs 4:20–21

Prayer

Ask God to help you listen to His commands and treasure them deeply in your heart.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world. — Psalm 46:10

Prayer

Ask God to help you slow down, remove distractions, and be still so you can hear from Him.



Reflection Questions

01 How often do you find the world's noise overwhelming?

02 What do you consume through your ears on a regular basis?

03 How can you live out Proverbs 2 in the days and weeks ahead?

Notes:

MARCH

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Holiness and Sex

Note: If you haven't talked with your child about sex, consider having that conversation with them before continuing with this devotion.

What does the Bible say about sexual purity?

God designed sex to be an intimate act and expression of love between a husband and wife within the covenant relationship of marriage. Sexual purity means refraining from any sexual activity until marriage, honoring God's design and purpose.

Bible Story

¹² You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything. ¹³ You say, "Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food." (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can't say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies. ¹⁴ And God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead.

¹⁵ Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never!

¹⁶ And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one." ¹⁷ But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

¹⁸ Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. ¹⁹ Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

— 1 Corinthians 6:12–20

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

APRIL

Devotion

Sexual sin is one of the most common ways the world contradicts God's truth. From entertainment to social media, the message is clear: premarital sex isn't a big deal. But as followers of Christ, we are called to be set apart. Holiness means living differently because we serve a perfect and holy God. No matter what the world says, we must choose to follow what God says about sex and purity.

When it comes to relationships, marriage, and sex—God is the Creator, and He alone defines their purpose. He designed sex exclusively for a man and woman within marriage. This includes all sexual action, not just intercourse. The question *How far is too far?* shouldn't even be our focus. Instead, we should aim to honor God by avoiding any steps toward sexual sin. Jesus taught that even lusting after someone is sinful (Matthew 5:28). Sex isn't meant

to exist outside of the covenant relationship of marriage.

A helpful analogy is that of a race car. A race car is meant to be driven on a racetrack. If you take it off-road and into the mud, it will get damaged, break down, or even be destroyed—because it's being driven somewhere it was never intended to be. In the same way, sex is designed for the "track" of marriage. When taken outside of God's boundaries, hearts break, emotions are wrecked, and our lives and testimonies can be damaged.

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul reminds us that sex creates a deep, mysterious bond between two people. In marriage, this bond is beautiful because God joins a man and a woman together as one. Outside of marriage, however, this connection can be harmful because it lacks the lifelong commitment that God intends and it is selfishly motivated. As believers, we belong to Christ, and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We should not take our bodies which are holy and join them with someone else in an unholy way. Thus, engaging in sexual sin grieves the Holy Spirit and damages our relationship with God. If we truly love

God, we should strive to honor Him with our bodies rather than breaking His heart—and potentially someone else's as well.

Is there still grace when we fall? Absolutely. God's grace covers all sin, including sexual sin. However, we should never use grace as an excuse for deliberate sin. Sin still has consequences, even when we are forgiven and covered with the righteousness of Jesus. That's why we must trust God's wisdom and follow His plan, knowing that he has our best interests at heart. No matter what others say, we can stand firm in God's truth.

So, what should we do?

Flee from sexual temptation; don't entertain it.

Guard your heart and mind; be mindful of what you watch, listen to, and think about.

Don't fight sin on your own! Talk to your parents, a trusted adult, or a church leader for guidance and support.

Trust God's timing; His design for sex and marriage is perfect, and waiting for His best is always worth it.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.

— 1 Corinthians 6:18

Prayer

Ask God to help you flee from all sexual temptation and to run to Him instead.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

Promise me, O women of Jerusalem, not to awaken love until the time is right.

— Song of Songs 8:4

Prayer

Thank God for His perfect design for sex and marriage, including His perfect timing.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. — Matthew 5:28

Prayer

Ask God to guard your heart, mind, and eyes from lust and temptation.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery. — Hebrews 13:4

Prayer

Pray for strength and trust God's plan for your future relationships with obedience and patience.



Definition

Sexual immorality: Any sexual activity outside the boundaries of a marriage relationship.



