



NINTH GRADE

Discipleship Essentials Pathway

DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS PATHWAY

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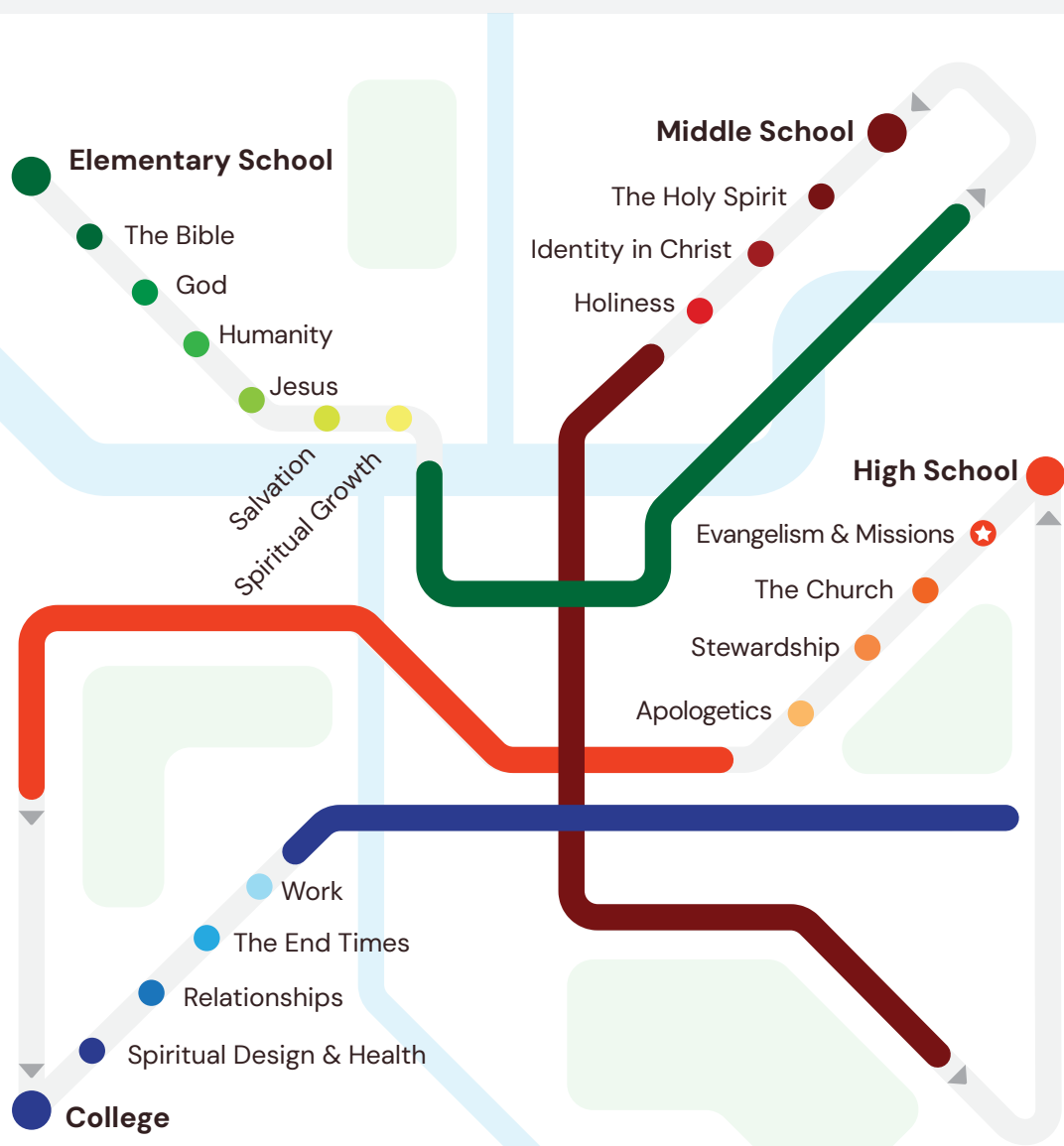
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System Map

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.” 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 10: Evangelism and Missions and is designed to be used with ninth 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 lessons, 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 student 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 ninth grader to say as much with you as possible. 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, these are for you to use during the week and on the rest of the family devotion days of the month.

During the week, look for opportunities to discuss 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 and as we go. The goal is to help your student 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 student to memorize it 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 11 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. Review 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.

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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.

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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.

The Great Commission:

Making Disciples

What is the Great Commission?

The Great Commission is Jesus's command to take the good news to the world. It is also the promise that Jesus will be with us as we share the gospel.

Bible Story

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted!

¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

— Matthew 28:16–20

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?

Devotion

Learning to ride a bike can be a daunting task, but it is a skill that every child should learn. Imagine the scene: as other children are riding their bikes with smiles ear to ear, one child stands back to watch. They haven't yet learned how to ride, so they have no way to join in on the fun. Something is holding them back from doing what they know they should. Perhaps it's fear circling in this child's mind: "What if I fall? What if I crash?"

But eventually, the child finally gives it a go. They strap on their helmet and muster up just enough courage to get on their bike and push off to ride after the other kids. There comes a moment in this adventure when the child realizes and believes that they would not be left there even if they did fall or crash. They also recognize that their family members or a friendly neighbor would be there to help them. Someone would be with them every step of the way.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He left His disciples with a final encouragement and challenge. He instructs them to go out and make disciples of all nations, teaching people what the Good News is and what it means for their lives. This command that Jesus gave to His disciples—and us—is called the Great Commission, and we, as followers of Jesus, devote our lives to it. The way Jesus concludes this final message is the best part. He tells His disciples that they will never be alone. Jesus promises them His support and presence every step of the way! This assurance is the key to their ability to fulfill the Great Commission; God lives in us, empowering us to boldly embrace what He has called us to do. We can go and teach others about Jesus: our friends, family, neighbors, teammates, coworkers, and even people we just met, because Jesus will help us do it. In other words, He won't abandon you to figure out how to ride a bike by yourself. Jesus will stand by you as you take on this Great Commission and live it out.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.

And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
— Matthew 28:19–20

Prayer

Thank God that the person who shared Jesus with you obeyed the Great Commission.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"
— Romans 10:15

Prayer

Ask God to help you be obedient and willing to go wherever He sends you to tell others about Jesus.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning

in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'"
— Luke 24:46–47

Prayer

Thank God for the Bible, which gives us what to say and confidence in sharing it.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

Again he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." — John 20:21

Prayer

Ask God to give you peace as He uses you to bring peace through Jesus to others.



Reflection Questions

01 What is the Great Commission?

02 How do you live out the Great Commission?

03 What scares you about sharing the gospel with others?

04 Who is someone far from God but close to you? How can you share the good news of Jesus with them this month?

Notes:

AUGUST

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Evangelism:

Sharing the Good News

What is evangelism?

