



October

THE 2026 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE
LUKE — ROMANS

BIBLE
DISCOVERY

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OCTOBER 2026

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A Time of Testing

“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’ (ROMANS 8:15). This Scripture tells us that God is our Father, because we are being conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, as partakers in the divine nature—we are becoming like Him. We are truly His children, awaiting the redemption of our bodies and adoption of sonship when the firstborn among the dead, that is our brother and forerunner, Jesus, returns to glorify His saints! We are not in bondage to Him but are free from sin by Him, and able to serve Him in righteousness without fear of condemnation and death. What a wonderful calling!

This month, many are struck by the trade wars which erupted between Canada and the USA. But as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, let's remember that we are citizens of heaven, not in bondage to earthly endeavours; rather, we are free to serve God. So, the question is:

How do we continue to serve God in these trying times?

The Apostle Paul urged us to, "Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (PHILIPPIANS 2:14-15A). We need to pray for guidance and patience against the challenges this worldly generation promotes to demonstrate what Jesus Christ has told us about how to act and respond toward each other in times of difficulty.

This is a great time of witnessing for Christ, in our present darkness. The LORD is with those who love Him and serve Him. Amen!



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How to use this Bible in a Year 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 insightful, 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.

The Seed of the Woman



How the Messiah was destined to break biological boundaries.

After Jesus had been brutally murdered at the hands of the Romans, His disciples were confused, disappointed, and heartbroken. In their view, the Messiah wasn't supposed to die. But when the risen Jesus suddenly began appearing to them three days later it completely transformed their theology! Luke records one encounter in which Jesus appears to two of His disciples as they were walking and talking along the road to Emmaus. Though they were bewildered at the events that had transpired

THE VERY FIRST MESSIANIC PROPHECY PREACHES THE VERY FIRST GOSPEL MESSAGE.

over the last few days, Jesus said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” (LUKE 24:25-27)

As Jesus pointed out to them, His death and resurrection was a key component of the Messiah's mission and was prophesied about right from the very beginning. As a matter of fact, the very first messianic prophecy comes as early as Genesis 3:15 just after Adam and Eve had fallen from grace. In the midst of God's judgment, the Lord in His great mercy promised to send a Saviour who would conquer Satan and restore humanity's broken relationship with God. God declares to the Serpent: “*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*” This first promise (even though it's not overly detailed) tells us quite a bit about the Messiah.

Notice first that according to this passage the Saviour will be both God and man. As the seed (or offspring) of a human woman He will be human. But He will also be more than that because He is the seed of a woman and not a man. This is extremely unusual since the Bible normally lists offspring as the man's not the woman's. One reason for this is because the man has the seed. The woman does not. That's just biology 101! But the Messiah is going to break biological boundaries because He will have no earthly father. Indeed, as the prophet Isaiah later explained, He will be born of a virgin (ISAIAH 7:14). So this Messiah will be human, but He will also be more than human. In fact, He will be God Himself wrapped in human flesh. The God-Man.

But the Messiah will break biological boundaries in more ways than one because, as I previously mentioned, this Genesis 3:15 prophecy also hints at His death and resurrection (something Jesus likely related to His disciples). Notice how it declares that He will be “bruised” by Satan (i.e., through His crucifixion) but He in turn will “crush” Satan (through His resurrection). Genesis 3:15 is so powerful, not only because it accurately predicted these things, but also because this very first messianic prophecy preaches the very first gospel message: Man sinned and was subject to death (i.e., eternal separation from God) but the Lord mercifully promised to send a Saviour who would conquer evil and restore humanity's broken relationship with God. As the Apostle John would later write: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus), that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (JOHN 3:16) ■

James the Just

A brief biography on the brother of Jesus



One of the most surprising early figure heads of the Christian Church was James the brother of Jesus. Early in Christian history he was nicknamed “James the Just” to differentiate him from James the apostle of Christ, and the many other James that existed at the time.

The first mention of James in the gospels comes from Matthew 13, when Jesus preaches in Nazareth. He is met with skepticism because the people had known Him from childhood and knew His parents, naming His mother, four brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, and mentioning that He also

HE WAS NICKNAMED “JAMES THE JUST” TO DIFFERENTIATE HIM FROM...THE MANY OTHER JAMES THAT EXISTED AT THE TIME.

had sisters. Unimpressed with Jesus’ origins, most of His hometown neighbors couldn’t respect Him as a teacher. In Mark 3, we learn that His brothers and mother travelled to Him to try to make Him stop His ministry, thinking that He was out of His mind. And in John 7 His brothers try to convince Him to go to the Passover festival in Jerusalem to essentially promote or prove Himself as a public teacher, it is noted in the gospel that they did not believe in Him. In their culture, family honor was of utmost importance. Jesus being so controversial would have brought the family into shame and disrespect.

The next time we hear about James and the brothers of Christ in the Bible is in Acts 1 after the death and resurrection of Christ. They are with the apostles and close disciples of Christ, dedicating themselves to prayer and waiting for the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised. So, at some point between John 7 and Acts 1 the brothers of Christ went from skeptics to followers of Him. Our only insight comes from 1 Corinthians 15:7

when the apostle Paul is describing the resurrection appearances of Jesus, he says that Jesus appeared to James and then the rest of the apostles. It seems that Jesus met with His brother and for James and the rest, it changed everything.

Very quickly, James rose in respect and position in the Christian church in Jerusalem. James then became a prominent leader of the Jerusalem church, the apostle Paul called him a pillar of the Church (**GALATIANS 2:9**) and speaks of him as on the same level as the other 12 apostles (**GAL. 1:19, 2:11-13**).

James seems to have settled well into the leadership of the Jerusalem church; when a council was held to figure out what should be done with Christian Gentiles, whether they should also follow the Mosaic law or not, it is James who is given the last word. He discerns that Gentile Christians do not need to follow the Law, the Holy Spirit has approved Gentile Christians apart from the Law, and so they should remain (**ACTS 15**). James then exhorts the church to teach the Gentiles to separate themselves from pagan practices, though they do not need to take while not taking up Jewish ones.

The first century Roman historian Josephus recorded the martyrdom of James calling him the brother of Jesus and saying that he was sentenced to death by the Sanhedrin, who stoned him (**ANTIQUITIES, 20.200**). A later 4th century Christian historian (Eusebius) tells us that an earlier Christian writer (Hegesippus) said that James was pushed off a high edge of the Temple mount where he was standing addressing the crowd, when the fall didn’t kill him, the religious leaders stoned him and finished him off with a club (**ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, 2.23.4-8**).

