



# October

**BIBLE**  
ISCOVERY

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### ..... OCTOBER 2025 .....

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9 TISHREI, 5786 – 9 CHESHVAN, 5786

# God is On the Move!

I am absolutely positive that you have noticed how inundated with news and tragedy our everyday lives in the West have become. In this environment, it can be hard not to feel that the end times are near! Yet, God has told us that no one knows the day or the hour when the Son of God will return. So, while things seem to be brewing and as we witness both the exciting and the troubling, let us not forget to stay on the path. We must be faithful to reading God's Word and building our lives on Him as our firm foundation.

It is having God as our foundation that will allow us to truly grieve for those who have been victims in our world. It is God as our foundation that will keep us safe in the age of artificial intelligence. How our times have changed! Luckily, God has not! He is on the move. He has made His deep, powerful presence available to us all, and if we look

we can see countless examples of how Christ redeems.

Iran is a great example of God's moving. Did you know that mission groups claim that there are around 10 million new Christians in Iran? Not something you will generally hear reported on the news, but I certainly think it is newsworthy!

God is on the move! We must continue to pray and trust Him to lead us. We must read His Word and learn how to hear and know Him. Let's stay connected to our calling by being consistent and bold in the testimony of Christ Jesus. Today is a good day to continue on!



Rod Hembree, Th.D, DE.



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# How to use this Guide

Make the most of your devotional time with our Guide to the Bible in a year. Each Guide provides valuable context and theological insight to help strengthen your faith and dig deeper into the richness of God's Word every day.

The following three tips will help you make the most of your daily Bible reading and Guide:



## SPOTLIGHT ON...

In every Guide, you'll find a section with specific highlights from the perspectives of history, apologetics, theology, and more. These viewpoints provide a holistic context from which to view the month's Bible reading, giving us a greater understanding of the Word, and equipping us to grasp the impact of the Bible in these important fields.



## DAILY READING

The readings are in traditional order, with a date corresponding to the Hebrew calendar. Each reading consists of a daily insight and a focus on three major takeaways from the day's Bible passage. Challenge yourself to meditate on the *Discovering The Truth* and *Today's Prayer* sections as you go about your day.



## WATCH THE DAILY SHOW

Catch our companion TV series for even more valuable insight and theological discussion, hosted daily by the Hembree family. Join Rod, Janice, Ryan and Corie in this thirty-minute devotional show that will change the way you see and read the Bible. Visit **BibleDiscoveryTv.com** to watch our show online or to find a TV channel in your area.

# Mercy and Justice

by Ryan Hembree



Although the Bible repeatedly declares that God is longsuffering, kind, loving and merciful, there are several occasions where Divine order is given to destroy—and in some cases to totally and utterly destroy—certain nations and cities. Some of these include the complete annihilation of the Canaanites, the levelling of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the world-ending Global Flood. In fact, God even destroyed His beloved Jerusalem and exiled His own people off into a foreign land. It is such egregious acts which have caused many to reject God as loving and merciful, viewing Him instead “as a deity who required appeasement and blood sacrifice to satisfy his capricious lust.”

However, this cynical view of the Almighty is completely ignorant and unfounded. For one thing, these critics want to separate the God who is merciful and loving from the God who is righteous and just. But these ‘Gods’ are one in the same. Exodus 34:6-7 could not make this more clear as it first declares God to be “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth” but goes on to say that He “will by no means clear the guilty, [even] visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children.” (ASV) As Paul the Apostle put it, “Behold then the goodness and severity of God.” (ROMANS 11:22 ASV) To be sure, God is merciful and full of compassion, and promises to save and have pity on anyone who repents and calls upon Him (ISAIAH 55:7). But God is also just, and therefore does not extend mercy to those who refuse to repent, but administers justice.

This fact relates to another problem with the critic’s view of God. The reason God brought destruction on certain peoples was because “they violently and steadfastly impeded or opposed his work over a long period of time.” Indeed, in each and every case God gave ample time and opportunity for the people to turn to Him and live. For example, God waited many

years before judging the world with a Flood. In fact, He did not bring the watery judgment until “all flesh had corrupted their way on earth” and violence had filled the whole earth. He even sent Noah as “a preacher of righteousness” (2 PETER 2:5). But the people completely ignored His warnings and continued on with their everyday lives: “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, [right up] until the day that Noah entered the ark” (MATTHEW 24:38). Similarly, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were so wicked that not even ten righteous could be found there. Yet God waited more than three centuries before destroying those cities and He even sent them Lot as a last lifeline (2 PETER 2:7). Even the Canaanites, who committed such vile practices as child sacrifice, sodomy, bestiality, among other offences (LEVITICUS 18:25, 27-30) were given over 400 years of mercy and grace to turn from their wicked ways.

A third reason why the critic’s view of God is unfounded is because the destruction of such evil nations was in itself an act of love and mercy. As previously noted, anyone who violently and steadfastly impeded or opposed God’s work over a long period of time was destroyed. But just what exactly is God’s work? Why it is the redemption of the whole world through the Messiah, of course! For the Saviour to be born there needed to be a certain level of physical, moral, and spiritual purity.

Clearly God desires that the whole world be saved. Sadly, many people in the world today still actively oppose the work of God and eventually they too will face judgment—ultimate judgment. May we take a lesson from history and use this long period of grace (which has now been approximately 2000 years) and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and live! (ISAIAH 55:6-7) ■

## FURTHER READING

This article is an excerpt. Read the full article and related bibliography on our website: <https://biblediscoverytv.com/history/2025/mercy-and-justice/>

# Python Spirit

by Corie Bobeckho



In Acts 16, we read about an interesting occurrence in the ancient city of Philippi in Macedonia. Just for interests' sake here, Philippi was a Roman colony founded by Roman veterans who settled there in 42BC, this means that many Philippians were also Roman citizens. And the status of Roman colony came with several perks: The right to an autonomous government, legal rights, being in Philippi was legally like being in Rome, and exemption from provincial tax. Archaeologists have noted that the majority of the inscriptions found in Philippi are in Latin, the official language of Rome, which is comparatively unusual. So, it looks like their Roman Colony status was a point of pride for them, which might be why Luke says that Philippi was a leading city of that district of Macedonia in Acts 16:12. Philippi was not the capital of Macedonia, that title belonged to Thessalonica, so Luke's description probably has to do with Philippi's wealth, social honor or reputation.