Reflection Questions

01 What do you believe about sex? Has the world's view influenced your thinking?

02 From this devotion, what are the dangers of sex outside of marriage? Have you seen these consequences in someone's life?

03 What steps can you take to actively flee from sexual immorality?

Notes:

APRIL

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Holiness and Dating

What does God say about dating relationships?

God designed males and females to seek relationships with one another. Godly dating allows us to pursue the person He has prepared for us. We should date with the goal of keeping ourselves and our dating partner holy.

Bible Story

¹ Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You live this way already, and we encourage you to do so even more. ² For you remember what we taught you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

³ God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. ⁴ Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor —

⁵ not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways.

⁶ Never harm or cheat a fellow believer in this matter by violating his wife, for the Lord avenges all such sins, as we have solemnly warned you before.

⁷ God has called us to live holy lives, not impure lives. ⁸ Therefore, anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

⁹ But we don't need to write to you about the importance of loving each other, for God himself has taught you to love one another. ¹⁰ Indeed, you already show your love for all the believers throughout Macedonia. Even so, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you to love them even more.

¹¹ Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. ¹² Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others.

— 1 Thessalonians 4:1–12

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Some Christians see dating as a tricky topic, and it often comes with mixed opinions. You must honor your family and follow the instructions they have given you for this topic. If they allow you to date, discuss the best way to do so under their guidance, focusing on holiness and future marriage. If they forbid you to date until a later age, obey them and focus on godly friendships.

The Bible doesn't specifically discuss dating because it is not a part of biblical cultures. But the Bible talks about how to remain holy and pure in all contexts as we live, which certainly includes dating.

In the first book of the Bible, just two chapters in, after God had declared everything in creation good, He says, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18). So, He created a helper for the man: a woman.

Genesis 2:22 tells us that God made the woman and brought her to the man. Verse 24 explains, "This is why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two become one." In this, we see that God intends marriage to be a lifelong relationship between a man and a woman. Just as we are to take marriage seriously, how we

date matters, too. Dating is a path toward marriage in our culture. If you choose to date, aim to do so in a way that honors God.

As we have seen, the desire to connect to another is part of how God made us. However, not all feelings or attractions should dictate our choices. Instead, we need to evaluate them through God's Word and seek wisdom from others. Here are four key dating principles that honor God to help you do that:

1. Pursue God above all else.

Matthew 6:33 teaches us that when we seek God first, He will take care of the rest. The most satisfying relationship you will ever have isn't with another person—it's with God. If you want a healthy relationship in the future, it starts by giving God the first place in your life today.

2. Start with friendships. Yes, we are naturally drawn to the opposite sex, but attraction doesn't automatically mean it's time to date. This time in your life might be better focused on friendships, growing your faith, and preparing for the future rather than rushing into relationships. When it is time to date, get to know the other person and pay attention to how they treat their friends and family. Do they love Jesus? Do they have godly character? These things are often easier to see in a friendship than in a dating relationship.

3. Seek wise counsel. The Bible emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom from others, and dating is no exception. Talk to your

parents, mentors, or trusted adults about your feelings and relationships. They can offer guidance, help you make wise decisions, and hold you accountable to God's standards for relationships with the opposite sex.

4. Set boundaries in dating. As we seek to stay clear of all immorality, we must set up boundaries to do so. Not only should you not approach the line of immorality, but you should be careful to stay as far away from the line as possible. You may choose to go on dates only with friends, have family members chaperone, or date only in public. Whatever you need to do, you mustn't allow the enemy or your flesh to tempt you inside your dating relationship.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." — Genesis 2:18

Prayer

Thank God for His perfect design in creating us to need relationships with others.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. — Proverbs 4:23

Prayer

Ask God to help you find your ultimate fulfillment in Him rather than a relationship.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? — 2 Corinthians 6:14

Prayer

Ask God to help you trust His wisdom in surrounding yourself with godly friends, and one day choosing a spouse who shares your faith and values.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

"And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength." The second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself." No other commandment is greater than these. — Mark 12:30–31

Prayer

Ask God to help you love Him first and foremost and to love anyone you date with a selfless, Christlike love.