This was a devastating loss for the Jerusalem church, and an addition to the growing list of Christian martyrs. ■

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A Command

DISCOVERING THE WORD

A command is only as good as the authority behind it. Depending on our understanding of the authority that issued the command, we will follow it or rebel against it. In our reading today, Jesus arrives at Capernaum near the sea of Galilee and He hears a desperate plea from a Roman centurion. This centurion was unusual in that he was known to love God and support the Jewish people. Due to his life in the military structure of Rome, the centurion seems to have had a robust appreciation for authority structures that coloured his understanding of the spiritual world. He believed that Jesus Christ was a figure of great authority, and he honoured Jesus with that in his request. The Bible tells us that Jesus marveled at the faith of the centurion. Luke 7 records this interesting interaction and leaves us to think on the significance of authority.

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 7:1-15

The centurion knew the power of a command and understood the authority of God. We should always acknowledge and have faith in the authority of Jesus Christ in our life.
(v. 1-8)

Jesus Christ acknowledges the centurion's faith. Faith is impressive only when it is in Christ.
(v. 9-10)

Jesus Christ has compassion and restores life to a man already in his coffin. When we have compassion, we are acting in the character of Christ.
(v. 11-15)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

To truly follow the Lord Jesus Christ, we must allow the Holy Spirit to teach and direct us. The Holy Spirit does not come only to bring charismatic gifts, He comes to teach us the character of Christ.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO KNOW
YOUR CHARACTER AND
LIVE IT OUT EVERYDAY.**

Acceptance or Rejection

DISCOVERING THE WORD

When Jesus sent out 72 of His disciples, He was clear that people had the choice to welcome them or reject them. Just like those people hearing the 72 disciples of Jesus, we, too, have the option of either accepting or rejecting the good news of God. There isn't an in between space, we either accept God as He is and His work as it is, or else we don't. If we try to change who God is or make the Bible more acceptable to our society or our lives, then we are not following God but a god we have made in our own image. Where we sit today in the modern West, we are in danger of not taking God and His Word seriously. Our culture was built on the principles of the Scripture, but if we don't submit our hearts to God, and ask His forgiveness through the work of Jesus Christ, then we will fail. The only road to peace both personal and interpersonal is through Jesus Christ.

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 10:1–16

The acceptance of Jesus Christ brings peace.

As Christians, we have peace from our sins through Christ Jesus our Lord.

(v. 1–9)

Rejection of Jesus Christ brings confusion and turmoil.

Those who reject the Lord Jesus do not have God's peace or blessings.

(v. 10–12)

Cities are dealt with by the words of Jesus Christ.

There is a coming judgment for both places and people that willingly reject Jesus Christ as Lord.

(v. 13–16)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The good news is good because through God's forgiveness we are saved from the ravages of hell. Though we all stand guilty of sin, God has made a way for us if we would just take it.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAISE YOUR
HOLY NAME FOR YOUR
AMAZING GRACE AND
THE FORGIVENESS OF
ALL MY SINS!**

A Call to Repentance

DISCOVERING THE WORD

In the gospels, we often see Jesus bringing correction to what the people had been taught by the religious leaders. The Pharisees and Sadducees were committed to their rules and regulations that were supposed to help them keep the requirements of God. The problem was that these rules, these traditions, were actually leading them away from the requirements of God and teaching others to do the same. Jesus was also committed to something, He was committed to the truth of God and to people in need. God came to heal and help the lost and broken. The religious leaders were convinced that they knew what God wanted and how to accomplish it, when Jesus challenged that, many were not happy. It has never been about rules and regulations, but about submitting ourselves to God, who is personal and relational.

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 13:1–17

Repentance through Jesus Christ is absolutely necessary to restore our relationship with God.

We are all sinners and need to live in repentance before God.

(v. 1–5)

If you want to know who God is, you must train your attention to seek Him.

God does not hide from us; Jesus Christ is in full view.

(v. 6–9)

A woman was healed on the Sabbath. The religious leader was offended by the actions of Jesus Christ. The leader was absolutely wrong!

(v. 10–17)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God calls us to respond to people in need, and that could happen at a time we do not expect. We need to always be ready to share the Gospel, no matter the time or place. Let's be the hands and feet of Christ, as we share and administer His healing and compassion.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOU SO CLOSELY THAT I KNOW WHERE YOU WANT ME TO BE AT ALL TIMES.

The Word Brings Life

DISCOVERING THE WORD

As Creator, God has given us so many blessings in creation. Not only has He given us life, and ways to sustain our life, but also things that add enjoyment to our life; things like the beauty of nature, the sweetness and pleasure of our food, the satisfaction that comes when we build something. God has given us so many blessings just by nature of being human. The Bible explains how humanity corrupted these blessings, first through disobedience to God in the beginning, which is why it is so amazing to me that all of us, good or evil, still live in so many blessings of God. Psalm 129 describes how many people ignore God's work, and even curse or mock those who are not like them. We will often face mockery, cursing, and condemnation in this world but Psalm 129 shows that God is listening and watching. He is the perfect Judge, and He will make everything that is wrong, right. May we find comfort in that today, and also a reminder to be careful of what we say and how we say it.

DISCOVER: PSALM 129:1–8

Many a time they have afflicted me from my youth; Yet they have not prevailed against me.

The LORD is righteous; He has cut in pieces the cords of the wicked.

GUIDED PRAYER

LORD God, I pray that You would help me to listen to You and Your Word. It is critical that I know what You think of me, instead of what others say about me.

Lost and Found

DISCOVERING THE WORD

As I read our reading for today, I couldn't help but think on how amazing the work of Jesus Christ was and is. The incarnation of Jesus truly was a living, breathing miracle. God acted outside of His natural order to deal with our sin against Him. It's truly amazing! One of the interesting things that Jesus did while He was ministering here was to speak in parables. These are stories that communicate truth using fictional scenarios. The parables in today's reading speak about a lost sheep, a lost coin missing from a collection of ten, and a lost son. Jesus' use of these parables has given us much material to think on and appreciate, and it's incredible to me that two thousand years later we can still relate to them so well. Jesus' parables communicate timeless truths that speak directly to our hearts now that we see them in light of His work on the cross. Jesus came to save us, to heal us, to offer us forgiveness of our sins and restoration in our relationship with God. If you have been lost, and are now found, that is something to celebrate today!