Evangelism is sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others. Jesus instructs His followers to make disciples of all nations. As such, we are commanded to share the gospel with others.



Further Inspection

What is Christian missions? *Missions* are when we take the gospel and share it with the lost world around us, often outside of our normal operating space. Missions can take place across the street or around the world.

What is a mission trip? A mission trip is an organized, gospel-centered community service effort by followers of Jesus, churches, and organizations. A mission trip can last anywhere from a few days to multiple years.

Bible Story

⁹ If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.

¹¹ As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.”

¹² Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him.

¹³ For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

¹⁵ And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”

— Romans 10:9–15

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

When we have good news, we usually can't wait to tell someone what is happening. "I just got 100 on my test!" Or "My parents bought me a dog!" Or "I have a date next weekend!" We can't wait to share the good things we experience. With that excitement, we should share the gospel, the good news of Jesus. Think about it—have you received any news better than your rescue through Jesus? Jesus has made a way for you to be forgiven of every sin you've committed and put you back into a relationship with God. That incredible, shocking, life-changing gift has to be something shared with others!

That is what evangelism is.

Evangelism is when we take the good news of Jesus to others. We should do this in several ways. First, we should communicate the gospel by the way we live. For example, we know that we can have forgiveness because Jesus died in our place. So, we can share that forgiveness with others, even when they have wronged us. Likewise, we can go out of our way to love others because Jesus came down from heaven to show His love for us. Another way we can evangelize is by explicitly sharing

the gospel with people who don't know Jesus. We can do that by telling what Jesus has done in our own lives. How did Jesus give you hope, peace, or joy? How did Jesus encourage you when you needed it? Sharing how Jesus has changed your life is an incredible way to evangelize others. Sometimes, you can evangelize by inviting people to church, your small group, or even just to hang out at your house. Other times, you need to tell people directly what Jesus has done for them. You can share Scripture with them, like John 3:16–17, Romans 6:23, or Romans 10:9–10. The Bible holds the key to salvation—we have to show people the power that transforms their lives!

Not only are we called to share the gospel with people we know, but we are also commanded to share the good news with people we haven't yet met. One way we do that is through missions, whether a single short-term trip, a continuing relationship through a parachurch organization, or a long-term role as a missionary. It looks different for all of us. Whatever the case, Jesus calls and empowers us to take the good news of His rescue to the world.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith: Christ was revealed in a human body and vindicated by the Spirit. He was seen by angels and announced to the nations. He was believed in throughout the world and taken to heaven in glory. — 1 Timothy 3:16

Prayer

Thank God for the wonderful core message of the gospel we get to share with others.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

"For the Lord gave us this command when he said, 'I have made you a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth.'" — Acts 13:47

Prayer

Ask God to help you be prepared to share when the opportunity arises.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. — Psalm 105:1

Prayer

Thank God for allowing us to participate in spreading the good news of Jesus.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. — Romans 10:17

Prayer

Ask God to give you boldness to tell others about how they can come to trust in Jesus.



Next Steps

Who can you share your faith in Jesus with? Gather with your family or group and pray for someone God has brought to your mind. Ask God to give you an opportunity to share with them.

How can you be involved with Christian missions? Plan to serve locally or internationally in the next year. You can serve within the church, community, or by partnering with a Christian organization. Ask your church leaders about partnerships/information on how to serve all over the world.

Notes:

SEPTEMBER

My Reason for Sharing Christ

Why should I share my faith with others?

While all followers of Jesus are commanded to share our faith with others, our greatest motivation should not be that we have to, but rather that we get to. Jesus is our greatest treasure and the only way to eternal life. People all around us are lost and in need of Him, and we can introduce them to Him.

Bible Story

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city. ¹⁷ He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there.

¹⁸ He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, "What's this babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he's picked up?" Others said, "He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods."

¹⁹ Then they took him to the high council of the city. "Come and tell us about this new teaching," they said. ²⁰ "You are saying some rather strange things, and we want to know what it's all about." ²¹ (It should be explained that all the Athenians as well as the foreigners in Athens seemed to spend all their time discussing the latest ideas.)

²² So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: "Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, ²³ for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: 'To an Unknown God.' This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about.

²⁴ “He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn’t live in man-made temples, ²⁵ and human hands can’t serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. ²⁶ From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

²⁷ “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ ²⁹ And since this is true, we shouldn’t think of God as an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone.

³⁰ “God overlooked people’s ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. ³¹ For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.”

³² When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt, but others said, “We want to hear more about this later.” ³³ That ended Paul’s discussion with them, ³⁴ but some joined him and became believers. Among them were Dionysius, a member of the council, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

— Acts 17:16–34

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

Diseases are terrible. They cause pain, suffering, heartache, and death. No disease was part of God's plan, and no disease will be left standing when Jesus returns. But for now, disease extends its vile tentacles into the lives of far too many men, women, teenagers, and children.

But what if it didn't have to? What if you found a single cure for each and every disease that plagues humanity? What would you do? Would you keep it to yourself? Of course not! You would go to every hospital you could and give it away. You would go on the news and

declare to the entire world, “Friends, all disease is dead!”

Sadly, that’s only a what-if. There is no single cure for all disease. But what if you had something even better? And this isn’t a what-if; it’s real. As a follower of Jesus, you have the single cure for sin and eternal separation from God: you have Jesus. When you trusted in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, all your sins were forgiven in that nanosecond. When that happened, you received eternal life. What an amazing gift God has given through Christ Jesus! But this gift isn’t just for you. God wants you to share it with others.

This is what we see happen all throughout the book of Acts, and especially here in Acts 17. Paul had been a persecutor of the church. He was a hostile opponent of the Christian faith, responsible for the killing of many Christians. But one day, he met Jesus and his life was completely changed. From that day on, Paul did everything he could to share his faith in Jesus with others.

Here in Acts 17, Paul was on his second missionary journey. Just before this, Paul had been run out of Thessalonica for sharing about Jesus.

So, he went to Berea and began sharing his faith there. But when people in Thessalonica heard what he was doing, they went to Berea to chase Paul out of there too! Most of us would give up at this point, but not Paul. He had gone to Athens to “lay low” for a while, but notice what happened. His heart was troubled by the idol worship going on around him. Paul knew he was in a city full of people who needed Jesus and he couldn’t sit still. So, he shared his faith again.