Reflection Questions

01 What is the world's perspective on marriage and dating?

02 What steps to preserve holiness can you take when it comes to dating, if and when you date?

03 In what other areas can you help protect yourself and anyone you date?



Holiness and Social Media

How can we use social media in a holy way?

To live in holiness as we engage in social media begins with refusing to make it a priority in our lives, especially not over Jesus. It continues with how we engage in social media, striving to reflect Jesus in how we interact with others. Finally, it includes how we set wise boundaries for our social media use, and inviting godly, loving accountability to keep us on track.

Bible Story

⁸ And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

— Philippians 4:8

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Have you ever wondered what it means to follow Christ while using social media? Social media shapes how we spend our time, influences our thoughts, and even affects our sense of self-worth. While it has benefits—keeping us connected to friends, allowing for expression, and giving us access to information—it can also become an idol, lead us to unhealthy comparisons, and expose us to messages that contradict God’s Word. If you plan to spend much time on these apps, it’s important to set healthy boundaries. So, what boundaries do we need to

set to pursue purity and holiness through social media?

First, seek God before scrolling. Philippians 4:8 calls us to fix our thoughts on what is “true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable.” But here’s the reality—social media is not the ultimate source of truth. Scripture is where we find truth! If we start our day by checking our feeds instead of seeking God, we can allow the world to shape our thoughts before we hear from Him.

A simple challenge is before you open any social media app, spend time in God's presence. Read Scripture, pray, and listen to worship music. Matthew 6:33 reminds us to seek God first. If we begin our day by listening to people's loud opinions and posts instead of God, it shouldn't surprise us to see the world shaping our thoughts. It is also wise to set boundaries with how much time we spend on social media each day.

Second, let your social media interactions reflect Christ. We are called to think about what is excellent and praiseworthy and live in a way that reflects those values. That includes what we post, who we follow, and what we engage with online. If we follow creators and celebrities who don't align their lives with Christ, we can open the door to influences that may lead us away from Him. Also, following them can send a message—it can reflect agreement or approval with their lifestyles and agendas. Be intentional about surrounding yourself with content that strengthens your faith and uplifts your spirit. If you're going to be on social media, be a light. The things we like, comment on, and repost matter. Share content that points to Christ, engage in

conversations with kindness and wisdom, and make sure you are a good representative of God in your online presence. Before posting, ask yourself, "Does this honor God?"

Third, set guardrails for accountability. Like guardrails keep cars from running off the road into a dangerous area, you need help maintaining healthy social media use to keep you safe. Invite a parent, trusted mentor, or friend to check in on your social media. Ask for support to make sure that you don't prioritize social media, that you don't spend too much time engaged with it, and that you are honoring Christ in how you post.

Ultimately, we need to keep our focus on Christ—not our phones. Social media is a tool, not our source of hope or truth. These things come from Christ alone. But if we seek God first and allow Him to speak into our social media habits, we can use our influence in a way that honors Him. Live out Philippians 4:8, thinking on and sharing things that are worthy of praise—content that is honoring to Christ. Be intentional with your time, your content, and your connections, making sure they align with your calling to reflect Christ in all you do.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.
— 1 Corinthians 6:12

Prayer

Ask God for wisdom in engaging with social media in a way that benefits both you and those around you.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.
— Colossians 4:6

Prayer

Ask God to help your online presence be filled with kindness, truth, and love.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. — James 1:19

Prayer

Ask God for discernment when engaging online, so you share only what is true and approach discussions with gentleness and respect.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word. — Psalm 119:37

Prayer

Thank God for being greater than any number of likes, followers, or online influence.



Next Steps

- 01** Set a daily goal to spend time with God before social media.
- 02** Choose to be a light on social media this week by posting something that glorifies Christ.
- 03** Ask a parent, mentor, or friend to hold you accountable concerning your online presence.

Notes:

JUNE



Holiness and Technology

How can we engage with technology in a holy way?