DISCOVERING GOD – LUKE 15:1-21

Jesus told the sinners that God is always searching for His lost sheep.

We are lost until we are found through the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ.
(v. 1-7)

God says that every life is precious and priceless.

Even for just one, Jesus Christ came to die on the cross and rise from the dead.
(v. 8-10)

The rebellious son could not continue living in his pride.

The father does not punish him but welcomes him back home!
(v. 11-21)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God is perfect in both mercy and judgment. If we overemphasize either of these things we will be out of sync with Him. As Christians, we must demonstrate God's mercy, just as we have been shown mercy by God.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, TEACH ME TO
LEARN AND WALK IN YOUR
CHARACTER AND ATTITUDE
WITH ALL PEOPLE.**

The Coming Kingdom

DISCOVERING THE WORD

In Luke 17:24, Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man. In the gospels, Jesus is called both the Son of God and the Son of Man. Among other things, these titles highlight how He was perfectly positioned to deal with humanity's sins. He is God, but He also became Man, a son of Adam, so that He could rightfully deal with Adam's sin. In Luke 17:20-37, we read Jesus explaining to the Pharisees the Kingdom of God. They had their own expectations of the Messiah and the Son of Man, and their own expectations of what the Kingdom of God would look like and mean to Israel in the physical world. Jesus was challenging their expectations. It was a challenge and a warning. As we read it, let's allow our expectations to also be challenged, keeping our hearts softened toward the One who has proven His love for us eternally.

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 17:20–37

The Kingdom of God is closer than we think!

The Lord Jesus is as close as the mention of His name.

(v. 20–21)

God was right in front of them, but they did not see Him.

Jesus Christ mentioned time and time again that He came to pay the cost of our sins.

(v. 22–25)

The coming of Jesus Christ is compared to the days of Noah, and the days of Lot in Sodom.

The clock is ticking down, whether we like it or not.

(v. 26–37)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The times in which we live are unique and unyielding with evil. But the LORD is with us and continues to protect His people. We must pray carefully, every day, for those in our family and those around us.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, PLEASE BE WITH ALL OF US WHO LOVE YOU. HELP ME TO BE CONSISTENT IN PRAYER FOR YOUR PEOPLE.

Challenge of Authority

DISCOVERING THE WORD

During the ministry of Jesus Christ, He was often tested by people. In our reading today, we see the religious leaders of Israel questioning Him. The priests, teachers of the religious law, and the elders of the people came to Jesus to ask where He drew His authority from. They wanted to know how He believed He could enter Jerusalem as a king and drive the merchants and money changers out of the Temple complex. Jesus' answer seems to reveal His doubt that these Levites would accept any answer. Jesus posed them a counter question: By whose authority did John the Baptist baptize people, was it heavenly or human authority? The leaders refused to answer because they knew an answer would indict them. Since they refused to answer Jesus' question, He had no obligation to answer their question. What an interesting study of how God confronts our sinful attitudes!

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 20:1-18

The religious leaders could not answer their own questions about authority. We cannot outthink God.

(v. 1-8)

Jesus Christ tells a parable about a scheme involving wicked tenant vinedressers.

Force is one way to get what you want, but God's will is the ultimate force.

(v. 9-12)

Jesus Christ the Son of God, is the chief Cornerstone. We must come to terms with Jesus, one way or the other.

(v. 13-18)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is easy to argue about God and over religious ideas. But the leaders were speaking face to face with Jesus Christ! God is not just an idea, He is real and personal, and He wants to have a relationship with you. Are you too hardened in your own ways to have an honest conversation with Him? He can heal and help us.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I DESIRE TO HEAR
YOUR HEART AND KNOW
YOUR WORD. HELP ME
AND TEACH ME.**

The Passover

DISCOVERING THE WORD

In Luke 22, we see Jesus and the disciples preparing for and celebrating Passover. This is one of the most well-known feasts from the Old Testament because it is linked with the ten plagues of Egypt and it became linked with the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus. Passover was given to the Israelites, as the tenth plague of the death of the firstborn was about to descend in Exodus 12. The Israelites were to slaughter a lamb and put its blood on the doorposts of their homes, and in this obedience the plague of death would pass over them. From that time forward it became a feast that they celebrated each year up to today. This custom found its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ who was the perfect Passover Lamb. He sacrificed Himself so that the judgment for our sins would pass over us. This is why we still celebrate communion, or the Lord's supper, as Christians today. We remember Jesus' actions and how He fulfilled promises made by God long ago.

DISCOVERING GOD — LUKE 22:1–23

Judas Iscariot plotted to betray Jesus Christ.

God knows all and has responded to everything that will occur in the future.

(v. 1–6)

Jesus Christ set up when and where the Passover meal would be.

The LORD knows what we will face for the rest of our lives.

(v. 7–13)

Jesus Christ tells His disciples about the plot to betray Him.

God knows all things but wants us to communicate with Him when we pray.

(v. 14–23)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Prayer is talking to God. What an amazing privilege we have that we can speak with the Creator of the universe! What a blessing to spend time with our Heavenly Father in prayer. May we not waste this time and opportunity we have been given.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING TO MY
PRAYERS. HELP ME TO
PRAY CONSISTENTLY
AND HONESTLY.**

The Beginning

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The Gospel of John was written years after the first three gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke had already been put down in writing. It's often dated to about AD 85, and being written a few decades after the other gospels, the author of John likely had access to them and was aware of what they had already covered. John was the disciple of Jesus who was a fisherman and had become one of the three closest disciples of Jesus along with Peter and James. Traditional belief holds that Mark's original audience was Roman, Matthew's was Jewish, Luke's was Gentile, and John's was for the Church in general. Either way, God has used all the gospels to deeply impact the world of the last two thousand years! One thing that I find fascinating about the Gospel of John is how it begins by going back to the beginning of creation. By doing this, John connects Christ's message to creation, and to all human history. As we start to read through this Good News through John's eyes, let's remember that he is telling us what he believes really matters.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 1:1-13

Jesus Christ was not created; He is God and was with God in the beginning. Christ is fully God and fully man.

(v. 1-3)

Jesus Christ set up life. It is unique and no one can truly understand it. The LORD has made human life, we may try to replicate it, but we will never be able to.

(v. 4-5)

To all who believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him, He has given the right to become the children of God. No one has life, unless it is life through Jesus Christ. Come to Christ now!