Don’t miss how things turned out for Paul. Some believed, but many others did not. That’s important. It reminds us that the results of our sharing our faith are not up to us, but rather they are up to God. Our part is to follow in Paul’s footsteps. It’s to love Jesus and love other people enough to want to bring them together. It’s to recognize that people all around us are lost, hurting, and in need of forgiveness of sin and eternal life – just like we once were. And it’s to remember that we have the antidote. Sure we’re commanded to share our faith, but really, when it comes down to it, it’s a command we shouldn’t ever need because our hearts should drive us to do nothing less.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

"But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God." — Acts 20:24

Prayer

Ask God to help you always remember that sharing your faith is a significant part of your life's calling.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me." — Isaiah 6:8

Prayer

Ask God to help soften your heart for other people around you and to be willing to share your faith with others.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

In that wonderful day you will sing: "Thank the Lord! Praise his name! Tell the nations what he has done. Let them know how mighty he is!" — Isaiah 12:4

Prayer

Ask God to help you see sharing your faith not as a chore, but rather as a joyful act.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." — John 13:35

Prayer

Ask God to grow your love for other followers of Jesus but also for people who need to hear about Jesus.



Next Steps

Take time each day and focus on not seeing past people. Every day, you pass people on the street, in the halls, in stores, and everywhere else you go. Instead of ignoring them, ask God to help you look at these faces and realize that they are all made in God's image, and many are destined for eternal separation from God without Jesus. Ask God to help your heart grow to be more like Paul's – and even more like Jesus'.

Notes:

The Basics of Evangelism

What should evangelism look like?

Evangelism is not one-size-fits-all. There are many different ways for followers of Jesus to show and tell others about Him. Our personal testimony can be a powerful way to illustrate the change that takes place when we surrender to Jesus as Lord of our lives. However, the most important part of evangelism is telling the story of who Jesus is and what He has done.

Bible Story

¹ As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth.

² “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?”

³ “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. ⁴ We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. ⁵ But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶ Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. ⁷ He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!

⁸ His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some said he was, and others said, “No, he just looks like him!” But the beggar kept saying, “Yes, I am the same one!”

¹⁰ They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?"

¹¹ He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!"

¹² "Where is he now?" they asked.

"I don't know," he replied.

¹³ Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, ¹⁴ because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. ¹⁵ The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!"

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them.

¹⁷ Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet."

¹⁸ The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. ¹⁹ They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?"

²⁰ His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. ²³ That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him."

²⁴ So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, "God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner."

²⁵ "I don't know whether he is a sinner," the man replied. "But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!"

— John 9:1–25

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

We use computers, phones, and other devices every day. Few of us, though, know how they work. Really, it's all a mystery. It's truly a wonder. How can plastic, wires, chips, and who-knows-what-else do all the things our devices do?

What would you do if a friend asked your advice on what phone they should get next? Would you respond, "Well, I'm sorry, but I can't help you. You see, I know nothing at all about how phones are made or how they work. It's a total mystery. But, hey, good luck with that!"

Of course not. You would more likely share your experience using your phone, especially if you really like it. It doesn't matter how your phone does what it does; what matters most is what your phone does.

Evangelism is sort of like that. We have been given a tool that can be used powerfully without completely understanding how it works.

The Bible is a huge book; the New Living Translation (NLT) has over 800,000 words! You might not have even read them all. And even if you

have, what the Bible talks about can be quite complex. Theologians go to years of graduate school and spend their lives trying to understand just *parts* of the Christian faith. And they struggle to do even that. So, does God really expect you, a student, to be involved in evangelism? Yes, He does. And here's why. Evangelism isn't as complicated as we might think. This is what we see in the account of the man born blind.

John 9 tells this wonderful true story of Jesus healing a man who had been born blind. Unlike some other of his healings, Jesus didn't stick around for this one. It was sort of a heal-and-run!

When the Pharisees heard about the healing, they had a problem. The word was that Jesus had healed this man—a true miracle—but Jesus had done this on the Sabbath. The Pharisees' thinking, even though it was incorrect, was that Jesus had broken the Sabbath by "working" to heal him. Only a godly person could heal like this, they reasoned. But only an ungodly person would break the Sabbath, again, based on their wrong conclusion that healing is work.

They were confused as to what exactly was going on.

So, the Pharisees called for the man and posed this dilemma to him.

When the man said that he thought Jesus was a prophet, they balked and countered that they knew He was a sinner. And then the man said something profoundly wonderful: "I don't know whether he is a sinner, but I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!"

And in that, we see the beautiful simplicity of evangelism. We don't have to know it all. All we need to know is what happened to us—how we trusted in Jesus and how He gave us forgiveness of sin and new life. And if you've done that, then you know exactly what another person needs to know to do it, too. You also know the amazing transformation that has happened in your life. In evangelism, we share what we know and what God has done in our lives. Just like a phone, you don't have to know exactly how it all works; you just need to know that it *does*.

Evangelism is simply sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Just as the formerly blind man was able to tell others that he once was blind but

can now see because of Jesus, we can tell others what Christ has done for us and tell them the good news of how He can do the same for them.

The good news is that the only true God, the just and gracious Creator of the universe, has seen our hopelessly sinful condition and sent His Son, Jesus, to save us and establish His kingdom. Jesus is God's long awaited Messiah, the anointed King and God's one and only Son. Christ died on the cross for our sins, according to the Scriptures. He was resurrected on the third day, according to the Scriptures. In His great love and amazing grace, God the Father saves everyone who repents of their sin, believes in the gospel, and follows Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. When King Jesus returns on the last day, the great day of Judgment, everyone who follows Him to the end will enter the eternal kingdom of God.

This is the good news that has the power to save us. While we may not understand how it works, we trust that what we read in Romans 1:16 is true: "For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile."

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. — 1 Corinthians 9:22

Prayer

Ask God to help you connect with others who need Jesus in the way that makes the most sense to them.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" — 2 Corinthians 5:20

Prayer

Ask God to help you remember the simplicity of the gospel message we share with others.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

So his master said, "Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full." — Luke 14:23

Prayer

Thank God for putting people all around you who need Jesus.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." — Matthew 9:37–38

Prayer

Ask God for more people to participate in evangelism in your community, starting with you.



Next Steps

Connect with a few friends who are also followers of Jesus. You might do this at school, church, or even on a video call. Spend some time hearing from one another about what God has done for you in Jesus and sharing your understanding of how a person can trust in Him, too. It's okay if you don't have all the right words or if you stumble to say what you want to say. The goal is simply to get more comfortable and get some practice.

Notes:

NOVEMBER



My Testimony:

How Jesus Changed My Life

What is a testimony?

A testimony is your story, specifically how you began a relationship with Jesus. Typically, your testimony answers three questions: (1) What was your life like before you began a relationship with Jesus? (2) When and how did you begin a relationship with Jesus? and (3) What has changed in your life since you've met Jesus? Remember, this is *your* story; there are no right or wrong answers. It is simply you sharing how God has changed your life.