To live in holiness as we engage with technology means that we refuse to allow it to become an idol. We must guard our time and our hearts from seeking comfort and fulfillment in it. Technology should be used as a tool to glorify God and not be allowed to become an instrument of the enemy.

Bible Story

¹ I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. ² In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. ³ All of them ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵ Yet God was not pleased with most of them, and their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

⁶ These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, ⁷ or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, "The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry." ⁸ And we must not engage in sexual immorality as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day.

⁹ Nor should we put Christ to the test, as some of them did and then died from snakebites. ¹⁰ And don't grumble as some of them did, and then were destroyed by the angel of death. ¹¹ These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.

¹² If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. ¹³ The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

¹⁴ So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. ¹⁵ You are reasonable people. Decide for yourselves if what I am saying is true. ¹⁶ When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. ¹⁸ Think about the people of Israel. Weren't they united by eating the sacrifices at the altar?

¹⁹ What am I trying to say? Am I saying that food offered to idols has some significance, or that idols are real gods? ²⁰ No, not at all. I am saying that these sacrifices are offered to demons, not to God. And I don't want you to participate with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord's Table and at the table of demons, too. ²² What? Do we dare to rouse the Lord's jealousy? Do you think we are stronger than he is?

²³ You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial.

²⁴ Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

²⁵ So you may eat any meat that is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience. ²⁶ For "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

²⁷ If someone who isn't a believer asks you home for dinner, accept the invitation if you want to. Eat whatever is offered to you without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ (But suppose someone tells you, "This meat was offered to an idol." Don't eat it, out of consideration for the conscience of the one who told you. ²⁹ It might not be a matter of conscience for you, but

it is for the other person.) For why should my freedom be limited by what someone else thinks? ³⁰ If I can thank God for the food and enjoy it, why should I be condemned for eating it?

³¹ So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

— 1 Corinthians 10:1–31

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul reminds us of the Israelites' struggles with idolatry. Even though they were led by God, they often turned away and worshiped other things. For some, this revealed that they

did not have a saving relationship with God; they did not personally know Him. Paul says their story serves as a warning for us today. Anything—even something good—can become an idol if it takes

priority over God. Paul challenges us to ask, “Is this beneficial?” Just because we are allowed to do something doesn’t mean it’s helpful to our faith. This principle certainly applies to technology.

How does technology fit into a believer’s life today? We are constantly surrounded by it: television, video games, social media, smartphones, and more. While technology itself isn’t sinful, it can easily become a stumbling block that leads to sin in our lives.

Technology can consume our time without us even realizing it. How often have you started scrolling on your phone, only to look up and realize hours have passed? Video games and social media can be entertaining, but when they become our main source of comfort and fulfillment, they may have taken the place of God in our hearts.

Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 10 warn us about the subtle danger of idolatry. Even things we consider harmless can become dangerous when they pull us away from God.

James 1:14–15 reminds us that “Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.” If playing a video game consistently leads to anger or frustration, or if engaging with social media takes us down a path of comparison and discontentment, these things are not beneficial. We are much better off letting them go or thinking seriously about our relationship with them and taking appropriate actions.

James 1:17 says, “Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.” Technology can be a blessing when used wisely. It can help us relax, connect with friends, and even share the gospel. But it should never replace our dependence on God. Ensure that technology remains a tool, not an idol.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. — James 1:17

Prayer

Thank God for the good gift of technology and the ways it can benefit us and be used for good.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. — 1 Corinthians 10:31

Prayer

Ask God for wisdom to engage with technology in a way that brings Him glory.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. — Psalm 63:1

Prayer

Thank God for being infinitely more valuable than any technology.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. — Jeremiah 29:13

Prayer

Ask God to help you keep Him first and not let technology take His place.



Reflection Questions

- 01** Check your screen time: How much time do you spend on technology each week? How much money do you invest in apps, games, or technology accessories?