(v. 6-13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Our world seems to specialize in crafting stories for us to get caught up in. Think about the media and social media that we all consume. It truly can consume us. We must keep ourselves grounded in the Word of God and be reminded of what really matters.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO STAY
GROUNDED IN YOUR WORD
EVERY DAY.**

Made Well

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Many diseases plagued the ancient city of Jerusalem, and Jesus walked there and would have seen it. It is interesting for us to see that while Jesus healed so many people, there were also people that He did not heal. Today’s reading has an example of His selective healing. Jesus visited the Pool of Bethesda where many ill people waited for the water to be stirred up in hopes that they could receive healing from it. Jesus focused on one man in the crowd of the sick. This man could not work because he had been lame for thirty-eight years. Jesus asked him a significant question, and He asks the same question of us: Do you want to be made well? We would do well to remember that healing is not just physical, it is also spiritual. The world is dark with sin, with injustice and evil, the only way to overcome that is to deal with our own sin through Jesus Christ. With Jesus, we can confront the damage created by our own sin and the sin of others and move into His healing.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 5:1-15

Jesus Christ asked the sick man a question: *Do you want to be made well?*
He asks us the same question: *Do we want to be made well through Jesus Christ?* What will your answer be?
(v. 1-6)

Jesus Christ healed the man on the Sabbath day. God heals and restores those who have committed their life to His care.
(v. 7-9)

Jesus Christ later found the man and told him to sin no more. We who believe and follow Christ are committed to His care for our sins and healing.
(v. 10-15)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We cannot know all the answers, but we can know the One who does! When we trust in God, we learn that the LORD will make our paths straight for us and help us through difficulty.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR SAVING AND HEALING MY LIFE. HELP ME TO LEARN HOW TO TRUST IN YOU.

Priorities

DISCOVERING THE WORD

God wants our minds in the right place. When we were little children, we used to think our parents were always right. We just trusted them innately to teach us all true things—our values, our ideas, our beliefs—but this is not always true. As we grew older into our teenage years, we began to see the inconsistency in our parents and so we rebelled, forgetting that it is precisely rebellion which made our parents inconsistent in the first place.

We should never forget that we all live in sin, and this affects our whole self—the way we think, believe, and behave. Sin is alienation from God. That means there is a deep, real-world cost to that sin. It means that we were born disordered in our heart, mind, and soul, disoriented and hostile to God, and so in order to mend and heal that brokenness within, we need a real relationship with God in our lives. It means that we need to listen, repent, and apply the ways of Jesus Christ in our whole lives to reorder the way we think, believe, and behave, to act and react according to His perfect will. We need to submit ourselves to the Word of God.

Psalm 132 is a Song of Ascent, meaning it was sung as the people ascended to the Temple in Jerusalem. The main theme of this piece of music is to correct and focus our priorities on God—God must be our focus as we ascend to Him.

DISCOVER: PSALM 132:1–18

**I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,**
until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One
of Jacob.

GUIDED PRAYER

LORD, take over my life and help me
to prioritize Your desires in my heart.

Believe?

DISCOVERING THE WORD

What does it mean to believe in God? What does it mean to be a Christian and believe in Jesus Christ? First, you need to know and understand what Jesus Christ has done for you! You come to the understanding of the reality of sin in your life and ask the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only one who has dealt with your sin, to forgive you. That willing transfer of responsibility for sin goes off you and Jesus Christ takes it upon Himself. This is when you become a new believer. Some use the words of Jesus Christ when He spoke to Nicodemus about being born again. To believe means you begin to learn and understand what Jesus Christ said. He claimed that He was God and no one could come to the Father God except through Him (John 14:6). When Jesus taught His disciples about the Kingdom of God, His half-brothers did not believe. It was not until later, after the crucifixion and resurrection, that His brothers believed Christ. Sin blinds us from seeing the truth.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 7:1-19

Jesus Christ's half-brothers did not believe His claim that He is God.

A Christian is someone who believes what Jesus Christ taught and said and applies them in their heart and life
(v. 1-5)

Jesus Christ is at the center of life.

Jesus Christ answers all our deepest problems, in His perfect timing, not ours.
(v. 6-9)

Jesus Christ receives all the glory.

We should only seek to glorify God and point the way to Christ.
(v. 10-19)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Trusting in the LORD is important because we learn to trust in Jesus Christ. Our lives are not our own. We live for the work of God. This is faith. The Bible tells us in several places that the just shall live by faith. The longer we live, the stronger faith becomes.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, YOU ARE FAITHFUL!
HELP ME TO GROW IN
MY FAITH.

Life

DISCOVERING THE WORD

What does *living life* mean to us? Most people believe it means living right now, or embracing the moment, having fun. But to the dedicated Christian, real life begins when we are born again. That means that our life never ends when we come to Jesus Christ. Many people think living and life refer only to the here and now. But the Christian knows and is learning that life with Jesus Christ is forever, and that life begins now. There have been books and movies made about the Fountain of Youth. If you could just find it, and drink of it, you would live forever. Once upon a time, this was a metaphor for Jesus Christ, who is the true living waters and fountain of life (JOHN 4:14). In Christ alone, we live forever. It is not just fleshly rejuvenation and ongoing mortality. Some people make a bucket list, a list of things they want to do before they die. Personally, I do not see the need for a bucket list because, according to Jesus Christ, I will live forever. What an amazing life we have through Jesus Christ. This is why we should spend our time praising the LORD today and every day yet to come!

DISCOVERING GOD – JOHN 10:1-10

Jesus Christ told us that there are many bad shepherds. We must follow the words of Jesus Christ in the Bible.
(v. 1-3)

Christians know and follow the voice of Jesus Christ. When we recognize the voice of the Good Shepherd, we trust in His leadership and follow Him.
(v. 4-6)

Jesus Christ told His followers that He is the only One who gives them life. We must never follow our own words, but only those of Jesus Christ.
(v. 7-10)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We should always trust in the Word of God for our spiritual instruction. God has many good shepherds who lead people to the Word of God and never turn them away. We must read the Bible daily to learn what God tells us.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORD. HELP ME TO LEARN AND GROW IN IT EVERY DAY.

