

## **PERFECT VISION: TO BE & DEVELOP FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST**

HBC'S theme for 2020 is clear or perfect (20/20) vision. How do we get perfect vision? We pray and read God's Word so we can discover His perfect will and have perfect vision to see and do what God wants.

A cell phone company has commercials about service that is OK. One commercial is about a doctor who tells the patient he is worried about the procedure and has not been officially reinstated by the hospital to perform surgery. This is a situation that may be OK but most of us would choose another doctor/hospital. Theme is "Just OK is not OK".

Would it be ideal or best to go through life with OK vision or perfect vision? Research findings on the frequency of Bible reading revealed the following:

1 time per week, negligible effect on life

2 times per week, negligible effect on life

3 times per week, a small effect on life

4 times per week, significant effect on life

Decreases: 30% Loneliness, 32% Anger, 40% Bitterness, 50% Alcohol, 60% Spiritually stagnant, 61% Porn

Increases: 200% Sharing Faith & 230% Discipling

Do you want to continue living an OK life with limited vision or a great life with perfect vision? We challenge you to read your Bible a minimum of 4 times per week and see if life changes for you. We will have a church leader contact you so both of you can share how reading the Bible is changing your life.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) Reading the Word at least 4 times per week. Each week has 4 daily readings and optional readings for other days.
- 2) Introduce the principles of being a disciple. Each week focuses on a different aspect of being a disciple.
- 3) Develop relationships with other believers, living life together. There will be contact among small groups discussing the impact the scripture has on their lives.

### **TIME FRAME:**

Starts Sunday, Feb 9 to May 23, 15 weeks.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS BY CONTENT BY WEEK

- 1) The Gospel
- 2) The Call
- 3) Salvation
- 4) Adoption
- 5) Ambassadorship
- 6) Abundant Life
- 7) Transformation: Habits
- 8) Transformation: Confession & Repentance
- 9) The Slow Life: Unhurriedness
- 10) The Slow Life: Silence
- 11) The Slow Life: Sabbath
- 12) The Slow Life: Hospitality
- 13) The Grounded Life: Prayer
- 14) The Grounded Life: Fasting
- 15) The Generous Life: Forgiveness

## WEEK 1 (February 9-15), THE GOSPEL-the good news.

### OPTIONAL READING: Mark Chapters 1-5

Day 1 Read the following scriptures:

*The Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself or less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less. - Tim Keller*

Mark 8:27-31, <sup>27</sup>Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, "Who do people say that I am?" <sup>28</sup>They told Him, saying, "John the Baptist; and others say Elijah; but others, one of the prophets." <sup>29</sup>And He *continued* by questioning them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter *\*answered* and *\*said* to Him, "You are [a]the Christ." <sup>30</sup>And He [b]warned them to tell no one about Him. <sup>31</sup>And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Matthew 4:17 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>17</sup>From that time Jesus began to [a]preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Gospel declarative statements:

- 1) Christ died as predicted in the O.T. providing reconciliation for humanity's sins.
- 2) Christ was buried, He actually died and evidence supports it.
- 3) Christ was resurrected as predicted in the O.T. and seen by over 500 witnesses.
- 4) Kingdom of Heaven or God's kingdom is near.

Mark 1:14-17, <sup>14</sup>Now after John had been [a]taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, [b]preaching the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup>and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God [c]is at hand; repent and [d]believe in the gospel." <sup>16</sup>As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup>And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

These are the 3 imperative responses of the Gospel:

- 1) Repent of sin
- 2) Believe the Gospel
- 3) Follow Jesus

Things to consider: do you truly believe the first 4 gospel declarations? If so, have you repented of your sin, believed the Gospel and currently following Jesus?

Prayer: If a follower of Christ, ask God to help you share your story of the gospel with others. If you are not a follower of Christ we would love to talk with you about this. Our church office can provide a point of contact for you.

Discussion questions for small group or individuals:

“The kingdom of God is where we belong. It is home, and whether we realize it or not, I think we are all of us homesick for it.” Frederik Buechner

Is the Kingdom of God already here? Acts 28:30-31

Where is the Kingdom of God? Luke 17:20-21

So what should we be doing?

Day 2 Read the following scriptures:

I Corinthians 15:1-2, Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. <sup>2</sup> By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

Believing something and standing firm in it are the same. Belief involves “actual living” as a demonstration of belief. In Jesus’ culture belief was never a stand-alone thought but a commitment to action and to live that belief.

I Corinthians 15:3a, for what I received I passed on to you as of first importance,

The gospel was received by Paul as given to Him by Christ and is to be passed on to others. Every believer not just the writers of the Bible are obligated to pass on this gospel.

I Corinthians 15:3b-8, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

<sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, <sup>[b]</sup> and then to the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

<sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, <sup>8</sup> and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

Again, we see the first 3 Gospel declarations:

- 4) Christ died as predicted in the O.T. providing reconciliation for humanity’s sins.
- 5) Christ was buried, He actually died and evidence supports it.
- 6) Christ was resurrected as predicted in the O.T. and seen by over 500 witnesses.

Things to consider: are you actively living out your faith, telling others about Christ?

Prayer: ask God to reveal those He wants you to share your faith.

**Discussion questions for small group or individuals:**

**Are all followers of Christ responsible to share the Gospel? Romans 1:1-6 & Matthew 28:18-20**

**How are you sharing the Gospel?**

Day 3 Reading the following scriptures:

Ephesians 2:8-10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith; and <sup>[a]</sup>that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Paul is saying that no works done to obey the law of Moses can bring salvation. Faith is a gift from God. We are saved to do good works that God has prepared for us.

James 2:14-20 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>14</sup>What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can <sup>[a]</sup>that faith save him? <sup>15</sup>If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, <sup>16</sup>and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, <sup>[b]</sup>be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? <sup>17</sup>Even so faith, if it has no works, is <sup>[c]</sup>dead, *being* by itself. <sup>18</sup>But someone <sup>[d]</sup>may *well* say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." <sup>19</sup>You believe that <sup>[e]</sup>God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. <sup>20</sup>But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

James is talking about works that are in obedience to the Gospel. He is saying that those who only profess or say they have faith with no evidence of their salvation are not true followers of Christ. True followers of Christ will prove their salvation by good works.

Things to consider: can others see your faith by observing your actions?

Prayer: ask God to help you display your faith at home, work, school and everywhere.

Day 4 Read the following scriptures:

Romans 5:1-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**5** Therefore, having been justified by faith, [a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup>through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and [b]we exult in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>And not only this, but [c]we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup>and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup>and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. <sup>6</sup>For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>For one will hardly die for a righteous man; [d]though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Much more then, having now been justified [e]by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. <sup>10</sup>For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved [f]by His life. <sup>11</sup>And not only this, [g]but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Justification refers to a status; salvation is a whole new life, both now and forever. We will experience tribulations & difficulties but these will provide perseverance improving character which produces hope.

John 10:10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and [a]have *it* abundantly.

The life of God continues to save us, empower us and make our experience what John described as abundant.

Things to consider: do you have hope & are you living the abundant life?

Prayer: ask God to help you have an attitude of hope & live the abundant life.

**Discussion questions for small group or individuals:**

**What is the abundant life? See John 17:3, 2 Peter 3:18, Galatians 5:22-23.**