We can also assume that there was not a significant Jewish population there because there was no synagogue for Paul to visit, instead he went to the river outside the city on Sabbath where he was likely told that people gathered for Jewish prayer, and there he finds a group of women. After recounting the conversion of the prominent woman, Lydia, Acts goes on to tell us that Paul made a habit of going to that place of prayer by the river to speak, but he was followed by a demon possessed slave-girl who told the future for the profit of her owners. Our English translations normally just say that this girl had a "spirit" or a "demon", but the original Greek says, "python spirit". Unless we know Roman or Greek history, this probably means nothing to us. So, let's dig into it:

What should we take from this designation as a "python" spirit or demon? Turns out that this has its roots in the famous Oracle of Delphi. In Greek mythology the god Apollo was said to have slain a great snake or dragon that guarded the place that would become the deep cave of the Oracle of Delphi, Apollo earned himself the name

Pythian Apollo. A virgin priestess would preside as the Oracle, and she would be known as the Pythia. Ancient writers talk about how this priestess

would be violently possessed by Apollo as she sat on a special tripod and would predict the future. The Pythia were largely seen as accurate predictors of the future but were apparently known to give vague prophecies that could mess with the inquirer's understanding. And receiving these oracles from the Pythia were not the only ways that one could participate in this cult of the Oracle. There were other methods of divination, like drawing lots after offering a sacrifice that were much more economical for the average joe. Divination was, and still is a lucrative business. So, this slave girl in Philippi was being used by her owners to make a lot of money based on her demon possession that allowed her to give accurate future predictions and to know things about people that she couldn't possibly know. She had supernatural insight. After all, her assessment of Paul and his companions was accurate. This mirrors other accounts in the gospels where demon possessed people were able to identify Jesus as the Son of God.

What I find very interesting is Paul's reaction. First, he just ignores her. But eventually, he casts the demon from her. There's a lot of speculation around this, was he compassionate, angry? Afraid the gospel message would be misunderstood? Worried that people would think it acceptable to receive information via divination or spiritists? Regardless, this account tells us with no uncertainty that Paul did not accept this spiritually inspired recognition, he rejected it so much that he cast the demon out. It begs the question, why doesn't it? The spirit was telling the truth, after all. The scriptures are clear on this topic: We are not to receive our information from spirits or demons. While they may sometimes tell the truth, demons and the devil are called God's enemy and our enemy. Messing with them, listening to them, is not only ill-advised, it is dangerous. ■

## SPOTLIGHT FOOTNOTES

- 1 Oshima, T. (2007). The Babylonian God Marduk. *The Babylonian World*, pp. 348-360.
- 2 Oshima, T. p. 355.



2025 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE

# October

LUKE — ROMANS



# Building the Kingdom

LUKE 7-9

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

When Christians say they are building the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God, those listening might wonder what in the world they are talking about! In the world today there are several different forms of governments, some of them good and some of them bad. There are also all kinds of leaders within those governments. We know all too well how easily leaders can be corrupted, how quickly they seem to be alright with deception. Our systems of government bring issues that we have to deal with in the here and now, but there is another kingdom! One that we contribute to building right now, and that we will have full participation in later: The Kingdom of God. Not ruled by men, but by God Himself, when God's absolute authority will be recognized by all.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 9:1-11

— 1 —

### All power and authority come from God.

Governments who recognize the power and authority of God as their fundamental platform are wise.

(v. 1)

— 2 —

### Places that allow God's Word and ways to be taught are good.

Places that do not allow God's Word and ways are not.

(v. 2-6)

— 3 —

### Healing comes when God's Kingdom is taught.

When we teach the Bible, the LORD moves with His Spiritual gifts.

(v. 7-11)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Bible is recognized as the sword of the Spirit in Ephesians 6, the only offensive weapon in the armor of God. Without having God's Word in our hearts and praying, we can accomplish nothing of eternal value.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, AS I PLACE YOUR  
WORD IN MY HEART, TEACH  
ME TO USE YOUR SWORD IN  
MY LIFE, RIGHTLY.**



# Persistence

LUKE 10-12

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

The value of persistence cannot be overestimated. It is how Jesus described affective prayer! We must pray regularly, growing a consistency that keeps us aware of God in everyday life. Prayer is bringing our lives before God: Telling Him about our thoughts, our ideas, our issues, asking Him to work things out. Prayer is also listening to God: Being quiet in His presence to allow Him to direct us. When we pair this discipline with thoughtfully reading our Bible, we open a clear pathway for God to speak with us. The Bible keeps us grounded; it helps us know who God is so that we don't mishear Him or become deceived by anyone who would have us go the wrong direction in our faith. It's a sad truth that many people never listen to God, even within the church. They may assume He wants them to talk to Him and hear their requests and complaints, but they don't give Him the time of day in any other way. There's no listening. There's no reading. This cannot be! Today, we will go over Jesus' giving of the Lord's prayer. It keeps us aimed in the right direction in our prayer lives.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 11:1-10

— 1 —

**In this world, evil is working all the time in our lives.** We must pray for God's provision.

(v. 1-4)

— 2 —

**Persistence is a real valuable quality with prayer.** We should never give up praying.

(v. 5-8)

— 3 —

**Keep asking, seeking, and knocking.** God rewards persistence to those who ask, seek, and receive Him.

(v. 9-10)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We should pursue our relationship with God with intensity of heart, in all things. Our Heavenly Father responds to our persistence in prayer. He is faithful.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME NOT TO GROW WEARY BUT TO BE PERSISTENT IN MY WALK WITH YOU.**

# Arrogance

LUKE 13-14

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

Arrogance is a major problem. It's a human problem. When we read history, it is there. When we look around in our world today, it is there. When we look inside our own hearts and minds, it is there. What does it mean when we see the very attitudes that God stands against in our history, culture, and lives? It means we need God's help! Following Jesus Christ means putting to death our pride and arrogance and following Him as our LORD. It also means telling the truth to a culture that doesn't want to hear the truth. Arrogance hates the truth. It would rather redefine it. But as Christians we cannot have time for that sort of foolishness, we need to bring our lives into the light of Christ and allow Him into every corner of our hearts. Today, we'll read about a time when Christ talked about arrogance, and how to deal with it.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 14:1-11

— 1 —

**Arrogance was on full display among the religious leaders in the time of Jesus Christ.**

Christians must not be arrogant in nature.

(v. 1-4)

— 2 —

**Jesus challenged their arrogance by posing a question to them.** We are constantly learning from the LORD, as we follow Him.

(v. 5-6)

— 3 —

**Jesus told a parable to point out the danger in taking an arrogant position.** We should build our lifestyle with humility, not arrogance.

(v. 7-11)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We should always be moving our lives toward a godly lifestyle. Let's not be fixed on what others do but follow God and live the way He has called us as Christians: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God (MICAH 6:8).

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO BUILD MY LIFESTYLE SO THAT IT REFLECTS YOU TO OTHERS.**

# God and Mammon

## LUKE 15-16

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

As we continue to read about Jesus explaining the Kingdom of God to His disciples, we'll read many of Jesus' parables. Parables are stories told to illustrate spiritual truths. In our case today, Jesus tells a story displaying just how different the Kingdom of God was from the kingdom that had power in His day, which was the Roman Empire. In this parable, we see a man who is called the unfaithful steward. It is interesting to imagine Jesus' audience. They were diverse: peasants, farmers, tradesmen, tax collectors, and the wealthy. How would they have responded to this parable? Jesus challenges us all in how we think about money. As Christians we are encouraged to think about everything in a new light, and money is no exception.

### DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 16:1-13

#### — 1 —

**A parable was told about a dishonest manager who squandered his employer's riches.** We need to learn how to think about money not like the world does, but like God.

(v. 1-7)

#### — 2 —

**God told His audience that we need to think more clearly about our values than the world does.** We should use money wisely to advance God's Kingdom.

(v. 8-9)

#### — 3 —

**Money is a tool and not a reason to live.** We should be careful how we use this tool. We must live to be faithful to the Lord, first.

(v. 10-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The LORD encourages us to use our money wisely in order to advance God's Kingdom. Spiritually, every believer is a steward of the gifts God has given. We must be faithful with what God has given us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO SERVE  
ONLY YOU, AND TO BE  
TRUSTWORTHY AND  
FAITHFUL WITH ALL YOU  
HAVE GIVEN ME.**

# God Redeems

## PSALMS 129–131

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In the songs of ascent, we learn that God hears us when we call on Him. In Psalm 130, we hear the writer call out to God, “Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD; Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications” (PSALM 130:1-2). We also know from the Old Testament that there is forgiveness for our sins because of God. These truths are reflected in the heart cries of the Psalms, and amazingly they also point to Jesus Christ, though they were written hundreds of years before His birth. These Psalms also teach us to be repentant before the LORD. We know that God redeems! He will redeem His people Israel; He has already redeemed those who call on His name. The Psalms contain precious words for those of us who know God, they remind us of His goodness and mercy.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 130:1–8

#### — 1 —

#### **God hears our voice.**

No matter where we are,  
God hears us!

(v. 1–2)

#### — 2 —

**God has provided a way for us to be forgiven.** With God, there is forgiveness of our sins.

(v. 3–4)

#### — 3 —

**There is everlasting mercy with God.** We must hope in the mercy and redemption of our God.

(v. 5–8)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Psalm Sundays are wonderful because they remind us of the songs and prayers God has provided in His Word. The psalms reveal God’s sovereignty and goodness for His people to instill confidence in those who put their trust in Him.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I GIVE YOU ALL MY  
PRAISE AND WORSHIP.**

# Jesus and Money

LUKE 17-19

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

Some people see Jesus Christ as a money-making scheme, and sadly, it can work! Some people have leveraged truths about God, and preaching in the name of Christ, for the purpose of making themselves wealthy. This is sinful and wrong. Preachers and teachers should be taken care of financially, but our motivations as humans need to be carefully monitored. Are you following Christ, or money? Who is your Lord, because it can't be both. Money should only ever be seen as a tool. There can be a great seduction that happens with money, one day you are using it appropriately, and the next you're living for it. In Luke 19, we witness Jesus challenging people about the seduction of wealth. He encountered a rich man who had gained his money as a cheating tax collector, someone who took more money than what was due, for his own profit.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 19:1-10

— 1 —

**Jesus invited himself to the home of Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector.**

As Christians, everything we have belongs to Christ.

(v. 1-5)

— 2 —

**Zacchaeus was happy and joyful that Jesus took notice of him!** The joy of the LORD is our strength!

(v. 6-7)

— 3 —

**Salvation comes when we are in love with the Lord Jesus Christ.** No object or amount of money is worth the cost of our soul that Jesus paid in full on the cross.

(v. 8-10)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we give our lives to follow Christ, the Lord Jesus changes our values. It is then that we understand our eternal life with Christ is more important than anything else. When our life values change, our life changes. This is the true test of any Christian.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO PUT  
YOU FIRST IN EVERY  
SINGLE THING.**

# The Beginning of the End

LUKE 20–21

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

It can be tempting to believe that things will go on relatively the same forever and ever. The sun has always risen while you and I have been alive, time goes on. In our vast history, whether you believe it to be millions or thousands of years, the world has been a constant. Yet, in Luke 21, Jesus affirms once again that time will not always go on. There will be an end. Also in this passage, Jesus tells His disciples not to be deceived. This means that we need to pay attention to spiritual and religious claims, not to buy into them all just because they exist. We have an obligation to ensure that we are following the true Jesus, rather than people who claim to speak for Him, or even to take His place. As we read these passages today, let's remember that time is running out. We need to be ready for the coming end of days and the return of Jesus Christ.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 21:1–17

— 1 —

**Jesus Christ pays attention to our giving.** God does not need our money, but He knows our heart.

(v. 1–4)

— 2 —

**God is not impressed with buildings and structures.**

The LORD knows what is important to His people; we should pay attention to that.

(v. 5–6)

— 3 —

**The end of days is coming closer and closer—do not be deceived!** Time is limited and those who follow Christ will not be popular people in the end of days.

(v. 7–17)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Things are changing very quickly in our world right now. We see the news and watch the world groan and suffer. Soon the LORD will begin the timed last days. God's Kingdom will come!

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, MY DESIRE IS TO BE  
READY FOR YOUR COMING.  
HELP ME IN MY DAILY  
WALK WITH YOU.**

# The Passover

LUKE 22-24

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

In today's reading, we will see Jesus preparing to celebrate the Passover. It's important and instructive to remember that Jesus celebrated all the Jewish feasts and festivals. In so many ways, these feasts foreshadowed Jesus, acting as types of prophecies that He would bring fulfillment to. I often wonder how He felt celebrating them each year. In Luke 22, we see Jesus instructing His disciples to prepare for Passover. He sends Peter and John ahead of the rest of the group, and we get to see God's hand in it all. This Passover was special. Like always, it was a remembrance and celebration of the Exodus event: God rescuing the nation of Israel from the tenth plague, from their slavery in Egypt and making them into a nation. Now, a new Exodus was about to take place. Through the sacrifice of Christ, God's Lamb, we are rescued from our slavery to sin, and we become the family of God, His holy nation.

## DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 22:1-13

— 1 —

**Satan enters one of the closest people to Jesus.**

We are not safe from Satan's influence, even if we are close to Jesus Christ.

(v. 1-6)

— 2 —

**Jesus gave precise details for His disciples to prepare the Passover.**

The LORD knows our future! We must submit to His will.

(v. 7-12)

— 3 —

**Everything was found as Jesus had said before the Passover.** God knows what will happen and when, and He has prepared for it. There are no surprises to God.

(v. 13)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Sometimes it is hard to trust in the LORD. But we must remember that the LORD is all-powerful and able in every way to take care of His people. This is why it is critically important for us to always follow and do the will of God.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO TRUST  
YOU AND FOLLOW YOUR  
WILL, EVEN IN THE TIMES  
WHEN I AM NERVOUS.**

# The Beginning

## JOHN 1-3

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The beginning of the gospel of John is really interesting. Rather than beginning with the birth of Christ on earth, John instead telescopes all the way back to the beginning of time! Perhaps surprisingly, he claims that Jesus was right there too, always existing. Then John tells us, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (JOHN 1:14). He clarifies that Jesus, as God, has always existed, but that there was a determined time when He came to earth to be born in the flesh. God has always had a plan of redemption. He knows it all, He has seen it all, and He has made a way: Amazing! Today we are going to dig into John 1:1-13. The gospel of John is believed to have been the last of the gospels written. John would have been aware of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, perhaps this influenced him to fill in the gaps with a more spiritual take on Christ's ministry. John certainly is different in its perspective. So, let's jump in!