Bible Story

¹ Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak in your defense."

So Paul, gesturing with his hand, started his defense: ² "I am fortunate, King Agrippa, that you are the one hearing my defense today against all these accusations made by the Jewish leaders, ³ for I know you are an expert on all Jewish customs and controversies. Now please listen to me patiently!

⁴ "As the Jewish leaders are well aware, I was given a thorough Jewish training from my earliest childhood among my own people and in Jerusalem. ⁵ If they would admit it, they know that I have been a member of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of our religion. ⁶ Now I am on trial because of my hope in the fulfillment of God's promise made to our ancestors. ⁷ In fact, that is why the twelve tribes of Israel zealously worship God night and day, and they share the same hope I have. Yet, Your Majesty, they accuse me for having this hope!

⁸ Why does it seem incredible to any of you that God can raise the dead?

⁹ "I used to believe that I ought to do everything I could to oppose the very name of Jesus the Nazarene. ¹⁰ Indeed, I did just that in Jerusalem. Authorized by the leading priests, I caused many believers there to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. ¹¹ Many times I had them punished in the synagogues to get them to curse Jesus. I was so violently opposed to them that I even chased them down in foreign cities.

¹² "One day I was on such a mission to Damascus, armed with the authority and commission of the leading priests. ¹³ About noon, Your Majesty, as I was on the road, a light from heaven brighter than the sun shone down on me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell down, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is useless for you to fight against my will.'

¹⁵ "'Who are you, lord?' I asked.

"And the Lord replied, 'I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. ¹⁶ Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. Tell people that you have seen me, and tell them what I will show you in the future. ¹⁷ And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles ¹⁸ to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith in me.'

¹⁹ "And so, King Agrippa, I obeyed that vision from heaven. ²⁰ I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do. ²¹ Some Jews arrested me in the Temple for preaching this, and they tried to kill me. ²² But God has protected me right up to this present time so I can testify to everyone, from the least to the greatest. I teach nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen—²³ that the Messiah would suffer and be the

first to rise from the dead, and in this way announce God's light to Jews and Gentiles alike."

²⁴ Suddenly, Festus shouted, "Paul, you are insane. Too much study has made you crazy!"

²⁵ But Paul replied, "I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. What I am saying is the sober truth. ²⁶ And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak boldly, for I am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner!"

— Acts 26:1–26

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

"I can't believe this happened to me!" If you've ever heard or said those words, you know that the story afterward was one for the ages! Maybe it was a story about an incredible trip you took with your family, where the sights were better than anyone's imagination. Maybe you were told about a day of school when everything kept going wrong. Or perhaps you couldn't wait to tell a friend about winning a giveaway or going viral on social media. A story is simply sharing about an experience you've had. And that's all a testimony is—it's the true story of your life and how you began a relationship with Jesus. The great thing about a testimony is that you already know it. You don't have to research to write one, but you do need to be prepared. In Acts 26, we see how Paul shared his testimony with King Agrippa. Paul followed a format of sharing his life before he started a relationship with Jesus, how he started a relationship with Jesus, and what his life was like after his relationship with Jesus began.

In vv. 4–11, Paul shares what his life was like before he had a relationship with Jesus. He speaks of growing up

as a devoted Jew and then taking it upon himself to do whatever he could to stop the early church. He was relying on his own acts and not Jesus for salvation. Then in vv. 12–18, Paul shares about how he met Jesus on the road to Damascus and was instructed to spread the gospel to the Gentiles. It was the moment when he committed his life to Jesus as his Savior and Lord. Finally, in vv. 19–23, Paul details his life after meeting Jesus and how he now spreads the gospel.

Jesus had transformed Paul's life and was continuing to change him. This is Paul's testimony. When we share ours, we can be honest about where we have been and excited about where we are headed. Our testimony is powerful because it shows what God has done in our lives through Jesus. And it is something to be incredibly excited to share. We should enthusiastically share our story: "I can't believe this happened to me!"

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. — 1 Chronicles 16:8

Prayer

Thank God for saving you and giving you a testimony that you can share with others.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

"No, go back to your family, and tell them everything God has done for you." So he went all through the town proclaiming the great things Jesus had done for him. — Luke 8:39

Prayer

Ask God to give you the courage to share your testimony with someone.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what he did for me. — Psalm 66:16

Prayer

Ask God to help you be confident and comfortable in sharing your testimony.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die. — Revelation 12:11

Prayer

Thank God for the power of your testimony and the even greater power of the gospel itself.



Next Steps

Knowing what a testimony is and having Paul's as an example, it's now your turn. In the space provided below, answer the following questions to construct your testimony:

01 What was my life like before I started a relationship with Jesus?

02 When and how did I start my relationship with Jesus?

03 How has my life changed since I started a relationship with Jesus?

Now that you have written out your testimony, share it with someone. Pick a friend or family member to share it with, and ask them to share their testimony with you.

My Life:

Showing Jesus' Love in My Love for Others

Who is called to show the love of Jesus?

All those who have trusted in Jesus as Savior and follow Him as Lord have been called to express their love for others in tangible ways—even toward those who may be difficult to love. Jesus commands us to love one another and provides a living example.

Bible Story

¹ Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. ² It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. ⁴ So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, ⁵ and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

⁶ When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will."

⁸ "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."

⁹ Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

¹⁰ Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you.” ¹¹ For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.” ¹² After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing?” ¹³ You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. ¹⁴ And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. ¹⁵ I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.”

— John 13:1–17

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

It's not always easy to love the ones we love. Sometimes we might disagree with a family member or close friend, and we certainly don't feel love toward them. And we surely won't necessarily act in love toward them in that moment. We know that we love them, but love can sometimes feel smaller and more distant. How much more difficult is it to love strangers and even enemies? But that's exactly what Jesus has called us to do.

As you read John 17, you may have noticed the phrase, "Jesus knew." It appears there three times (vv. 1, 3, 11). What did Jesus know?

In verse 1, we read that Jesus knew that His earthly ministry was nearing its completion and that He would return to His Father in heaven. According to verse 3, Jesus knew that the Father had placed everything under His authority, and that just as He had been with the Father before, He was about to be with Him again. As the scene is set, we see that nobody is more important than Jesus, and He knew it. Knowing this, what did Jesus do?

He got up from His seat at the table and washed the feet of His disciples. Jesus, the most important person in the universe, demonstrated that nobody is above serving in the Kingdom of God. In the first century, washing the feet of another was the most humble of tasks and was typically reserved not just for a slave but for the lowest of slaves. Each of Jesus' disciples would have assumed that washing the feet of the others was beneath them. Imagine their surprise when the Lord began washing their feet.