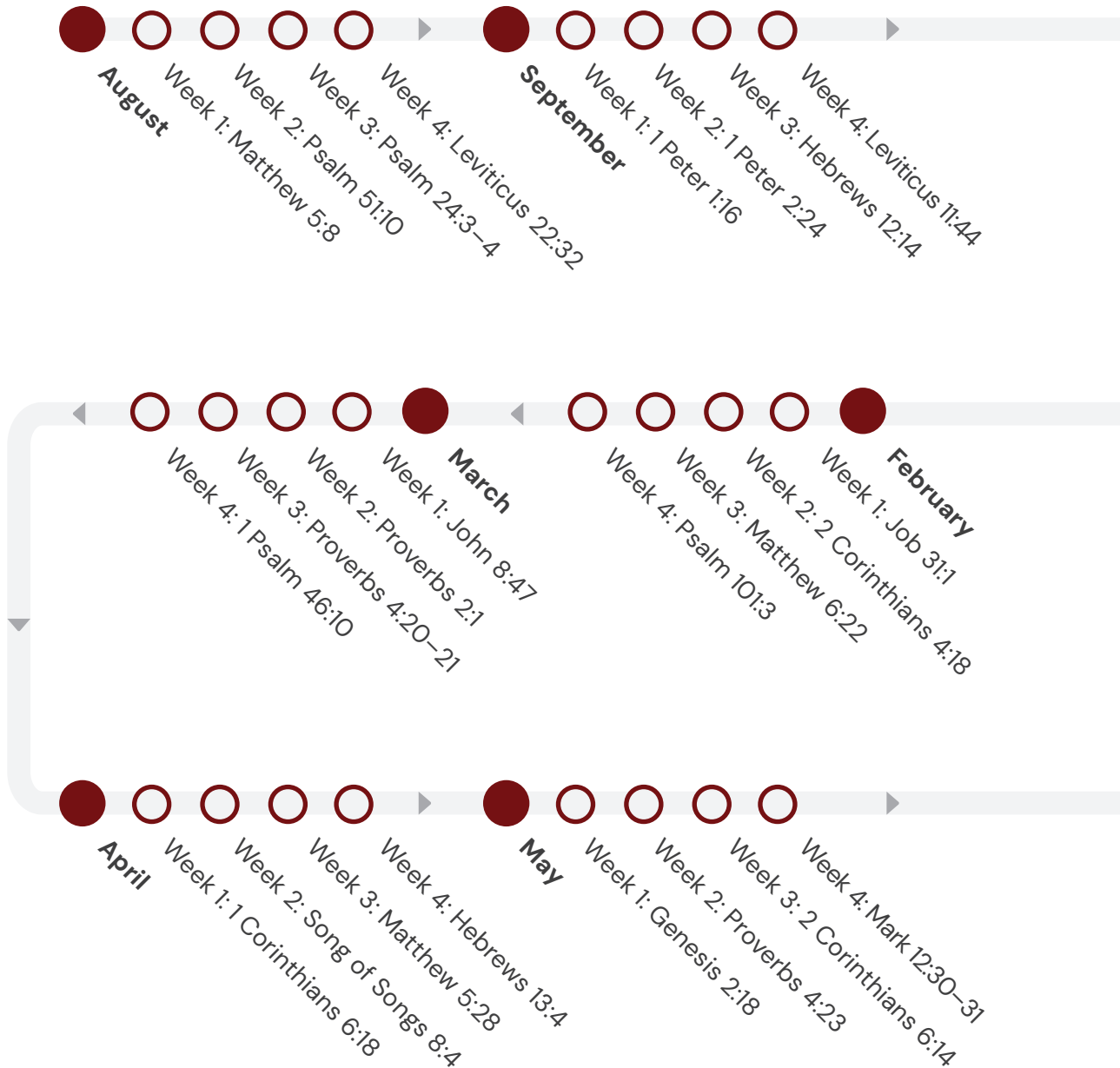
- 02** Are you distracted by technology even when you're not using it?

- 03** Do you turn to technology for comfort instead of God?