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 1:1-13

#### — 1 —

**John describes an unnatural and serious separation between sinful man and God.** We learn that the darkness does not understand Jesus Christ.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**John the Baptist was sent as a witness to the Light of Christ coming on earth for all to see.** John told the world that Jesus was coming and to prepare to receive Him.

(v. 6-9)

#### — 3 —

**God sent His only begotten Son to pay the price of sin and defeat death.** God has solved the sin problem through Jesus Christ, to all who receive Him.

(v. 10-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There is nothing that we can do on our own about the sin problem in our heart and in this world. Jesus Christ came from God and paid the cost of sin once and for all. All who believe in Christ and accept Him, God has given the right to become the children of God (JOHN 1:12).

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, FORGIVE ME OF MY SIN. I PRAISE YOUR NAME FOR SAVING ME FROM ITS POWER OVER ME.**



# Healed

## JOHN 4-6

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There is a lot of hype on today's public platforms. People seem to believe that the more important a message is the more publicity, or hype, it will naturally have. But the truth isn't always the most hype-able thing! And importantly, sometimes the truth can get lost in excitement, or lies can seem like truth because there are a lot of people loudly supporting it. The truth deserves sober attention, introspection, and serious consideration. It's not all about hype! Jesus dealt with the problem of truth and lies by healing a man on the Sabbath. It's all very interesting: There was a place that promised healing, yet healing was rare. Jesus goes there and chooses one man out of hundreds to heal, and He doesn't even tell the man who He is! Zero hype. Jesus was interested in the man, not the fame. Today, there are a lot of parallels to this. It's not always about the popularity of an idea or teacher, often the truth comes without a skillfully crafted brand, without a sign-up email, without a major platform.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 5:1-13

#### — 1 —

**The pool of Bethesda was a place of healing hype as angels stirred up the waters.** God needs no hype when He heals.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**Surrounded by sick people, Jesus chooses one to heal among all of them.** It is Jesus Christ who heals us. It is not a person, place, or thing.

(v. 5-8)

#### — 3 —

**Jesus Christ did not tell the man who He was.** God still heals today for His own reasons. We need to be faithful.

(v. 9-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We must always thank the LORD for healing us, because He has. When we get to the end of our earthly life, we have the entrance to eternal life. When we confess our sin and accept Jesus Christ as LORD, we are ultimately healed of all our sickness and problems. Praise the LORD!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, YOU ARE WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE, HONOUR, AND GLORY. I WORSHIP YOU TODAY WITH ALL MY HEART.**

# Fear of the Jews

## JOHN 7-9

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In our reading today, the gospel of John tells us that people didn't speak openly about Jesus because they were afraid of the Jews. Of course, it's a bit strange to think about because Jesus, His disciples, and these people who were afraid were Jews themselves! When John talks about "the Jews", the context tells us that he means the religious leaders of the Jewish world at that time: Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees, and priests. These men had dedicated their lives to different aspects of the religious sphere of ancient Judaism. The problem was that they largely rejected Jesus. They did not respond well to Jesus' challenges. Rather than seeing Him as a fulfillment of God's law, they saw Him as in contradiction to it. They opposed Jesus, and we can see instances in the gospels of them excommunicating people who followed Jesus, or who testified to His miraculous healings.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 7:1-13

#### — 1 —

**The brothers of Jesus did not believe His teaching and authority.** To be close to God is not to be related to God, it is to be obedient to the LORD.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**Jesus told His brothers that the fruit of the world is evil.** Remember that building the Kingdom of God is building for the future reign of Jesus Christ.

(v. 6-9)

#### — 3 —

**Jesus was making the news headlines in His ministry.** We need to learn that God's headlines are based on truth, not lies.

(v. 10-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We don't need to adjust God's Word to make it more palatable to the world. God is more than capable of speaking to His creation! We need to focus on what God said, and how we can live to reflect Him.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO SENSE  
WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND  
KNOW WHAT YOU'VE SAID.**

# The Crown of God

## PSALMS 132–134

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Crowns are meant to be a visible representation of importance and authority. When people wear one it communicates rank and position to all who see them. Even though monarchies in today's world aren't what they used to be, there are still several royal households that wear crowns and tiaras on special occasions. When the Bible talks about God's Kingdom, it also mentions crowns in a similar way. In Revelation 4:10, we see twenty-four crowned elders taking their crowns off and putting them at the feet of Jesus in worship. All authority, all importance, all rank is ultimately God's. In Revelation 19, Jesus is described as having many diadems, or crowns. With all of this in mind, let's move to today's reading in the book of Psalms. Psalm 132 will show us an image of God unlike any other.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 132:1–18

#### — 1 —

**The presence of the LORD was paramount to King David.** God's presence is inside those who have given their lives to Jesus Christ.

(v. 1–5)

#### — 2 —

**The servants of God are called to worship Him alone.** Worship only God; only He is worthy of all praise!

(v. 6–10)

#### — 3 —

**The sons and daughters of God's servants bear the benefit of His grace.**

Even though God has no grandchildren, He does provide ready access for the children of His servants.

(v. 11–18)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The enemies of God will bear the shame of rejecting Him. There is shame when we refuse to believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God takes our shame away, when we come to Him and give our lives to follow Him.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO GIVE MY LIFE WHOLEHEARTEDLY TO YOU AND MY CALLING.**

# The Good Shepherd

JOHN 10-13

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

Life on planet Earth is not easy; and we all know that statement applies both physically and spiritually. Most of us focus on the physical struggles that we have, but Jesus reminds us to focus on the spiritual first. The principle is that the physical follows the spiritual. Today, as we continue our study, we will read John 10 and be encouraged to pay attention to certain issues of the spirit. Jesus tells us that satan is like a thief who comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy. Jesus is not like that. He is the Good Shepherd who comes to give us life and life more abundantly (JOHN 10:10). The goals of sin and the goals of righteousness are not the same. One leads to death. One leads to abundant life. Jesus' words are direct and important. Let's remember them as we go about our lives today.

## DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 10:1-13

— 1 —

**Those who know God recognize His voice, and wherever He leads they will follow.** There are imposters who try to take over and lead the Church astray.

(v. 1-4)

— 2 —

**Jesus told His disciples that people who love God will not follow a stranger.** When we love and know God, we trust in His leadership and follow only Him.