The first lesson that Jesus would have His disciples learn from His example is that no one is above serving, and the second is that no one is below being served. As Jesus washed their feet, verse 11 says, "For Jesus knew who would betray him." Jesus still chose to serve Judas, knowing that He is King over all and that Judas was about to betray Him. Can you imagine? We often won't hold open the door for someone who looked at us funny once, yet Jesus intimately served the one who would help send Him to the cross. But that's love—the love we are commanded to mirror.

Jesus, knowing that His disciples rightfully called him “Teacher” and Lord,” gave them an example to follow, commanding them to do as He had done. And we are commanded likewise. If Jesus is the Lord of your life, then go and love as He did. Loving isn’t always easy, but it’s always worth doing. From the highest to the lowest, every other person deserves our love. And as Jesus promised in verse 17, “Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.” When we obey God and love others well, it impacts them—and makes us more like Jesus.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other." — John 13:34

Prayer

Ask God to help you love others unconditionally, even when it's difficult.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. — Ephesians 5:2

Prayer

Ask God to open your eyes to the needs around you and to show you ways to serve others with His love.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. — Matthew 5:16

Prayer

Ask God to use your actions and words to point others to the love of Jesus.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. — John 15:13

Prayer

Thank God for His amazing love for you, which is revealed most powerfully at the cross.



Next Steps

Try to find one “difficult” person around you to show the love of Jesus to. It could be a classmate, a coworker, a family member, or even a friend. Whether it’s writing a note of encouragement, volunteering, or spending time with someone in need, let your actions reflect Jesus Christ’s love. Write down how you see God working through you in these moments. The love of Jesus is never-ending and supernatural; reflect it freely and watch how it affects the lives of those around you and your own!

Notes:

My Story Is Worth Sharing

Is my story worth sharing?

Yes. There is no right or wrong story; whatever your story is, it's not about you. It's about Jesus and His story of coming to earth on a rescue mission for you and all others who turn to Him in faith. Be confident in your story, and remember when you share it, you're really sharing Jesus' story. God will use your story to affect others.

Bible Story

¹ Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. ² You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. ³ All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

⁴ But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, ⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) ⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. ⁷ So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

⁸ God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we

have done, so none of us can boast about it.¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

— Ephesians 2:1–10

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

Everyone has a story; each is part of a greater story—the story of God and His glory. We have all heard incredible stories of extreme life change from those who lived incredibly sad, dark, rebellious, wild lives before they met Jesus. These stories often include addiction, violence, abuse, prison, idol worship, atheism, or any number of things that are clearly outside the will of God.

For many, especially those who grew up in church, sometimes it is easy to feel like our story is somehow lesser than those who have experienced such noticeable change. Because of this, we may be hesitant to share our story with others because the change we experienced at salvation may not be as evident, and we may feel it seems unimpressive.

But according to Ephesians 2:1–3, every one of our stories has the same beginning, and it is anything but good news. The apostle Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, describes life outside of Christ as being dead. From the start, we were all living in sin, according to the devil's plan, following our own selfish desires. As such, "By our very nature

we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else." That means we, just like the people in those powerful stories, began as dead in sin: following the ways of this world, the schemes of the devil, and the desires of our sinful nature. As such, we deserved God's anger just as much as anyone else.

But then, God changes everything. The only good news in the first three verses of Ephesians 2 is that it is in the *past tense* for those who have been saved by God from sin. We were dead, but we are no longer. All of this bad news becomes old news for those of us who have heard and believed the good news.

In Ephesians 2:4–10, we see that good news. Despite our helpless, lifeless, deplorable condition, God loved us. With an unlimited supply of mercy and grace, He sent His Son to live the holy life that we simply could not so that He could die the death that we should have. Jesus rescued us from our sin; just as God raised Jesus from the dead, He also does the same for those who believe. We haven't earned new life and don't

deserve it, but we can receive it, for God's glory and our good.

If you have been saved by grace through faith, you have a story that deserves to be told. That's because the star of your story—and the star of every other believer's story—is not you; it's Jesus. Your story is good enough because Jesus is good enough. Your story is powerful because the gospel is powerful. You can boldly share the story of how you once were dead but are now alive and can offer the same to others in the name of Jesus Christ.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News. — 2 Timothy 1:8

Prayer

Thank God for your story and for Him reaching you and giving you life.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

"And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry." — John 15:27

Prayer

Thank God that the power of your story is based on Jesus.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

"We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard." — Acts 4:20

Prayer

Ask God to give you a deep desire to share your story with others.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. — 2 Corinthians 3:5

Prayer

Ask God to give you confidence in sharing your story.



Reflection Questions

01 What gives your story its power?

02 When you think of your story, how much focus do you put on yourself, and how much do you put on Jesus?

03 How do you see yourself before trusting in Jesus? How do you see yourself since?

What Holds Me Back

What should I do when I am afraid to share the gospel?

When you are afraid to share the gospel, remember to practice, pause, pray, and participate. By taking these four steps, we can be strong and courageous and obey Christ's command to share the good news with others.

Bible Story

¹ After the death of Moses the Lord's servant, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, ² "Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. ³ I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you— ⁴ from the Negev wilderness in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, including all the land of the Hittites.' ⁵ No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

⁶ "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. ⁸ Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. ⁹ This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

— Joshua 1:1–9

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 been afraid before? Is there something you are afraid of right now? If we are honest, we can often struggle against our fears, even as followers of Jesus. Sometimes we might even be afraid to follow Jesus.

Fear comes from uncertainty about the future or the outcome of a situation. Often, what God calls us to do creates anxiety because we simply don't know what might happen, even as we follow His leadership.

While God has not called us to lead the Israelites into the promised land as He did Joshua, He has called us to share the gospel with those who do not know Jesus. In both situations, what God calls us to do is beyond our strength, which naturally can create anxiety. But we can learn to overcome our fear of sharing the gospel by taking a closer look at Joshua's story.

Joshua had just lost his friend and mentor, Moses, when God called him to lead the Israelites. This likely made Joshua feel afraid and overwhelmed by the unknown that would come next. God wasn't surprised by Joshua's emotions or

upset with Joshua for being afraid, but He gave him this command three separate times: "Be strong and courageous." Joshua 1:9 says, "This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Notice that the command to be strong and courageous is not based on Joshua's abilities. This was not a pep talk where God told Joshua how great he was. While Joshua may have been a gifted leader and a skilled communicator, his success wouldn't come from those skills. Joshua himself was not the basis of his strength and courage. No—the foundation for Joshua's strength and courage was God's presence in his life.

In Joshua 1:5, God says He will do what He has already done, "For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you." We have a God who is always with us, who can bring peace amid fear. The best thing to do is pause and seek the Lord when fear starts to creep in. Pausing to seek the Lord reminds us that we are not alone as we face fear. The Creator of the universe is

with us and gives us all we need to continue onward.