The Father God

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Many like to talk about God as the Father. But when you begin to introduce Jesus Christ as the Son of God and fully God, they become angry. What is it about Jesus Christ that makes them so upset? When we look at the life of Jesus Christ and learn about the struggles people caused Him, and how the Lord Jesus, time and time again, overtook the struggles and turned them into benefits, we begin to learn that God was speaking to us directly. The LORD God showed us that Jesus Christ was fully man and fully God, and God was in Him. This is the authority Jesus Christ spoke from when He taught and healed people. It is hard for us to understand intellectually, not unlike trying to explain how the universe works. Yet in John 14, the beloved disciple writes for us what Jesus Christ told us. This is not to confuse us but to help us learn that God is so much greater than our minds can grasp—far beyond human reasoning—that He alone is worthy of worship. Remember that the LORD made everything that exists; even if we don't really know how things work, He does.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 14:1–11

Jesus Christ is preparing a place for us. This is amazing! God wants you to live with Him.
(v. 1–4)

Jesus Christ is the One mediator between God and man—He alone reconciled us to the Father. Believing, confessing, and following Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour is the key to eternal life.
(v. 5–6)

Jesus Christ told us that He is the Lord. We believe that Christ is God and worship only Him.
(v. 7–11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

John 14 teaches us who Jesus Christ is. We recognize Him as fully God and fully man, and the One who understands our weaknesses and strengths. We give our lives to Him completely and follow Him only.

TODAY'S PRAYER

HOLY SPIRIT, I WANT
TO GROW AND LEARN
MORE ABOUT YOU!
GIVE ME REVELATION
THROUGH YOUR WORD.

Jesus Prays

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Many never hear John 17 as God praying for those who have committed themselves to following Jesus Christ. This is an astounding message for every one of us to hear. We need to learn and understand how much Jesus Christ prayed for all who would come after Him and commit their lives to His Kingdom. In this chapter, the first 19 verses show Christ's priorities and the image He paints for us in our past and future. This is an eternal prayer! We need to understand that. Jesus Christ didn't need to pray, but He did so we could hear it. God is communicating with us that He loves us and has taken care of all our difficulties and troubles caused by sin. As we study the first part of this chapter, open your heart and mind to let the LORD speak to you about who He is and what He has done for you.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 17:1–19

Jesus Christ said that when we commit our lives to Him as Lord, we join His eternal Kingdom.

We are eternal beings as partakers in the divine nature.

(v. 1–5)

Jesus Christ is LORD!

We now know God's purpose in sending Christ, His only begotten Son. Praise the Lord!

(v. 6–8)

Jesus Christ has prayed for all His disciples and has sanctified them in this evil world. Our eternal life begins when we are saved. Our purpose and preparation begins now.

(v. 9–19)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

John 17 is one of the most amazing Scripture passages in the Bible. Rarely do we have such a private conversation between God and Jesus Christ available. Jesus Christ taught us to pray, and we should pray, always.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR PRAYER. HELP ME TO KEEP MY HEART AND MIND FOCUSED ON YOU.

The Resurrection

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The stories about Jesus the Christ are easy to believe. The hardest thing about the Lord Jesus to believe is His resurrection. Jesus' life is easy to believe, but the resurrection requires real faith. This is the essence of Christianity. That is what makes Christianity different from any other religion. The exclusive price that Jesus Christ paid for our sins, and His resurrection. We have eternal life in Christ because of Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead. In John 21, we see women are the first to await and see our risen Lord, specifically Mary, the one whom Jesus had cast out demons from. This reverses the order of what happened in the Garden of Eden, when Eve, the first woman, first spoke to the serpent and man followed. Now woman is the first to see the risen Christ, to receive the gospel and tells the apostles the good news. Christ heals and restores all things.

DISCOVERING GOD — JOHN 20:1-16

John seemed to hold back from entering the tomb; he may have wanted to stay clean. We must understand that it is only Jesus Christ who is pure and the only One who can make us clean.

(v. 1-5)

The Holy Scriptures held that Jesus Christ would rise from the dead. We do better when we know the Scriptures in God's Holy Word.

(v. 6-10)

Jesus Christ identified Mary by her name. The Lord Jesus knows each of us, personally!

(v. 11-16)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is hard to understand, but when we believe that Jesus Christ knows us personally and is involved in our lives, the troubles seem to fade, and His presence seems to enlarge in our lives.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME LEARN
TO TRUST IN YOUR
CHARACTER.**

The Holy Spirit

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Time and time again, musicians, philosophers, and psychologists have told us that humans never change. But the Holy Spirit is the One who changes everyone, wherever they are, with what they have. Acts 2 explains why the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is truly so different than any other religious gathering: The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God. When the Holy Spirit came to earth in a new way during the festival of Pentecost, the LORD changed everything. There is absolutely no substitute for the Holy Spirit. Our assigned reading today tells us about the time when the Holy Spirit began to build His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, and it continues to be built to this day. Soon the Lord Jesus will return, and when He does, everything will change again. But until He comes back, let's continue to build God's Kingdom.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 2:1–13

The Holy Spirit changed and continues to change everyone filled with God's presence. True Christians are unique and different from this world.
(v. 1–4)

No language or people are isolated from God. There is no place that men can hide from the presence of God.
(v. 5–11)

Many do not understand Jesus Christ as God. The LORD speaks to those who know that they need Him desperately.
(v. 12–13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

How do we learn and understand who the Holy Spirit is when we do not know or understand who God is? We must seek the face of God Almighty to inherit the promise of the Father in our lives—to be His children and heirs to His Kingdom.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I NEED YOU
DESPERATELY, EVERY
SINGLE DAY OF MY LIFE!**

His Mercy Endures

DISCOVERING THE WORD

God uses music to teach our souls how to talk to Him. In Psalm 136, He speaks to us about His creation, His provision, and His ongoing help. The psalmist caps off each verse with this statement: "His mercy endures forever!"

Psalm 136 is a song and prayer of thanksgiving written for God's people to sing together in the House of the Lord. There is no other god who is like this—He is the God of gods—as the psalmist declares! Only the LORD can command us to sing "His mercy endures forever!" While we may have questions and doubts when we think about it carefully, we cannot underestimate the mercy of God Almighty. He is all powerful, perfect in every way, yet when it comes to His mercy? His mercy endures forever!

This is a short and sweet song of thankful praise, placed near the end of book five of the Psalms. Let's take note, as we come closer to the end of the book of Psalms, just how often we are reminded of the vast goodness and greatness of our God!

DISCOVER: PSALM 136:1–26

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

Oh, give thanks to the God of gods!

For His mercy endures forever.

GUIDED PRAYER

LORD, today I especially stop and remember how great You are! Indeed, Your mercy endures forever!