(v. 5-6)

— 3 —

**God is the giver of life, not death.** Satan brings destruction, even when it feels good.

(v. 7-13)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God gives us the opportunity to overcome our sin and gain eternal life by confessing our sins to Jesus Christ our LORD. When we choose to follow the Good Shepherd, He stands between us and the evil one who comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I CONFESS MY SIN TO YOU. I CHOOSE TO FOLLOW YOU WITH ALL MY HEART.**

# God Speaks

## JOHN 14-16

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The sermon that Jesus gave in the upper room, His last supper, begins in John 13 and continues through 17, it takes up a lot of gospel real estate. It's interesting because Christ is revealing and reinforcing key issues like the way to true eternal life, the Holy Spirit, the truth about how God the Father works with us. It's also interesting to me because the gospel of John is believed to have been the final gospel written. John was likely aware of the other three gospels and he still desired to give us another perspective. He takes us through Jesus' ministry with what a lot of people have called a more pastoral perspective. In other words, John was alive and writing when the Church was facing difficult things, and by bringing them back through the ministry of Jesus, he was able to help and encourage them. Even today, many church leaders encourage John as the first gospel for a new Christian to read.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 16:1-15

#### — 1 —

**There are people who believe that by killing Christians they are doing the work of God.** Christian persecution has increased over the past fifty years.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**The Holy Spirit is the active and real presence of God.**

The Holy Spirit is real and ready to help those who seek God.

(v. 5-7)

#### — 3 —

**The Holy Spirit is the presence of Jesus Christ.**

God sent His Holy Spirit so we could fulfill our calling to this life and earth.

(v. 8-15)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Right now, we live in a world that is aching for truth and for God. The truth is not difficult but it does require faith. Remember what Habakkuk said, "Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith" (**HABAKKUK 2:4**).

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO LIVE BY FAITH, EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY.**

# The Arrest

JOHN 17-19

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

Jesus Christ was arrested by the Temple guard under the direction of the High Priest. What a conflict! Remember that as a boy Jesus had called the Temple His Father's house, and the very role of the High Priest pointed to the reality of the work of Jesus Christ! What an insult to Jesus, to be rejected by those He came to save. Nevertheless, Jesus consented to this conflict so that His work would be completed. He knew what had to be done. He knew that He was paying the cost of sin, giving His life for ours, fulfilling all the Old Testament prophecies of the New Covenant. Even still, this would have been tremendously difficult. Even for the disciples who had to watch it all go down. This proved too much for Peter, who tried to defend Jesus violently. In God's great mercy, Jesus handles it all with amazing grace. This was not a problem that the disciples could solve, only Jesus Christ could.

## DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 18:1-11

— 1 —

**The words "I am He" spoken from Jesus were so powerful that the soldiers fell back.** When God speaks, things react to His Word.

(v. 1-6)

— 2 —

**Jesus released the disciples when He was arrested.**

We cannot do everything that Christ did, we are not God.

(v. 7-9)

— 3 —

**The Lord Jesus had to do the work of conquering the cost of sin.** There are things we cannot do that only God can. We need to know the difference.

(v. 10-11)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are times when we cannot solve the problems in our life, only God can. We need to know when God is working and how to stay out of the way. The LORD is the God and leader of all we do and say.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO LEARN  
TO TRUST YOU. I WANT MY  
LIFE TO BE YOURS.**

# Teacher

## JOHN 20-21

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

History tells us just how awful it would have been to die by crucifixion. The Romans used it as a humiliating, shameful punishment that served to deter any potential criminals or rebels. Despite this dishonouring death, Jesus' body was honoured by being placed in a new, unused tomb, sealed with a heavy stone. Due to the teaching of the resurrection, the Jewish elders were able to get the stone sealed against tampering and guarded by Roman guards. This puts a new element of bravery to the women's walk to the tomb that early Sunday morning. Not only were they going to face once again the horror of their dead Lord, but they also had to face a set of Roman guards that were not likely friendly to their plight. Their loyalty and devotion to Christ led them to the tomb. Imagine their shock at the sight of the empty tomb! These loyal women became the first witnesses to the miracle of the resurrection, and they ran to tell the other disciples.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 20:1-16

#### — 1 —

**Peter and John were made aware that Jesus had been taken from the tomb.**

Both men knew that things were strange because Jesus was dead!

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**Peter and John did not see Jesus.** They did not know the Scripture and so they were missing important information about Jesus Christ.

(v. 6-10)

#### — 3 —

**Mary was the first to see Jesus in His resurrected state.** The LORD knows everything that has happened, what will happen, and is happening now!

(v. 11-16)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Whenever life becomes difficult, Jesus knows what we will be going through. He can heal us from all of life's failures and give us the amazing gift of eternity, freeing us from the cost of sin that naturally binds us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR  
GIVING ME ETERNAL LIFE!**

# The Challenge

## ACTS 1-4

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Jesus Christ gave a specific challenge to all who would follow Him after His ascension into heaven. This challenge, this responsibility remains in place until His return, until the “catching up” of souls who are committed to Him. So far, this has been about 2000 years, but it won’t stay like this forever! We must always be ready for Christ’s return. However you believe the end of days will shake out, we know it will perfectly explain all the prophecies of the Bible. We also know who wins! Only God knows all the details, but we do know that the time is getting closer and closer. This means that the challenge Jesus left us with is greater today than it has ever been! Today as we read Acts 1, let’s consider how well we are taking up the call of Christ. We will also learn that we need the help of the Holy Spirit to accomplish it!

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 1:1-8

#### — 1 —

**Luke explains to Theophilus that Jesus had made Himself known to the apostles.** Christians believe that Jesus Christ rose in the flesh from the dead.

(v. 1-3)

#### — 2 —

**Jesus told the disciples to wait for the Promise of the Father; they would be baptized by the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is alive and well, here and now!

(v. 4-5)

#### — 3 —

**Taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth is our challenge.** The LORD is healing and helping people gain eternal life, every hour of every day!

(v. 6-8)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The persecuted Church has never been as large as it is today. Christianity is growing daily in the most inhospitable places on earth. We would do well to build into our lives daily prayer for Israel and the persecuted Church.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAY FOR ISRAEL  
AND THE PERSECUTED  
CHURCH AROUND THE  
WORLD. HELP THEM AS THEY  
SEEK YOUR FACE.**



# The Foundation

## ACTS 5-7

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Today we will read about an amazing man named Stephen. It always strikes me that God can and will empower us to speak His profound truths right when we need to. Stephen was a true follower of Christ, we're told that officially he was a deacon, a leader whose responsibility was to take care of the physical needs of the people. We're also told that he was full of the Spirit and wisdom and that he was doing great wonders and signs among the people! When we get to Acts 7, we get to see that wisdom and empowerment of the Holy Spirit on display. Stephen lays out the foundation of Israel and testifies to how Christ fulfilled all their history. Stephen's rebuke of the people who hadn't accepted Christ would end in his murder, his martyrdom. He has gone down in history as the Church's first martyr. One who followed Christ with all his heart.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 7:1-16

#### — 1 —

##### **Stephen establishes the foundation of Israel.**

Abraham had faith. God promised him everything when he had nothing, and he believed God.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

##### **God gave the covenant of circumcision to Abraham.**

The LORD speaks in covenants.

(v. 6-8)

#### — 3 —

##### **God's nation of Israel started with 70-75 people.**

The LORD always calls people. We must respond to His call and He will keep us.