The two most prevalent commands in all Scripture are “Do not be afraid” and “Remember.” This is no coincidence. When we remember who God is, what He has said, and that He promises to be with us, we are less likely to be afraid. When we are tempted to be fearful in evangelism, we remember that the gospel is defined as “the power of God” in at least two places (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18). When we are sharing the gospel, we are sharing the power of God from the power of God.

There are a couple of other important things to remember about evangelism. First, when we share the gospel with someone, we have already been successful. God calls on us to be faithful in sharing the good news. The results are not up to us. God saves sinners when they hear and respond to the gospel. In His sovereign grace, God uses those saved by the gospel to share the same good news of salvation with others.

We can be strong and courageous in sharing the gospel with others because we know God is with us.

True strength isn't from us going to the gym or pretending we aren't afraid; true strength comes from the Lord alone. Isaiah 40:29 says, “He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.” If we want to face fear well, we cannot do it on our strength. We must remember that God is the one whose strength can help us through every fear-filled season of our lives, just like we see through Joshua's story. While fear might seem strong, our God is stronger. Courage doesn't mean you aren't afraid; courage means taking a step forward despite fear. Joshua needed to continue and trust God, even though he was afraid. We can do this, too, when we remember that God goes before us and will never leave us.

Fear is normal, so you are not alone in the fight! We can acknowledge our fear, but we must remember God is with us. We lean on His strength and continue forward. Bring your fears to the Lord, because He is strong enough to carry them. Just as Joshua was called to be strong and courageous in the midst of fear, we have that same invitation from our all-powerful God.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.
— Joshua 1:9

Prayer

Thank God for His presence, which eases our fears.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? — Psalm 56:3–4

Prayer

Thank God for being available to listen to us when we call to Him in fear.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. — Isaiah 40:29

Prayer

Ask God to give you courage and strength, especially when you are afraid.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that

everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” — Matthew 5:14–16

Prayer

Ask God to calm your fears and to help you live boldly and brightly for Jesus.



Further Inspection

Practice: It's always helpful to practice. You can practice sharing the gospel with a friend, in your small group, with a family member, or with your pastor. Practice sharing the gospel using your testimony, the bridge illustration, the Romans Road, or another tool.

Pause: Before you share the gospel, take a moment to pause. Take a deep breath and gather your thoughts before entering a conversation.

Pray: Talk to God before you share the gospel. Pray and thank God for the person who shared the good news with you. Thank Him for the opportunity to be a part of building His kingdom. Ask Him to give you the confidence to speak. Ask God to provide you with the right words and allow you to trust Him even as you do something difficult.

Participate: If you have someone to share the good news with, know that God is already working. He has brought you together, and He's not going to leave you now. Sharing the gospel isn't all on you; only God's work can help someone see the truth about their need for Jesus. So, all you have to do is participate. Be a part of what God is already doing, and trust Him with the result of your obedience.

We are the Salt of the Earth

What does it mean to be the salt of the earth?

Jesus described His people as “salt” to tell us two things: First, our presence has a preserving effect as people come to know Jesus through our words and deeds. Second, our presence has a seasoning effect as we speak and live as representatives of Jesus in the world.

Bible Story

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶ In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

— Matthew 5:13–16

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?

Devotion

Imagine sitting down to eat at a Mexican restaurant – what is one of the first things that happens? A waiter sets down a fresh and warm basket of tortilla chips. These chips are almost perfect, but they usually need one thing: salt. Why? When you add salt to these chips, it brings a new flavor that makes them taste better. They can be slightly bland without a dusting from the salt shaker. This salt brings the chip to its full potential. Just like the salt improves the chip and makes it the best it can be, we are called to be the salt this world so desperately needs.

In Matthew 5, Jesus tells us as his followers that we must live as “the salt of the earth.” To be the salt of the earth, we would bring the truth of what Jesus did for us to the whole world. Christians are called to “season” the world with the taste of Christ’s truth, love, sacrifice, and grace. The world without Jesus is dull, full of deceit, hopeless, and self-centered – it needs the seasoning that Christ’s followers can bring.

Matthew 5:13 says, “But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you

make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.” Jesus is making the point that believers must live with purpose. If the salt in our shaker is stale, we would throw it out. Why? Because it is not fulfilling its purpose – to bring flavor! If we, as Christians, aren’t sharing the truth of Jesus, we aren’t living up to our calling. Matthew 28:19–20 reinforces this calling for believers: “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Jesus wants us to live on mission to share the good news of his love for us!

Here are a few questions: How are we doing in our role as salt? Are we living out our calling, or have we lost our flavor? We can answer these by looking at how we have lived our lives around our family, friends, teammates, classmates, and those we encounter daily. Do we live as the salt, showing the love of God and hope to a weary world? Do we preserve those around us, pointing

them to abundant life in Jesus? This calling continues in Matthew 5 when Jesus tells us to be the “light of the world.” As the salt and light, we aren’t called to blend in – we are called to stand out. We can live on our mission as the salt and light by asking friends how we can pray for them. We can live out this mission by loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. We can live out this mission by encouraging and not tearing down. We can be kind to those who don’t deserve it. We can work for the benefit of others and not ourselves. Ultimately, we are salt because we share the truth of God’s Word.

We are never too young or too old to choose to “season” the world. It is an honor, not a burden, to be the salt and light for God’s glory! We can choose to do this each day. Our calling as followers of Jesus is to live on mission for God’s glory. Let’s season the world with God’s truth and love together!

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

"You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden." — Matthew 5:13–14

Prayer

Ask God to help you be faithful so that you can always be useful for Him.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

This false teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough! — Galatians 5:9

Prayer

Ask God to use you to counteract any false beliefs and teachings by which others are influenced.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven." — Matthew 6:1

Prayer

Ask God to protect your heart so that you use your influence for others for His glory and not your own.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! — Hebrews 13:1–2

Prayer

Ask God to give you opportunities to influence strangers positively.



Next Steps

Take a few minutes to make a plan for this week about how you can be the salt of the earth. Make two columns on paper, or create two notes on your phone. Write a plan, including action steps, of how you will *preserve* the world by showing people the new life that's possible through Jesus. Then, write down how you will *season* the world by sprinkling the love and peace of Jesus in your words and deeds.

Notes:

We Are the Light of the World

What does it mean to be the “light of the world?”

Jesus described His people as “the light of the world.” This is one way we relate to the world around us. We are to be people whose faith is visible and attractive, drawing people away from the darkness of our fallen world and toward God’s kingdom.

Bible Story

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶ In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

— Matthew 5:13–16

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?