Faith & Tradition

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The resurrection of Jesus Christ caused a huge rift in Israel. It tore the Temple veil and split households apart, dividing true believers in God from those who only professed faith in God with their mouths. Would you follow the traditions of men or the prophets of God? This tension would only intensify between the followers of Christ and Judaism, as time progressed. Then, along came Stephen. This conflict was fueled by lies manufactured by the men who were positioned in power in the Jewish religion. Even those who had accepted Christ as Lord were captured by this belief. What is interesting is that these kinds of lies persist and have maintained today. The reason seems to involve the Holy Spirit. We see the Scriptures tell us that Stephen was a man full of God's wisdom and grace. So why would those men choose to fight with Stephen; building their case against him, so they could kill him? Let's remember that the Holy Spirit changes men so that they are set apart in Christ, not bound by sin, Satan, and the ways of this world.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 6:1-15

The study and digestion of God's Holy Word was prioritized. Men were chosen to serve and tend to the needs of the Church, while others were committed to prayer and preaching the Word. (v. 1-4)

God's Word was being propagated dramatically in Jerusalem. God's Word, the Bible, is different than any other book; God speaks to us through it. (v. 5-7)

Stephen was attacked because of the dramatic conversion rate of people following Jesus Christ. The LORD continues to transform people all over the world. (v. 8-15)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The ongoing struggle for God's Kingdom is sharp and pointed. Remember that the Holy Spirit has the ultimate power to overcome those who denounce God. Never get caught up in the arguments, just teach the truth of Jesus Christ from your life.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I DESIRE TO FOLLOW
YOUR LEAD AND TRUST YOU
WITH MY WHOLE LIFE.**

LORD of Hosts

DISCOVERING THE WORD

What does the phrase *LORD of hosts* mean? This is the way the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is often identified. This phrase appears two hundred and seventy-two times in the New King James Version of the Bible, so it seems important. The first time the word “hosts” is used in Hebrew in the phrase, *the LORD of hosts* is in 1 Samuel 1:3. The word hosts means “masses”. The Hebrew word LORD means “God”. So, when God is identified here, He is the LORD of the masses. There is no distinction between the physical and the spiritual. Therefore, the masses included spirits, as well. God is sovereign over all the spirits. In Acts 8, there is a spiritual man in the ancient city of Samaria who impressed the people with his magic and spiritual mysticism. That man’s name was Simon, and he was referred to as a practitioner of spiritual sorcery. Philip, an early evangelist, went to that city and preached the good news of Jesus Christ. Interestingly, this mystic was taken by the message of Jesus Christ. He recognized the sovereign power of Christ!

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 8:1-13

Saul was dedicated to persecuting the early Church. Saul was changed by his encounter with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, to preach to the Church.
(v. 1-3)

Demonic spirits lost their place in people, when Jesus Christ was preached. There is no possible way to be delivered, except through Jesus Christ.
(v. 4-8)

Simon, the former sorcerer, was delivered when he believed and accepted Jesus Christ as LORD. There is no other power like that of the Lord Jesus Christ.
(v. 9-13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There is no power like the power of Jesus Christ in our lives. All our suffering, sorrows, and sins, our troubles, trials and tribulations, whether in body or soul, the Lord Jesus helps us as we go through them, to overcome them and become stronger—sanctified!

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, I NEED YOU IN MY LIFE. HELP ME TO FOLLOW YOU THROUGH EVERYTHING.

First Journey

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The book of Acts portrays an early Church very much led by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 13, we see the church at Antioch being very concerned with missions or outreach. The church there was being led by teachers and prophets who are named as Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul (also called Paul). The Holy Spirit spoke to all of them telling them to anoint Saul and Barnabas to go out and bring the message of the gospel to the world. They prayed for and anointed Saul and Barnabas, and their first missionary journey was begun. Much was changed on this journey, people were taught and encouraged, churches were planted, and elders were appointed. Paul also began to write his thirteen letters that became included in the New Testament. Let’s remember that the LORD knows how to form a foundation, and in Acts we get to see how He mobilized the early Church in order to do just that. God knows how to build, and He can teach us how to handle trouble and overcome the challenges that we come up against.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 13:1–12

Saul's first missionary journey with Barnabas was prayed for and anointed by God.

Mission work should always be a result of prayer, not just planning.
(v. 1–3)

The sorcerer worked against Saul and Barnabas to stop the gospel from reaching the proconsul.

Someone will always resist the good news of Christ.
(v. 4–8)

The sorcerer was struck with blindness by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit always overpowers evil that pits itself against the good news of Jesus Christ.

(v. 9–12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Eternal life comes through Jesus Christ alone. When we give our lives to Him, we are forever changed. Some people are resistant to such a spiritual change, we must pray for their hearts to be softened.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO FOLLOW
YOUR LEAD IN MY LIFE,
AND HELP MY FRIENDS AND
FAMILY TO FIND YOU.**

The Corinthian Church

DISCOVERING THE WORD

In the days of the early Church, there were cities that had reputations for decadence, one of them was Corinth. Corinth was in modern-day Greece, and it was known as the connection between Rome and the world of the East because of its location. It was a critical trade city, important to commerce, and full of people from different backgrounds. It's reputation, however, was known for being evil. Very similar to the Las Vegas, Nevada of today, 'whatever happens in Corinth stays in Corinth'. In Paul's day, we even know that you could correct someone's behaviour by telling them to stop acting like a Corinthian. How amazing then, that God told Paul to stay in the city for a year and a half, and that God had many people there. In Acts 18, we get to witness a part of how the redeemed people of Corinth became a church.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 18:1–11

As always, Paul begins his ministry in Corinth reasoning in the synagogue. God's work has a pattern.

(v. 1–4)

When the Jews rejected Paul's message of Jesus being the Christ, he left and went to the Gentiles. Many are called, but few come to Christ.

(v. 5–7)

Paul continued teaching Jesus Christ for a year and a half in the city of Corinth. It is God who gives permission for us to stay or to go.

(v. 8–11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The moves we make in our lives, from location to location, should come from the Lord Jesus Christ. God will direct us and help us to know how to face the obstacles and challenges in front of us

(PROVERBS 3:5-6).

