



MONDAY, AUGUST 23 – SUNDAY, AUGUST 29

Today we begin a new Bible Reading Plan focused on the Life of Joseph. Between now and the end of September, Pastor Mike is sharing a message series called ***Faithful God – Crazy Life*** that focus' on life lessons we can learn from Joseph. Joseph was a godly man who faced many ups and downs in life. As we look at his life, we learn a great deal about the faithfulness of God and how God redeems bad into good. We learn about facing temptation and how to overcome adversity. We also learn that our future is not determined by our past or what happened within our families when we were growing up.

Most of the Bible Reading this first week is about Joseph's parents and grandparents. It is important to understand Joseph's family background to fully appreciate why what happened to Joseph took place and how God worked in amazing ways in Joseph's life. As we read through this plan, ask God to show you what He wants you to learn about Him and how the things Joseph faced in his life relates to your life.

MONDAY, AUGUST 23

READ:

Genesis 25:19–34 (NLT) [19] This is the account of the family of Isaac, the son of Abraham. [20] When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram and the sister of Laban the Aramean. [21] Isaac pleaded with the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. [22] But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the LORD about it. "Why is this happening to me?" she asked. [23] And the LORD told her, "The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son." [24] And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! [25] The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. [26] Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born. [27] As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. He was an outdoorsman, but Jacob had a quiet temperament, preferring to stay at home. [28] Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed eating the wild game Esau brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob. [29] One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home from the wilderness exhausted and hungry. [30] Esau said to Jacob, "I'm starved! Give me some of that red stew!" (This is how Esau got his other name, Edom, which means "red.") [31] "All right," Jacob replied, "but trade me your rights as the firstborn son." [32] "Look, I'm dying of starvation!" said Esau. "What good is my birthright to me now?" [33] But Jacob said, "First you must swear that your birthright is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob. [34] Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. He showed contempt for his rights as the firstborn.

REFLECT:

1. What are the truths and/or principles that stood out to you from what you just read?
2. Is there anything you believe God would want you to do in response to today's scripture reading?
3. Is there any sin you need to confess to God and/or to others that God revealed to you through what you just read?

PRAY:

- Tell God at least one thing you love and appreciate about who He is
- Thank God for something that happened in your life yesterday
- Pray for at least one other person
- Pray for yourself and commit to God your cares and concerns
- Ask God to help you become more like Jesus today and open the doors for you to encourage and help someone else in Jesus' name.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24

READ:

Genesis 26 (NLT) [1] A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham's time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived. [2] The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. [3] Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father. [4] I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. [5] I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions." [6] So Isaac stayed in Gerar. [7] When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, "She is my sister." He was afraid to say, "She is my wife." He thought, "They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful." [8] But some time later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah. [9] Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, "She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" "Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me," Isaac replied. [10] "How could you do this to us?" Abimelech exclaimed. "One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin." [11] Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!" [12] When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the LORD blessed him. [13] He became a very rich man, and his wealth continued to grow. [14] He acquired so many flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and servants that the Philistines became jealous of him. [15] So the Philistines filled up all of Isaac's wells with dirt. These were the wells that had been dug by the servants of his father, Abraham. [16] Finally, Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave the country. "Go somewhere else," he said, "for you have become too powerful for us." [17] So Isaac moved away to the Gerar Valley, where he set up their tents and settled down. [18] He reopened the wells his father had dug, which the Philistines had filled in after Abraham's death. Isaac also restored the names Abraham had given them. [19] Isaac's servants also dug in the Gerar Valley and discovered a well of fresh water. [20] But then the shepherds from Gerar came and claimed the spring. "This is our water," they said, and they argued over it with Isaac's herdsmen. So Isaac named the well Esek (which means "argument"). [21] Isaac's men then dug another well, but again there was a dispute over it. So Isaac named it Sitnah (which means "hostility"). [22] Abandoning that one, Isaac moved on and dug another well. This time there was no dispute over it, so Isaac named the place Rehoboth (which means "open space"), for he said, "At last the LORD has created enough space for us to prosper in this land." [23] From there Isaac moved to Beersheba, [24] where the LORD appeared to him on the night of his arrival. "I am the God of your father, Abraham," he said. "Do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you. I will multiply your descendants, and they will become a great nation. I will do this because of my promise to Abraham, my servant." [25] Then Isaac built an altar there and worshiped the LORD. He set up his camp at that place, and his servants dug another well. [26] One day King Abimelech came from Gerar with his adviser, Ahuzzath, and also Phicol, his army commander. [27] "Why have you come here?" Isaac asked. "You obviously hate me, since you kicked me off your land." [28] They replied, "We can plainly see that the LORD is with you. So we want