Devotion

When we walk into a dark room or building, it is wise to be hesitant with every step. We may walk with our hands out in front of us to help guide us, or drag our feet so we don't step on something sharp. We are so careful that it affects our progress in whatever we are trying to accomplish. As followers of Jesus, we have to ask the question: Am I a shining light or darkness to the people surrounding me?

A light is a tool of comfort. When people are in moments of fear, confusion, or uncertainty, light brings clarity to the spots that would be invisible in the dark. When we walk into a dark room, the first thing we do is turn the light on. We do not continue to walk around, hoping we do not bump into something harmful. Instead, we turned on the light so we could be confident in our steps. In our walk with Jesus, we desire to follow Him because He brings clarity, confidence, comfort, and purpose to every step we take in this dark world.

As believers in Jesus, we have a light that can bring clarity, confidence, comfort, and purpose to those around us who are walking in

darkness, a life separated from God. This light is not because of you but because of Jesus and what He has done in our lives. Our light is the joy that comes from being forgiven, the strength that comes from our faith, and the peace that comes from being safe in Christ. With this light, we can show people who walk in darkness and help them come into the light. This exposure is not one of shame and guilt but of grace and mercy. This light draws anyone and everyone near it. God desires for you to use your life as a light to those around you who walk in darkness.

We can live in a way that reflects the light of Jesus! Our lives should provide hope, guiding others toward the love, grace, and truth found in Jesus. Rely on Jesus each day and obey His directions. Praise His name in secret and public. Let your motivation be Jesus' name, not your own. We are called to shine brightly, not by our strength, but through the transforming power of Jesus within us. When we live for Jesus with courage and humility, we can trust that others will be drawn to the One who gives life, purpose, and eternal hope.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." — John 8:12

Prayer

Thank God for giving you His light through Jesus.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

Do not gloat over me, my enemies!
For though I fall, I will rise again.
Though I sit in darkness, the Lord
will be my light. — Micah 7:8

Prayer

Ask God to reveal where you can shine your light.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never
extinguish it. — John 1:5

Prayer

Ask God to give you the confidence to share your light with others.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

You light a lamp for me. The
Lord, my God, lights up my
darkness. — Psalm 18:28

Prayer

Thank God that nothing is more powerful than the light He has given you to share.



Reflection Questions

01 What does it mean to be the light of the world in your everyday life?

02 In what ways can our actions either shine or dim the light of Jesus to those around us?

03 How does light bring clarity, confidence, comfort, and purpose to our spiritual walk?

04 Can you share a time when someone's "light" influenced your life positively?

Notes:

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Sharing Christ with Humility

How do we evangelize with humility?

Humility is thinking of yourself less, not thinking less of yourself, and thinking of others more. To evangelize with humility means we seek to serve others and tell them about Jesus because it is best for them.

To evangelize with humility is to share about Jesus with kindness, gentleness, and love.

Bible Story

¹ Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? ² Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

³ Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

⁵ You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

⁶ Though he was God,
he did not think of equality with God
as something to cling to.

⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;
he took the humble position of a slave

and was born as a human being.
When he appeared in human form,

⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

— Philippians 2:1–8

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 intended to serve someone, but then realized that you were actually doing it for yourself and not solely for the other person? At times, we have all been guilty of doing the right thing with the wrong attitude. We might do something for someone to be recognized or rewarded. We might resist doing a good deed, but then do it and pat ourselves on the back for having the discipline to get it done. While our external actions might seem virtuous, our wrong motivation sometimes spoils the action itself. And often, that wrong attitude will spill over into other areas of our lives, and others will be able to tell that we are not serving or living from a sincere heart.

Writing to the church in Philippi, the apostle Paul pointed out that some among them were sharing the gospel—which is a great thing—but they were doing it out of jealousy, rivalry, and selfish ambition—which is not so great. Paul expressed gratitude that the gospel was being proclaimed but grief that some were doing it with an attitude that was not Christlike. He knew that pride and selfishness, not humility, were at the root.

Later, in the same letter, Paul lovingly called out two women to settle a disagreement they had with each other. He pointed out that these women were believers who had previously been actively sharing the gospel with others in the community alongside him. Although they were doing good things, their attitudes toward one another were exposing their prideful hearts, which Paul knew could hinder the effectiveness of the gospel message they were sharing with others.

So, what was Paul's antidote for pride, which can so easily limit, taint, or compromise the gospel? Jesus. Paul pleaded with the Philippians and us to "have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had," then reminded them that Christ was a flawless picture of humility. He humbled Himself by stepping down from heaven to live as a servant on earth, was perfectly obedient to the Father, and even died on the cross to save us from sin.

The gospel is the power of God for salvation. The good news of Jesus rescues us from the *penalty* of sin, which is death, is the same gospel that saves us from the *power* of sin, which chains us to destructive choices like pride. It's a beautiful calling, isn't it? The best way to share the message of the gospel is in the power of the gospel!

So, how does this work? What do we do when we recognize a prideful attitude in ourselves as we share the gospel? We lean on Jesus. We preach the gospel to ourselves first and remember how Jesus humbled Himself for us. We remember that we did nothing to earn our salvation—we weren't good enough or smart enough. We are saved only by God's grace. So now, we prayerfully tell others about the goodness of God with a heart of kindness, gentleness, and self-control. The gospel and humility are intertwined from start to finish. Rest in what Jesus did for you as you share the gospel!

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

If I must boast, I would rather boast about the things that show how weak I am. — 2 Corinthians 11:30

Prayer

Ask God to help you fight any urge to boast about anything other than what Jesus has done for you.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. — Matthew 11:29

Prayer

Thank God for the perfect example of humble but powerful living we see in Jesus.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

For the Lord delights in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. — Psalm 149:4

Prayer

When you share your faith with others, ask God to help you trust in His power, not your own.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. — Colossians 3:12

Prayer

Ask God to help you clothe yourself in humility as you seek to love others.



Reflection Questions

- 01** In what ways might you struggle with pride, or at least diminished humility?

- 02** How might a believer share the gospel with pride? In what ways might that show itself?

- 03** What can you do before, during, and after sharing the gospel to protect your humility as Christ's witness?

Sharing Christ with Compassion

How do we evangelize with compassion?

Compassion is a Christlike response to recognize someone in need, care deeply for that person in that moment, and then do what you can to help them with their need. While people have various needs, there is no greater need than salvation from sin and death. To evangelize compassionately is to recognize this and do all we can to point a person to Jesus.

Bible Story

³⁵ Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness.

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

³⁷ He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few.

³⁸ So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

— Matthew 9:35–38

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

Jesus is the Son of God, the Creator of all, who came to earth, wrapped Himself in human flesh, and lived among the very people He knew would ultimately betray Him. During His three years of ministry on earth, massive crowds followed Him. He knew most did not believe in Him, love Him, or worship Him. Rather, they were simply intrigued by Him. They wanted a show or a free meal. They were following a spectacle, not a Savior.