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO
INCLUDE YOU AND FOLLOW
YOUR LEADING IN ALL MY
DECISION-MAKING.**

The Will of God

DISCOVERING THE WORD

When I was young, my family attended many prayer meetings. I remember several of the prayer leaders, well-grounded in the Scriptures, saying at the end of their prayer, "Not my will, but Yours be done." Have you ever wondered what that really means? Many times over the years, I thought it was a way of creating an "out," just in case what we prayed for did not happen. But reading Acts 21 reveals this saying's true meaning. When we pray that the will of the Lord be done, it is more of an admission that we may have missed God's will in praying, so we conclude the prayer by admitting our ignorance and God's providence. I am sure that is what those prayer leaders, many of whom are in heaven now, meant. We are human. There is nothing wrong with admitting that we do not know everything, especially God's will on many occasions. At the beginning of our day, it is best to pray Matthew 6:10, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It is always best to be humble and to want what God desires.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 21:1–14

Paul came to Tyre and there he found local believers of Christ.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is always at work in places we may not expect.
(v. 1–4)

In the Gentile city of ancient Caesarea, there were many of God's people.

Let's remember that God continues to work in every nation of the world.
(v. 5–9)

The will of God is sometimes uncomfortable.

The will of God will be done, everywhere in every area of our lives.
(v. 10–14)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are times in our lives when the will of God is not comfortable. God does not make life for us to be happy all the time, but He always keeps us satisfied. When we have eternal purpose, we are fully in God's will.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME TO BE IN YOUR PERFECT WILL FOR MY LIFE.

Saving Grace

DISCOVERING THE WORD

After returning to Jerusalem, Paul had joined himself with four other Christian Jewish brothers who had made a vow to God, likely a Nazirite vow, and needed to complete that vow at the Temple with sacrifices. Though Paul was not creating a scene, some Jewish men who had seen him preaching in Ephesus recognized him and accused him of defiling the Temple by bringing in a Gentile. This caused chaos and Paul was arrested by the Roman commander stationed in the city. Much like today, Jerusalem is a hot bed of religious and political activity. And these topics are not known for being handled peacefully by people. Interestingly, Paul uses his wits to split the Sanhedrin against each other and get out of that situation. Because he was raised in that religious environment, he knew that he just had to bring up the topic of resurrection to end all discussion. Paul was pulled out by the Roman commander, and now he would advance the gospel to the Gentiles, by going to testify before the Roman governor.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 24:1–21

Tertullus, the lawyer hired by the Jews, delivers an elegant but untrue condemnation of Paul.

We must be alert to the manipulations of money or power.

(v. 1–9)

Paul replies that he worships and follows the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Following God makes the innocence and power of Jesus Christ come to bear.

(v. 10–14)

The resurrection is the issue that God wants the people to think about. The account of Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead is the truth.

(v. 15–21)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God keeps us focused on His saving grace. Let's remember that God's grace saves us. Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead after three days, demonstrating God's amazing love for us. His gift of forgiveness is available for us all.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO KNOW
AND UNDERSTAND YOUR
AMAZING, SAVING GRACE.**

God Retaliates

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Have you noticed how interesting it is to watch people watch a court case? When we listen to a trial, especially one that gets a lot of media attention, we see people become completely wrapped up in their thoughts on whether the person is guilty or innocent. People often declare their judgment before all the evidence in the trial is even presented.

As Christians, we need to be wise in this area. Our hearts are all tarnished by sin. None of us is immune. Our gut feelings, our instincts cannot always be trusted. We are evil by nature. Even our very best efforts can be wrong, because of sin.

Psalm 137 tells us through its lyrics that the true justice of God, Who is perfect, will be imposed on all people. True justice is coming. There won't be anything hidden. God knows it all. It is so important for us to do our best as a society to bring justice to criminals. Even when this happens, it will feel lack lustre because we need God's justice. One day, it will come. Are you ready? Are you forgiven? It's time to make sure we are right with our God.

DISCOVER: PSALM 137:1–8

**O daughter of Babylon,
who are to be destroyed,**

Happy the one who repays you
as you have served us!

GUIDED PRAYER

LORD, today I remember that my life
is not complete now; I live for eternity
in Your presence.

Paul Goes to Rome

DISCOVERING THE WORD

God chose Paul. When he was still known by the name of Saul, he was on his way to punish and kill those who had decided to love and serve Jesus Christ after His death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven. Paul believed, from the Jewish perspective, that Jesus Christ was an imposter. He was a man fiercely dedicated to defending the purity of the Jewish creed. The problem was that it had become more of a cultural creed than a true faith. But Jesus Christ appeared to Paul suddenly on the road to Damascus. Jesus confronted Paul asking him why he was persecuting the work of God. To which Paul turned around and changed his approach to life. Paul became an advocate of faith in Jesus Christ. He dedicated his life to advancing faith in Christ. At the end of Acts 28, Paul comes to the world's leading government and empire headquarters, Rome. Here Paul would die, but first he would make his final plea for all people to come and follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

DISCOVERING GOD — ACTS 28:1–16

Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake but suffered no consequences.

Still today, we face all kinds of resistance, but God overcomes them for us.

(v. 1–6)

Jesus Christ brings a healing ministry for the people of Malta.

Healing is always a part of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

(v. 7–10)

Paul came to Rome under guard and remained under guard for protection.

The Lord will put people around us to hear our testimony of God's help in our lives.

(v. 11–16)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The LORD God keeps His people intact and on track with His Kingdom. Christians are not on earth to build their own lives but to share with others who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for them. That is, to build the Kingdom of God.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO
SPEAK TO MY FRIENDS
AND FAMILY ABOUT
YOUR GRACE AND YOUR
GREAT DEEDS.**

The Capital City

DISCOVERING THE WORD

The apostle Paul wrote this letter, now called the book of Romans, to the church in the city of Rome, the capital of the most powerful empire on earth, probably from Corinth in AD 57. This city had a kind of decadence that was known throughout the ancient Roman world. Here, Paul was focused on the Jewish-Gentile Christians who were misunderstanding one another concerning faith in Christ and the new covenant. For the Gentiles, there were many ways to worship their gods. So, in Romans 1, Paul makes a profound statement about the Good News of Jesus Christ to His Church. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (ROMANS 1:16). It seems obvious that Paul clearly points to Jesus Christ as the only God to worship. This was important at this time in Rome. Remember that Christians were often called atheists because they worshiped only one God. Let's study Romans 1 and discover what God has told us through Paul.

DISCOVERING GOD – ROMANS 1:16-25

God's righteousness is revealed when we come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no way for us to be right with God, except through the Lord Jesus Christ.
(v. 16-17)

God's first revelation is this universe. The LORD shows Himself every day, in every way, to all people.
(v. 18-21)

The temptation to reduce God remains active and destroys our minds. Temptation is always in our hearts. But God overcomes temptation when we submit to Him.
(v. 22-25)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Being tempted is not a sin but when we yield to it, it quickly becomes sin. Sin is a horrible thing that destroys our mind and soul. Temptation warns us that our minds are not like God's until we submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; He turns temptation around.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME NOT TO GIVE INTO TEMPTATION. I GIVE YOU MY LIFE AND MY SOUL, RIGHT NOW.