to enter into a sworn treaty with you. Let's make a covenant. [29] Swear that you will not harm us, just as we have never troubled you. We have always treated you well, and we sent you away from us in peace. And now look how the LORD has blessed you!" [30] So Isaac prepared a covenant feast to celebrate the treaty, and they ate and drank together. [31] Early the next morning, they each took a solemn oath not to interfere with each other. Then Isaac sent them home again, and they left him in peace. [32] That very day Isaac's servants came and told him about a new well they had dug. "We've found water!" they exclaimed. [33] So Isaac named the well Shibah (which means "oath"). And to this day the town that grew up there is called Beersheba (which means "well of the oath"). [34] At the age of forty, Esau married two Hittite wives: Judith, the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. [35] But Esau's wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25

READ:

Genesis 27–28:9 (NLT) [1] One day when Isaac was old and turning blind, he called for Esau, his older son, and said, "My son." "Yes, Father?" Esau replied. [2] "I am an old man now," Isaac said, "and I don't know when I may die. [3] Take your bow and a quiver full of arrows, and go out into the open country to hunt some wild game for me. [4] Prepare my favorite dish, and bring it here for me to eat. Then I will pronounce the blessing that belongs to you, my firstborn son, before I die." [5] But Rebekah overheard what Isaac had said to his son Esau. So when Esau left to hunt for the wild game, [6] she said to her son Jacob, "Listen. I overheard your father say to Esau, [7] 'Bring me some wild game and prepare me a delicious meal. Then I will bless you in the LORD's presence before I die.' [8] Now, my son, listen to me. Do exactly as I tell you. [9] Go out to the flocks, and bring me two fine young goats. I'll use them to prepare your father's favorite dish. [10] Then take the food to your father so he can eat it and bless you before he dies." [11] "But look," Jacob replied to Rebekah, "my brother, Esau, is a hairy man, and my skin is smooth. [12] What if my father touches me? He'll see that I'm trying to trick him, and then he'll curse me instead of blessing me." [13] But his mother replied, "Then let the curse fall on me, my son! Just do what I tell you. Go out and get the goats for me!" [14] So Jacob went out and got the young goats for his mother. Rebekah took them and prepared a delicious meal, just the way Isaac liked it. [15] Then she took Esau's favorite clothes, which were there in the house, and gave them to her younger son, Jacob. [16] She covered his arms and the smooth part of his neck with the skin of the young goats. [17] Then she gave Jacob the delicious meal, including freshly baked bread. [18] So Jacob took the food to his father. "My father?" he said. "Yes, my son," Isaac answered. "Who are you—Esau or Jacob?" [19] Jacob replied, "It's Esau, your firstborn son. I've done as you told me. Here is the wild game. Now sit up and eat it so you can give me your blessing." [20] Isaac asked, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" "The LORD your God put it in my path!" Jacob replied. [21] Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come closer so I can touch you and make sure that you really are Esau." [22] So Jacob went closer to his father, and Isaac touched him. "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's," Isaac said. [23] But he did not recognize Jacob, because Jacob's hands felt hairy just like Esau's. So Isaac prepared to bless Jacob. [24] "But are you really my son Esau?" he asked. "Yes, I am," Jacob replied. [25] Then Isaac said, "Now, my son, bring me the wild game. Let me eat it, and then I will give you my blessing." So Jacob took the food to his father, and Isaac ate it. He also drank the wine that Jacob served him.