Jesus knew all this. But as you read through the Gospels, notice what He did time and time again: He saw them. Jesus saw these crowds, and in fact, He saw the individuals in those crowds, and He felt deep compassion for them. In the original language, the word translated as *compassion* describes a physical reaction in the intestines or bowels. We might describe it as a “punch in the gut” or a “sinking stomach.” When Jesus saw these crowds, He felt for them deeply, from within.

Jesus felt compassion for them because they were lost, aimless, hopeless, and lacked protection from harm. This compassion caused

Him to act. At times, this meant that Jesus fed the crowds or healed them. But above all, Jesus’ compassion prompted an even greater action on His part. Knowing the enormity of their spiritual need, He gathered His disciples and explained that the work was great, but the workers were few. He commanded them to pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest. And indeed, Jesus sent those disciples on a mission trip immediately after this. They were to be the answer to their own prayer! And we are to be, as well.

How do you see those you encounter as you walk through your daily activities? Do you see faceless crowds? Or do you slow down and strive to see the faces of each person in those crowds? Do you feel compassion for them? Does their brokenness break your heart? This is the first step in evangelizing with compassion. However, it is not the only step. Just like Jesus, if we truly are to feel compassion, we must act on it.

At times, this means doing all we can to meet a person’s physical needs

so that a door might be opened to help meet their spiritual needs by telling them about Jesus. At other times, this might mean we sit with them in what they are experiencing, much like Job's three friends. Still, at other times, this might mean we take a bolder approach and share the gospel more immediately. But even then, we do so with love and kindness.

You are God's answer to the disciples' prayer two thousand years ago. But just as importantly, you might be God's answer to someone's desperate prayer today.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

"But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants." — John 3:21

Prayer

Ask God to give you a compassionate heart like Jesus' so you will always do what is right.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
— Matthew 9:36

Prayer

Ask God to give you the wisdom to understand others' situations and to be sensitive in your conversations.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

"This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another." — Zechariah 7:9

Prayer

Ask God to give you opportunities to show compassion and kindness to others.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity.
— Colossians 4:5

Prayer

Thank God for giving you daily opportunities to extend compassion to others.



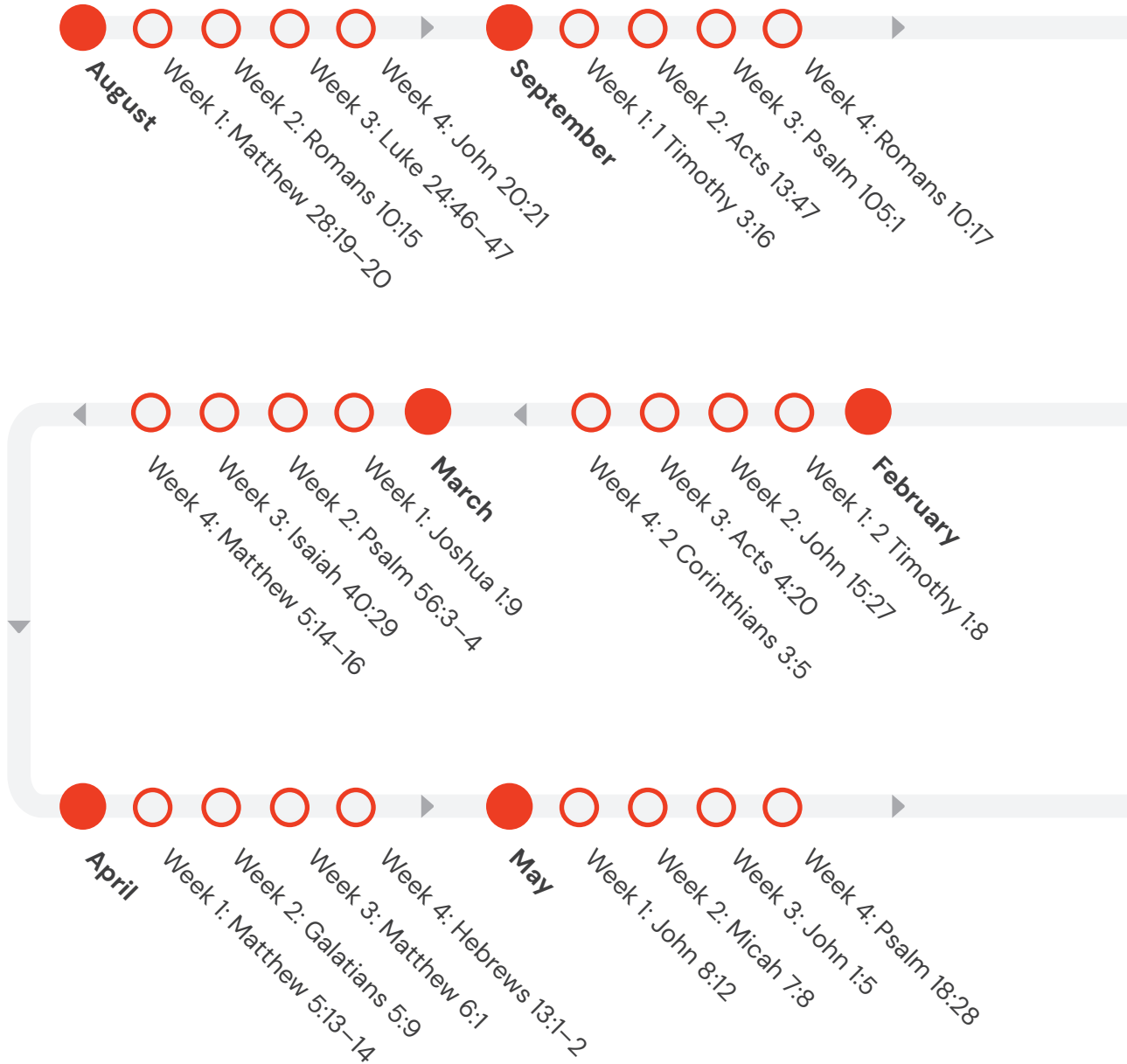
Next Steps

Think of one person who needs Jesus's love, and pray for opportunities to show compassion toward them. Start by listening to their story and being sympathetic toward their needs. Look for ways to serve them, and when the time feels right, share the hope of Jesus with them.

Write down your experience and reflect on how God used your compassion to plant seeds of faith. Remember, evangelism isn't about being perfect or having all the right answers; it's about loving someone so much that you want them to know Jesus, too!

Notes:

Memory Verse Tracking Log



NINTH GRADE





NEW VISION