The Law

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Paul wrote to the Romans so they could make sense of God's mercy through Jesus Christ. In ancient Rome, pagans worshipped whatever and whomever they wanted. Then there were Jewish people who were very strict and adhered to the letter of the Law. Paul tells the Roman Christians about the holiness and mercy of Jesus Christ and the Law of God. We need to read the book of Romans because it counters two tendencies within us: a desire for no law or a desire for only law. In both tendencies, we constantly misunderstand God's love for us because we tend to gauge that by our performance. But the truth of Jesus Christ is that our performance can only come through Jesus Christ, who grows us through His Holy Spirit. In other words, we must gain access through Christ to the Holy Spirit in our lives in order to change and grow us in the work for God's Kingdom. This is very important for Christians to learn and understand as we grow in Jesus Christ.

DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 7:1-12

Paul gives the example of marriage being a close relationship, which only God can make and keep.
As a Christian, our union with God is Christ-centered.
(v. 1-4)

Paul reminds us that we serve God by living in the Spirit. Now we can serve God in a new way, and He helps us grow and change to His way of thinking.
(v. 5-6)

Paul tells us that the law is only one part of knowing God. Jesus Christ is God and has paid the cost of our sin and given us eternal life. We serve Him.
(v. 7-12)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Sin is highlighted by the Law of God, but it is powerless to change the human heart. God's law is good and holy, but it is only through the power of God's grace made available through the work of Jesus Christ that we have redemption from sin and the gift of eternal life.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAISE YOUR
AWESOME NAME FOR
ALL THAT YOU HAVE
DONE FOR ME!**

Christians

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Christians were first called Christians in the first-century Church. We read the details in Acts 11: "So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (ACTS 11:26). The word Christian means Christ-follower. This word has lasted for about 2,000 years. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again in the flesh, He changed everything. No other religion in the world has ever been able to claim that their leader is fully God and fully man, died on a cross and rose from the dead. Romans 8 offers a fascinating explanation of what God does and how He works in those who have become a Christian. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (ROMANS 8:1). Condemnation is not a part of the Christian experience.

DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 8:1-11

Jesus Christ has freed from sin those who belong to Him and walk in the Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit frees the believer from the power of sin that leads to death.
(v. 1-2)

To set our mind on things of the carnal nature means death. Setting our minds on Christ means life. We seek the Lord Jesus Christ for everything.
(v. 3-8)

Only Jesus Christ has the key to eternal life and forgiveness of sins. No other religion, anywhere, at any time, has the Holy Spirit of Christ.
(v. 9-11)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Let's remember that when we come to Jesus Christ, it is a life-changing event that affects us forever. The life of a Christian is never the same throughout the seasons; the LORD gives us challenges to conquer in each season.

TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR
BEING SO FAITHFUL. HELP
ME TO BE CONSISTENT FOR
YOU IN MY LIFE.**

Gifts & Serving God

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Paul continues to explain to the church at Rome that there are gifts to which Christ has given each one of us. We should use those gifts to help build the Church. The way all other religions work is not the way the Kingdom of God works. While on earth, Christ explained to His disciples that the Kingdom of God was different from anything they had known. Paul continues the explanation of the Kingdom by calling on them to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God. That is stunning because sacrifices were made all the time in Rome to the Roman gods. And the Jewish faith had sacrifices that were killed at the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem. So, when Paul tells the Roman believers to present their physical bodies a living sacrifice as their spiritual worship, as Christ did, they are hit with a challenging statement (**ROMANS 12:1; CF. PHILIPPIANS 1:29**). The keyword is “living”! The people are to dedicate their lives to the Good News of Jesus Christ because they have been given the grace of eternal life.

DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 12:1–13

God's perfect will involves Jesus Christ changing our lives for His work.

We should keep ourselves focused on serving God's Kingdom, not our own.

(v. 1–2)

As God has given, each of us has a unique gift to give to God's Kingdom.

There are no superstars in God's Kingdom.

(v. 3–8)

Christians are dedicated to read the Bible, pray, and care for the needy.

God speaks to everyone through His servants.

(v. 9–13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God is speaking to the world right now. Through those who love and serve God, the LORD tells the world that He loves them and has sent His only begotten Son to forgive the world of their sins and give those who choose Him eternal life.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME PUT INTO ACTION ALL THAT YOU HAVE CALLED ME TO DO BECAUSE THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO NEED TO HEAR AND SEE IT.

Hope In Christ

DISCOVERING THE WORD

Great hope and a wonderful future await those who follow Jesus Christ. Why? Because when you follow Jesus Christ, you are following God—eternal life Himself! The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He is the second Adam, given to us for salvation. From what? From sin: missing the mark and failing. You have heard it said that no one is perfect, but there is One who is perfect: Jesus Christ. He is the only perfect sinless Person who came and lived in our earthly culture, bound to sin and failing, yet living as God in the flesh. It is Christ to whom all who believe and have dedicated their life to. Since Christ has united us to Him as His body, Paul explains how we, as believers, are to work together in Him. Paul's main point is summed up in chapter 15, "For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, 'The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me' " (ROMANS 15:3). Jesus Christ has taken the cost of sin and redeemed it. We are dedicated to Christ, because of what He has done for us.

DISCOVERING GOD — ROMANS 15:1–13

God has provided a way for us to work together as Christians. The world is full of sin, but Jesus Christ cleanses us of sin, so that we may have hope in Him.
(v. 1–4)

God gives us the ability to set our minds and desires to unity with Him. We learn how to live with each other in Christian unity, through Jesus Christ.
(v. 5–6)

Christians are not a specific group but a called people who dedicate their lives to follow and serve the Lord Jesus. Christians are committed to Christ's work in and through us.
(v. 7–13)

DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God fills us with His peace and grows the fruit of joy in us, when we dedicate ourselves to His Word and work. Fights and conflicts in the Church will happen, but Christ helps us work them out as we submit our will to His.

TODAY'S PRAYER

LORD, HELP ME MATURE IN YOU AND WORK THROUGH CONFLICTS AND ISSUES PEACEABLY WITH MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST.

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