[26] Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come a little closer and kiss me, my son." [27] So Jacob went over and kissed him. And when Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he was finally convinced, and he blessed his son. He said, "Ah! The smell of my son is like the smell of the outdoors, which the LORD has blessed! [28] "From the dew of heaven and the richness of the earth, may God always give you abundant harvests of grain and bountiful new wine. [29] May many nations become your servants, and may they bow down to you. May you be the master over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. All who curse you will be cursed, and all who bless you will be blessed." [30] As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and almost before Jacob had left his father, Esau returned from his hunt. [31] Esau prepared a delicious meal and brought it to his father. Then he said, "Sit up, my father, and eat my wild game so you can give me your blessing." [32] But Isaac asked him, "Who are you?" Esau replied, "It's your son, your firstborn son, Esau." [33] Isaac began to tremble uncontrollably and said, "Then who just served me wild game? I have already eaten it, and I blessed him just before you came. And yes, that blessing must stand!" [34] When Esau heard his father's words, he let out a loud and bitter cry. "Oh my father, what about me? Bless me, too!" he begged. [35] But Isaac said, "Your brother was here, and he tricked me. He has taken away your blessing." [36] Esau exclaimed, "No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven't you saved even one blessing for me?" [37] Isaac said to Esau, "I have made Jacob your master and have declared that all his brothers will be his servants. I have guaranteed him an abundance of grain and wine—what is left for me to give you, my son?" [38] Esau pleaded, "But do you have only one blessing? Oh my father, bless me, too!" Then Esau broke down and wept. [39] Finally, his father, Isaac, said to him, "You will live away from the richness of the earth, and away from the dew of the heaven above. [40] You will live by your sword, and you will serve your brother. But when you decide to break free, you will shake his yoke from your neck." [41] From that time on, Esau hated Jacob because their father had given Jacob the blessing. And Esau began to scheme: "I will soon be mourning my father's death. Then I will kill my brother, Jacob." [42] But Rebekah heard about Esau's plans. So she sent for Jacob and told him, "Listen, Esau is consoling himself by plotting to kill you. [43] So listen carefully, my son. Get ready and flee to my brother, Laban, in Haran. [44] Stay there with him until your brother cools off. [45] When he calms down and forgets what you have done to him, I will send for you to come back. Why should I lose both of you in one day?" [46] Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm sick and tired of these local Hittite women! I would rather die than see Jacob marry one of them." [1] So Isaac called for Jacob, blessed him, and said, "You must not marry any of these Canaanite women. [2] Instead, go at once to Paddan-aram, to the house of your grandfather Bethuel, and marry one of your uncle Laban's daughters. [3] May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants multiply and become many nations! [4] May God pass on to you and your descendants the blessings he promised to Abraham. May you own this land where you are now living as a foreigner, for God gave this land to Abraham." [5] So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to stay with his uncle Laban, his mother's brother, the son of Bethuel the Aramean. [6] Esau knew that his father, Isaac, had blessed Jacob and sent him to Paddan-aram to find a wife, and that he had warned Jacob, "You must not marry a Canaanite woman." [7] He also knew that Jacob had obeyed his parents and gone to Paddan-aram. [8] It was now very clear to Esau that his father did not like the local Canaanite women. [9] So Esau visited his uncle Ishmael's family and married one of Ishmael's daughters, in addition to the wives he already had. His new wife's name was Mahalath. She was the sister of Nebaioth and the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son.

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 26

READ:

Genesis 28:10–29:30 (NLT) [10] Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. [11] At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone to rest his head against and lay down to sleep. [12] As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from the earth up to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down the stairway. [13] At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, “I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. [14] Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions—to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. [15] What’s more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you.” [16] Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn’t even aware of it!” [17] But he was also afraid and said, “What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God, the very gateway to heaven!” [18] The next morning Jacob got up very early. He took the stone he had rested his head against, and he set it upright as a memorial pillar. Then he poured olive oil over it. [19] He named that place Bethel (which means “house of God”), although it was previously called Luz. [20] Then Jacob made this vow: “If God will indeed be with me and protect me on this journey, and if he will provide me with food and clothing, [21] and if I return safely to my father’s home, then the LORD will certainly be my God. [22] And this memorial pillar I have set up will become a place for worshiping God, and I will present to God a tenth of everything he gives me.” [1] Then Jacob hurried on, finally arriving in the land of the east. [2] He saw a well in the distance. Three flocks of sheep and goats lay in an open field beside it, waiting to be watered. But a heavy stone covered the mouth of the well. [3] It was the custom there to wait for all the flocks to arrive before removing the stone and watering the animals. Afterward the stone would be placed back over the mouth of the well. [4] Jacob went over to the shepherds and asked, “Where are you from, my friends?” “We are from Haran,” they answered. [5] “Do you know a man there named Laban, the grandson of Nahor?” he asked. “Yes, we do,” they replied. [6] “Is he doing well?” Jacob asked. “Yes, he’s well,” they answered. “Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the flock now.” [7] Jacob said, “Look, it’s still broad daylight—too early to round up the animals. Why don’t you water the sheep and goats so they can get back out to pasture?” [8] “We can’t water the animals until all the flocks have arrived,” they replied. “Then the shepherds move the stone from the mouth of the well, and we water all the sheep and goats.” [9] Jacob was still talking with them when Rachel arrived with her father’s flock, for she was a shepherd. [10] And because Rachel was his cousin—the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother—and because the sheep and goats belonged to his uncle Laban, Jacob went over to the well and moved the stone from its mouth and watered his uncle’s flock. [11] Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and he wept aloud. [12] He explained to Rachel that he was her cousin on her father’s side—the son of her aunt Rebekah. So Rachel quickly ran and told her father, Laban. [13] As soon as Laban heard that his nephew Jacob had arrived, he ran out to meet him. He embraced and kissed him and brought him home. When Jacob had told him his story, [14] Laban exclaimed, “You really are my own flesh and blood!” After Jacob had stayed with Laban for about a month, [15] Laban said to him, “You shouldn’t work for me without pay just because we are relatives. Tell me how much your wages should be.” [16] Now Laban had two daughters. The older daughter was named Leah, and the younger one was Rachel. [17] There was no sparkle in Leah’s eyes, but Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face. [18] Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, he told her father, “I’ll work for you for seven years if you’ll give me Rachel, your younger daughter, as my wife.” [19] “Agreed!” Laban replied. “I’d rather give her to you than to anyone else. Stay and work with me.” [20] So Jacob worked seven years to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to him but a few days. [21] Finally, the time came for him to marry her. “I have fulfilled my agreement,” Jacob said to Laban. “Now give me my wife so I can sleep with her.” [22] So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood and prepared a wedding feast. [23] But that night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her. [24] (Laban had given Leah a servant, Zilpah, to be her maid.) [25] But when Jacob woke up in the morning—it was Leah! “What have you done to me?” Jacob raged at Laban. “I worked seven years for Rachel! Why have you tricked me?” [26] “It’s not our custom here to marry off a younger daughter ahead of the firstborn,” Laban replied. [27] “But wait until the bridal week is over; then we’ll give you Rachel, too—provided you promise to work another seven years for me.” [28] So Jacob

agreed to work seven more years. A week after Jacob had married Leah, Laban gave him Rachel, too. [29] (Laban gave Rachel a servant, Bilhah, to be her maid.) [30] So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, and he loved her much more than Leah. He then stayed and worked for Laban the additional seven years.

REFLECT:

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 27

READ:

Genesis 29:31–30:43 (NLT) [31] When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he enabled her to have children, but Rachel could not conceive. [32] So Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "The LORD has noticed my misery, and now my husband will love me." [33] She soon became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She named him Simeon, for she said, "The LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me another son." [34] Then she became pregnant a third time and gave birth to another son. He was named Levi, for she said, "Surely this time my husband will feel affection for me, since I have given him three sons!" [35] Once again Leah became pregnant and gave birth to another son. She named him Judah, for she said, "Now I will praise the LORD!" And then she stopped having children. [1] When Rachel saw that she wasn't having any children for Jacob, she became jealous of her sister. She pleaded with Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!" [2] Then Jacob became furious with Rachel. "Am I God?" he asked. "He's the one who has kept you from having children!" [3] Then Rachel told him, "Take my maid, Bilhah, and sleep with her. She will bear children for me, and through her I can have a family, too." [4] So Rachel gave her servant, Bilhah, to Jacob as a wife, and he slept with her. [5] Bilhah became pregnant and presented him with a son. [6] Rachel named him Dan, for she said, "God has vindicated me! He has heard my request and given me a son." [7] Then Bilhah became pregnant again and gave Jacob a second son. [8] Rachel named him Naphtali, for she said, "I have struggled hard with my sister, and I'm winning!" [9] Meanwhile, Leah realized that she wasn't getting pregnant anymore, so she took her servant, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob as a wife. [10] Soon Zilpah presented him with a son. [11] Leah named him Gad, for she said, "How fortunate I am!" [12] Then Zilpah gave Jacob a second son. [13] And Leah named him Asher, for she said, "What joy is mine! Now the other women will celebrate with me." [14] One day during the wheat harvest, Reuben found some mandrakes growing in a field and brought them to his mother, Leah. Rachel begged Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." [15] But Leah angrily replied, "Wasn't it enough that you stole my husband? Now will you steal my son's mandrakes, too?" Rachel answered, "I will let Jacob sleep with you tonight if you give me some of the mandrakes." [16] So that evening, as Jacob was coming home from the fields, Leah went out to meet him. "You must come and sleep with me tonight!" she said. "I have paid for you with some mandrakes that my son found." So that night he slept with Leah. [17] And God answered Leah's prayers. She became pregnant again and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob. [18] She named him Issachar, for she said, "God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband as a wife." [19] Then Leah became pregnant again and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob. [20] She named him Zebulun, for she said, "God has given me a good reward. Now my husband will treat me with respect, for I have given him six sons." [21] Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah. [22] Then God remembered Rachel's plight and answered her prayers by enabling her to have children. [23] She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. "God has removed my disgrace," she said. [24] And she named him Joseph, for she said, "May the LORD add yet another son to my family." [25] Soon after Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said