(v. 9-16)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There is no question about it—God keeps us! No matter what happens to us or the mistakes we make, when we come to Christ, confess our sins and commit our lives to follow Him, we are saved. Nothing is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our LORD!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I GIVE MY LIFE TO**  
**YOU TODAY. I TRUST IN**  
**YOUR ABILITY TO HOLD ME**  
**AND KEEP ME.**

# His Mercy Endures Forever

## PSALMS 135–136

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There is one phrase we hear over and over again in the book of Psalms, “For His mercy endures forever!” That is what we read today in Psalm 136, a fabulous piece of music dedicated to proclaim the unspeakable truths of God. What is the mercy of God? If we look at a dictionary definition of mercy, it means compassionate or kindly forbearance shown toward an offender, an enemy, or other person in one's power. Notice that it says the person being shown mercy is someone who is in the mercy giver's power. That's an important dynamic of God's relationship with us that should not be ignored. God has power over everyone, even though they may not believe in Him! And, in His mercy, He lets them live and wonder and come to Him. Today we will study about the reality of God's mercy and how it does, indeed, endure forever!

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 136:1–15

#### — 1 —

**God is the Creator of all things!** There are many who don't believe that, but it is true. Everyone will find out soon.  
(v. 1–6)

#### — 2 —

**God created all the planets, stars, sun, and moon.** The only thing that pop-science can come up with is chance and lots of time.  
(v. 7–9)

#### — 3 —

**God provided miracles for Israel, as they were faced with death.** The LORD still provides help for us today.  
(v. 10–15)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God's mercy endures forever! I can see this as I look back on my own life: God has kept me close to Him in times of trouble, and times of ease. I can see this as I look at the world. Oh, how His mercy endures forever!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAISE YOUR NAME**  
**BECAUSE YOUR MERCY**  
**ENDURES FOREVER!**

# Saul's Conversion

## ACTS 8-10

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Saul was ruthless! Back when Christians were called people of the Way, Saul was on a mission to eradicate the Way. He believed that he was working for God, after all the Scriptures did say to remove the evil from Israel, and the religious leaders had declared Jesus evil. Saul was arresting Christian men and women and killing them when he could. The early Church was growing so quickly it was clearly seen as a large and dangerous threat. Saul wasn't just any man either, he was a student of the Jerusalem rabbis, on his way to becoming an important religious figure of Judaism. His passion and status earned him the support of the religious authority of Jerusalem, and word of him spread throughout the ancient world. Little did Saul know that his trajectory to becoming a religious leader would take a drastic turn. On the road to Damascus, Christ Himself would appear to Saul, challenging him to his core.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 9:1-16

#### — 1 —

**The presence of Jesus appearing to Saul was enough to change him forever.** The presence of God will always change us.  
(v. 1-6)

#### — 2 —

**Saul lost his sight and didn't eat or drink for three days.** Sometimes God speaks to us in ways only we can know.  
(v. 7-9)

#### — 3 —

**Ananias had concerns about going to pray for Saul, but he trusted the LORD.** We may not always understand what God speaks to us, but when we trust Him He always delivers  
(v. 10-16)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God is talking to us. Are we listening? Let's remember to spend time in God's Word and in prayer, so we can hear His voice and know Him. What a blessing, honour, and privilege that is!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO KNOW  
YOU AND HEAR YOU TODAY!**

# Prayer & Angels

## ACTS 11-14

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There are many people who do not believe in angels. The Greek word for angel means “messenger”, and more specifically, “messenger of God”. Angels are sent by God to help us build God’s Kingdom. In today’s reading, we see that angels are still actively engaged in spiritual warfare—an angel rescues Peter from his prison cell because of earnest prayer made by the church, and then either the same or another angel kills Herod for not giving glory to God. It is important for us to remember that the spiritual world is just as real as the physical world. Sin has set the world ablaze and thrust us into spiritual darkness. But the Holy Spirit of God has been released to do His work through those who are truly Christians. Jesus Christ said, “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you” (JOHN 14:16-17). God has won the war through the work of Jesus Christ. Now we must choose which side we are on—we must believe into Jesus Christ or suffer the same fate as Herod.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 12:1-16

#### — 1 —

**Herod had James killed and Peter was arrested but held in custody until after Passover.** God called the church to pray for Peter.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**Peter could not tell whether the angel was real or he was seeing a vision.** There are times when God moves in unique ways in our lives and we do not recognize it; it seems strange. (v. 5-10)

#### — 3 —

**The early church was so surprised that God answered their prayers for Peter. They were amazed!** Always pray. God still moves and answers our prayers!

(v. 11-16)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As we come to God in prayer, He is faithful to hear us. Talking to God and bringing Him our requests is good but it is also very important for us to listen to His Holy Spirit. When we do, the LORD answers prayer.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO BE SENSITIVE TO YOUR HOLY SPIRIT WHEN I PRAY.**

# Corinth

## ACTS 15–18

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Corinth was an interesting city and a rather dark place. Yet in this darkness, God spoke to Paul and told him “...I have many people in this city” (ACTS 18:10). The LORD always seems to have good people in the midst of those who are evil. God displays the best of who He is and what He has done for us in the midst of deep darkness. We understand this from prophets like Jonah. Nineveh was an evil place, yet it was God who compelled Jonah to prophesy, and so the city turned around and God spared it. Corinth was very much like ancient Nineveh—it was the prostitute of cities in the Roman Empire. This was the place from which Paul the apostle would write two very specific letters to address the troubles in the Corinthian church. It is also the place in which Paul would spend one-and-a-half-years establishing the early Church.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 18:1–11

#### — 1 —

**The Jews were kicked out of Rome by Claudius.**

God can use people anywhere, even in the government, to build His Kingdom.

(v. 1–2)

#### — 2 —

**After the Jews rejected the message of Christ, Paul went to the Gentiles.** God will use

these shifts to establish His Kingdom.

(v. 3–6)

#### — 3 —

**Paul spent one year and six months in Corinth.** Paul used his time in Corinth to teach the Word of God.

(v. 7–11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Corinth is the city in which we see how the LORD chose the Gentiles as His Church. This is what Romans 11 speaks about when Paul tells us that we are grafted into the Kingdom of God.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WILL CONTINUE  
TO PRAY FOR PEOPLE  
EVERYWHERE TO RESPOND  
TO YOUR CALL AND COME  
TO YOU.**

# Two Years in Ephesus

## ACTS 19–22

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Another place in which Paul established a well-grounded Church was in the ancient city of Ephesus. After teaching for three months in the synagogue, some grew hardened against Paul's message and began to speak lies about the Way. So, Paul withdrew himself and the disciples, and he began to establish his daily teachings of the Lord Jesus in the school of Tyrannus. Tyrannus was either the owner or a prominent philosopher associated with the place. Some traditions explain that Paul spoke there from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. daily. Typically, at this time of day, people were resting from work and so those who wanted to hear about what Paul was saying could listen. This is how the church at Ephesus was established. Paul would later write to the church of Ephesus after he left, which is the book called Ephesians. This was part of Paul's journey throughout the Roman world to establish the teaching and way of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 19:1–10

#### — 1 —

**Paul began the church in Ephesus by baptizing disciples in the name of the Lord Jesus.** The true Church of God is founded on the teaching and life of the Lord Jesus Christ exclusively.