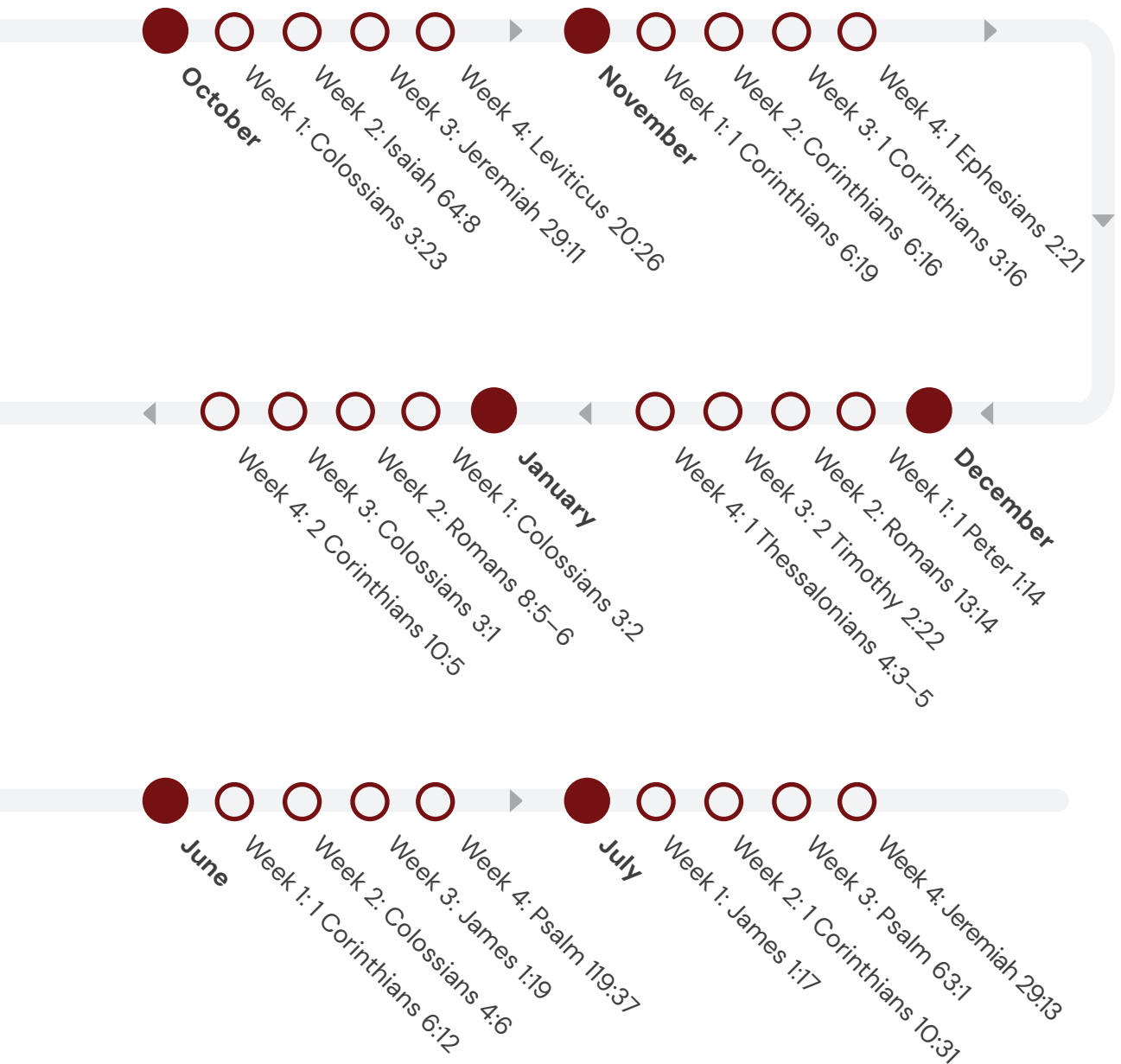
- 04** Is there an area where you need to cut back or surrender technology to God?

- 05** How could you better use your time, money, and focus more effectively for God's kingdom?

Memory Verse Tracking Log



EIGHTH GRADE





NEW VISION