to Laban, "Please release me so I can go home to my own country. [26] Let me take my wives and children, for I have earned them by serving you, and let me be on my way. You certainly know how hard I have worked for you." [27] "Please listen to me," Laban replied. "I have become wealthy, for the LORD has blessed me because of you. [28] Tell me how much I owe you. Whatever it is, I'll pay it." [29] Jacob replied, "You know how hard I've worked for you, and how your flocks and herds have grown under my care. [30] You had little indeed before I came, but your wealth has increased enormously. The LORD has blessed you through everything I've done. But now, what about me? When can I start providing for my own family?" [31] "What wages do you want?" Laban asked again. Jacob replied, "Don't give me anything. Just do this one thing, and I'll continue to tend and watch over your flocks. [32] Let me inspect your flocks today and remove all the sheep and goats that are speckled or spotted, along with all the black sheep. Give these to me as my wages. [33] In the future, when you check on the animals you have given me as my wages, you'll see that I have been honest. If you find in my flock any goats without speckles or spots, or any sheep that are not black, you will know that I have stolen them from you." [34] "All right," Laban replied. "It will be as you say." [35] But that very day Laban went out and removed the male goats that were streaked and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted or had white patches, and all the black sheep. He placed them in the care of his own sons, [36] who took them a three-days' journey from where Jacob was. Meanwhile, Jacob stayed and cared for the rest of Laban's flock. [37] Then Jacob took some fresh branches from poplar, almond, and plane trees and peeled off strips of bark, making white streaks on them. [38] Then he placed these peeled branches in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, for that was where they mated. [39] And when they mated in front of the white-streaked branches, they gave birth to young that were streaked, speckled, and spotted. [40] Jacob separated those lambs from Laban's flock. And at mating time he turned the flock to face Laban's animals that were streaked or black. This is how he built his own flock instead of increasing Laban's. [41] Whenever the stronger females were ready to mate, Jacob would place the peeled branches in the watering troughs in front of them. Then they would mate in front of the branches. [42] But he didn't do this with the weaker ones, so the weaker lambs belonged to Laban, and the stronger ones were Jacob's. [43] As a result, Jacob became very wealthy, with large flocks of sheep and goats, female and male servants, and many camels and donkeys.

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WEEKEND – AUGUST 28-29

- > Use the weekend to catch up on any passages you didn't have an opportunity to read during the week.
- > If you have an opportunity, check out the passage below from the book of Psalms.

READ:

Psalms 19 (NLT) *For the choir director: A psalm of David.* [1] The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. [2] Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. [3] They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. [4] Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. [5] It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding. It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race. [6] The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat. [7] The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul.

The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. [8] The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living. [9] Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. [10] They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. [11] They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them. [12] How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. [13] Keep your servant from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin. [14] May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

REFLECT:

1. What are the truths and/or principles that stood out to you from what you just read?
2. Is there anything you believe God would want you to do in response to today's scripture reading?
3. Is there any sin you need to confess to God and/or to others that God revealed to you through what you just read?

PRAY:

- Tell God at least one thing you love and appreciate about who He is
- Thank God for something that happened in your life yesterday
- Pray for at least one other person
- Pray for yourself and commit to God your cares and concerns
- Ask God to help you become more like Jesus today and open the doors for you to encourage and help someone else in Jesus' name.