(v. 1–5)

#### — 2 —

**The Holy Spirit came as they began to worship Jesus Christ.** God's Holy Spirit is the presence of the LORD, and is the difference between manmade religion and God.

(v. 6–7)

#### — 3 —

**When Paul was rejected by the Jews, the LORD expanded his ministry to everyone.** The Kingdom of God involves every culture and people all over the world.

(v. 8–10)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

As we look at what the LORD did through Paul in the ancient city of Ephesus, we see how God is never held back. Every evil is made good and every good is made better with the work of the LORD.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME NOT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE EVIL IN THIS WORLD, BUT TO WORSHIP YOU.**

# To Caesar You Shall Go!

## ACTS 23–25

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Paul was a Roman citizen. God knew that when He called him. Paul knew how to appeal to Caesar and what would happen if he did. Paul's intent was to present the good news of Jesus Christ to the head of the whole world! Paul wanted to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to Caesar. So, when Paul was accused by the Jews of violations that he did not do, he appealed to Caesar. This is what we read about in Acts 25. Paul was in prison in Caesarea, a small town on the east coast of Israel. When you visit those ruins today, you can still feel the power of ancient Rome. The way the ancient building ruins were constructed and the way the city was laid out, you can see how the world was conquered by this ancient empire. Rome never really died like most empires do—with a bang—it just fizzled out. It is said that it was in the late fifth century that the ancient empire faded.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 25:1–12

#### — 1 —

**The Jews wanted Paul in Jerusalem, but God wanted Paul in Rome.** While in Caesarea, Paul would appeal to Caesar, the beginning of his trip to Rome.

(v. 1–5)

#### — 2 —

**The Jewish religious hierarchy accused Paul of many things which were not true.** There are some who will accuse and lie about those who follow Jesus Christ to eliminate them. (v. 6–8)

#### — 3 —

**As a Roman citizen, Paul appealed to Caesar. To Caesar he will go!** Paul was marching in tune with the Kingdom of God. We should be too.

(v. 9–12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Paul the apostle was not focused on saving his own life but to present the message of the Lord Jesus Christ to all who would listen, even to world leaders of his day like Caesar. God would take care of Paul's life, as he continued to spread the message of Christ.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO FOCUS  
ON SPREADING WHO YOU  
ARE TO THOSE AROUND ME.**

# The Trip to Rome

ACTS 26–28

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

Paul's trip to Rome was not without difficulty! The ships and the men were struggling after they moved to set sail. Paul tried to warn the men about the dangers of traveling at that time and advised them to winter where they were. Paul was unsettled and felt that the ship would be in trouble if it sailed. He sensed that it would end with the loss of the ship and their lives. He was likely the only one praying to the God of heaven. Traveling with him were prisoners and military commanders. One of them was Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment. He was kind to Paul, but chose to listen to the helmsman and the owner of the ship about setting sail, rather than listen to what Paul had advised. Julius chose poorly. The first part of the journey was troubled, but the last stretch almost killed the men and Paul. However, God gave Paul the words to lead him and the men to safety. Interesting, since most of the men on board were prisoners—violators of human law.

## DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 27:1–12

— 1 —

**Julius treated Paul well and gave him liberty.**

Paul was covered by the LORD, the Church was praying for his journey.

(v. 1–3)

— 2 —

**They changed ship and sailed to Italy, but it was difficult and they stopped.**

The journey was rough and in conflict, but God was with Paul.

(v. 4–8)

— 3 —

**Paul warned the military leaders that their trip would be a battle.** Paul told the truth, but the men did not listen, which set up the rescue by God.

(v. 9–12)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Each day is a spiritual battle for those who believe in the Lord Jesus and dedicate their lives to follow Him. Yet the LORD has made a way and continues to make a way to succeed for those who truly believe and submit to His will.

## TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, KEEP ME UNDER THE  
SHADOW OF YOUR WINGS,  
AS I TRUST IN AND SUBMIT  
TO YOUR WILL TODAY.**



# The Mercy of God

## PSALMS 137–138

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

It is hard to understand God. In fact, it is impossible until you believe and receive God as the LORD of your life. And when you do open your life and heart to Him, the mysteries of God are open to you. One of those mysteries is eternity. We will live forever! That is hard enough to comprehend—movies and books have been written about this. But eternity is more real than this life, it is not some dreamy state we cannot understand, it is being one with the LORD our God. Another of the mysteries is the mercy of God that endures forever! This is mentioned in Psalm 138. This psalm is given to us in the Bible to meditate on and to memorize. When we begin to understand the words of the Psalms – the music of God – we begin to know how heaven works; the mind of Christ begins to grow inside of our thinking! The Psalms are one of our exercises as believers to develop the mind of Christ in our lives.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 138:1–8

#### – 1 –

**We praise God for His lovingkindness and His truth.** These are two characteristics unique to the Holy God of heaven.

(v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

**God acts on behalf of those who are humble and oppressed.** But those who are proud or arrogant He does not.

(v. 4–6)

#### – 3 –

**God does not forget the work of His hands.** We need to let the LORD work in our lives and change us to His will and ways.

(v. 7–8)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We all know that life changes, and as we get older it becomes harder for us to change. So, how do we teach an old dog new tricks? There are no tricks. Nothing is impossible with God! Let's give our hearts and our ways to Him and allow God to change us with the help of His Holy Spirit.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME NOT TO BECOME STUBBORN IN MY OWN WAYS. HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOU.**

# Good News for Rome

## ROMANS 1-3

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The church in Rome was stunning! Think about it; Rome was the capital city of the most powerful empire in the world! It is from here that God used Paul to speak to all of us, throughout all of time. What are God's plans? How do we serve Him? How can we change our lives to give God the honour and respect He deserves? These are some of the questions that Paul's book answers. God is the LORD of all people and places in the universe. How do we speak to God? Yet, God speaks to us through the letter to the Roman church some very specific things about our lifestyle and day-to-day living, which helps us understand and find the will of God in our lives. This is a critical book and I am excited to read and study it with you! In the first chapter, Paul explains how God has chosen him to speak to the church in Rome, although I believe that Paul had no idea how many places and times this book would actually be read.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 1:1-12

#### — 1 —

**Paul opens with a statement of faith about Jesus Christ.** We have fellowship with others who believe like we believe, through Jesus Christ.

(v. 1-6)

#### — 2 —

**Paul tells the church at Rome that everyone is talking about their faith and that he is praying for them.** When

we live for God, He makes an amazing testimony out of each of us. (v. 7-10)

#### — 3 —

**Paul's goal was to come to Rome and see them, which he did by the grace of God!**

We, too, should seek God's will in all our activities.

(v. 11-12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we get our lives tuned to God's will, the LORD beings to move heaven and earth to lead us and make a way for us to accomplish what He has assigned to us. Let's keep that in mind when we pray about where we go and what we do for the LORD.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME EACH DAY  
TO GET MY LIFE FOCUSED ON  
YOUR WILL.**

# Grace and Sin

## ROMANS 4-7

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

What is a Christian? The definition could hold a different meaning between people. In today's world, there are many who claim to be a Christian because they have given themselves that title. But do they believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead in the flesh? Have they given their lives to Jesus? Even willing to die for Him? After all, Jesus Himself said He was the Son of God, and that those who truly love Him will follow His commandments (John 14:15). This now brings us to a new definition of Christian: a person who has turned away from sin in their life and declared war on their sinful desires, who truly follows Jesus Christ with the power of His Holy Spirit living in them, who has confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus and believed in their heart that God raised Him from the dead (**ROMANS 10:9-10**). Let's think again – how many do you know who call themselves a Christian, believe Jesus Christ rose from the dead, have turned away from pursuing sin, and have asked for God's Holy Spirit to take control of their living? When it comes to figuring out if someone is truly Christian, let's start there.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 6:1-14

#### — 1 —

**Paul talks about the newness of life as evading sin.** We must turn away from sin and turn to follow Christ; to walk in a new way of life.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**Christians have died to sin and live in Christ.** Our lives are destined to a lifestyle change when we come to know Jesus Christ.

(v. 5-9)

#### — 3 —

**We should not let sin rule over us, but present ourselves to God ready for righteousness.** This is a specific choice that we make every day.

(v. 10-14)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Let's remember that when we choose to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, we decide to turn away from sin and turn our lives to follow Him. Our new life in Christ Jesus is learning to walk every day in a new way of life with the help of God's Holy Spirit.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO GET  
FOCUSED ON LIVING MY  
LIFE ACCORDING TO YOUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

# The Name of the LORD

## ROMANS 8-11

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There are many who do not identify the name of the LORD because they feel that it is too sacred. But Paul the apostle uses the name Jesus Christ often because it is that name which changes everything. The truth is that Jesus Christ changes our lives when we come to Him and submit our sinful life over to Him. The ancient people of Israel believed that you could not even write the name of God because of His holiness. However, Paul speaks to the church at Rome and makes it clear that the name of the Lord Jesus is so powerful it changes us. Paul says, "For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved' " (**ROMANS 10:13**). We are then baptized in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Spirit. Paul even rebaptized those who were not baptized in the name above all other names, Jesus Christ (**ACTS 19:2-6; PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11**). Jesus Christ was fully God in the flesh (**JOHN 14:9-11**). Jesus spoke when He came to us and identified the cost of sin; He paid the price of sin with His death, but rose again because He was God. There is great mystery and beauty in the name of our Lord and Saviour.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 10:1-13

#### — 1 —

**God is not finished with the Jewish people.**

We desire God's will and not our own ideas, when it comes to Israel.

(v. 1-3)

#### — 2 —

**We are saved from sin when we confess the name of Jesus Christ to forgive us.** "Jesus is Lord" is a confession of faith.

(v. 4-9)

#### — 3 —

**In our heart we know and believe but with our mouth we confess our sin to Jesus Christ.** The way we make our belief known is founded on our confession of faith in Christ.

(v. 10-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Romans 10:13 says that all who call on the name of the LORD will be saved. Coming to Jesus Christ and confessing our sin is simple, but we need the help of God's Holy Spirit to live the life we commit ourselves to. The LORD will help us to begin our journey and walk with Him through His Holy Spirit.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR AMAZING GRACE, FOR  
FORGIVING ME AND SAVING  
MY SOUL. YOU ARE LORD!**

# Pay Your Taxes

## ROMANS 12-14

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The government is always a challenge, isn't it? I have heard so many people tell me they have figured out how to cheat on taxes through loopholes. But my question is: Is that what God wants us to do as believers? In Romans 13, Paul the apostle speaks to the church at Rome, the empire that hated Christians, and tells them to pay their taxes, and if possible, stay out of trouble, and honour the king (or emperor) no matter who he is. There are a lot of people who rest on the immense claims that the way democracy works is to protest always. But again, I ask: Is that what God wants us to do when we are proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world? There is something more important than establishing our rights here on earth and that is proclaiming Jesus Christ as the King of all kings. Soon the spiritual and the physical will come together once again, and God's Kingdom will be visible for all to see.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 13:1-8

#### — 1 —

**Paul explains that it is God who appoints all governmental authority.**

God is sovereign over us.  
We are temporary citizens of this earth.

(v. 1)

#### — 2 —

**Paul says that our conscience is in the mix when we consider protesting.** We should always pursue God's peace, instead of man's impatience and rebellion.

(v. 2-5)

#### — 3 —

**Paul says we should all pay our taxes.** If we cannot then we ask God for forgiveness and for help to pay them.

(v. 6-8)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Taxes are heavy in places where leaders take for themselves. In those times and places, we pray for God's deliverance. If we believe in God, then we believe in His provision to help us when we are in need. Trust in God, He is the One who gives us what we need.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I TRUST IN YOU**  
**AND YOUR PROVISION TO**  
**GIVE ME EVERYTHING I**  
**NEED TO DO WHAT YOUR**  
**WORD SAYS.**

# Life as a Believer

## ROMANS 15–16

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Our lifestyle changes when we reach out to Jesus Christ to cover our sins. The LORD changes us. This is called sanctification. When we believe on the Lord Jesus, we make a decision to follow Him and that affects how we think and live. We are no longer to think about ourselves so much as about pleasing God. It is a shift of life, and those who have made that shift successfully are fully committed to loving and glorifying God. Romans 15 explains how and why our thinking changes as we follow Christ, rather than living for ourselves. Paul says in Romans 15:1, “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” What a major shift in the way we think and live! Our life as a believer in Christ is very different after we have been given the gift of eternal life and our sins have been forgiven. We are to follow the example of the Lord, Jesus Christ, who did not live to please the flesh. The way of God’s love demands this change.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 15:1–13

#### — 1 —

**The strong Christian is to follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ.** We should think about others first, rather than ourselves.

(v. 1–4)

#### — 2 —

**Paul says that we have a goal to be one in mind toward each other under Christ Jesus.** Together our lives bring honour to God when we live for His Kingdom and not our

own. (v. 5–6)

#### — 3 —

**Paul says that the Gentiles were included in God’s Kingdom.** The Lord Jesus Christ is Saviour to all from every nation in the world.

(v. 7–13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is easy for us to become locked in our own ways and places. But remember that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is not simply one place, it includes the whole world throughout all of time. There are people everywhere who trust in Jesus Christ to cover their sins. The Church is huge, and growing bigger every day. Praise the LORD!

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH WORLDWIDE. HELP ME TO THINK OF OTHERS FIRST.**

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