



# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER — 2018 —

40 Days • 6 Pillars • 1 Vision

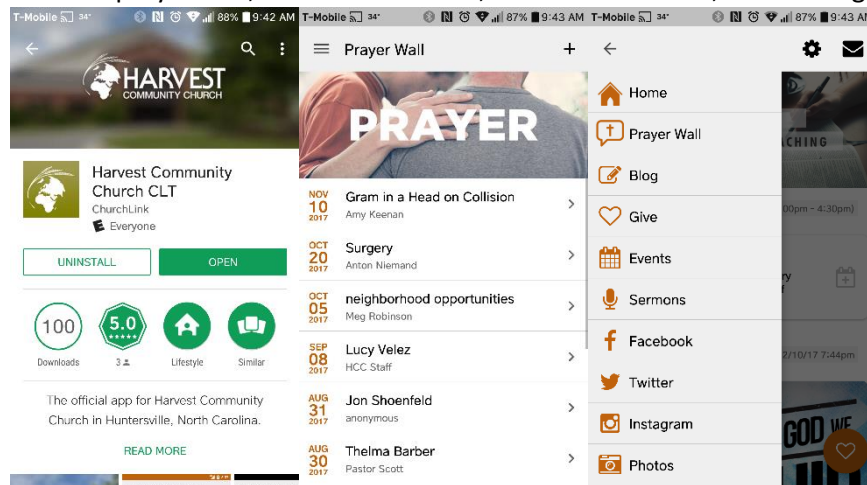
**Harvest Community Church exists...**

To develop people into followers of Jesus Christ with a passion to worship God well and communicate his love to others.

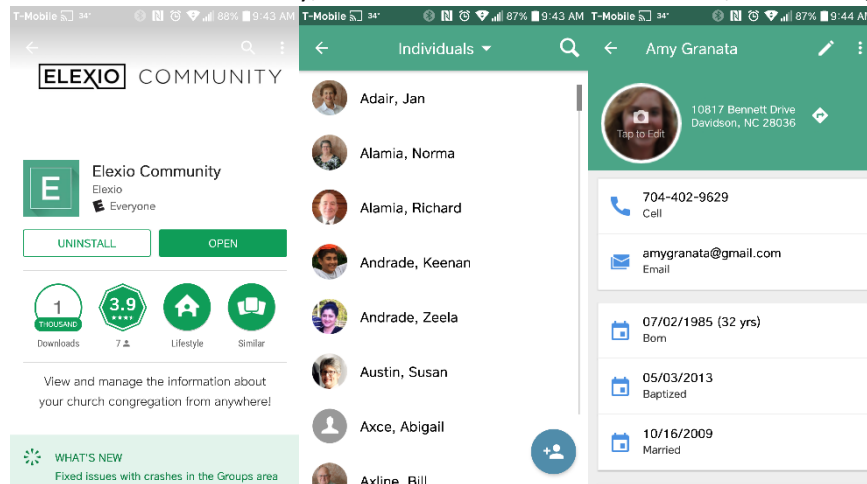


## Mobile Apps:

- **Harvest Community Church CLT** (no login required)
  - Includes prayer wall, access to sermons, social media feeds, electronic giving



- **Elexio Community** (requires login information, contact [Anna@HarvestCharlotte.com](mailto:Anna@HarvestCharlotte.com) to get started.)
  - Includes church directory, child check-in from mobile device, electronic giving



{over}

## Social Media:



**Facebook:** [harvestcharlotte.com/harvestcharlotte](https://www.facebook.com/harvestcharlotte)

“Like” our page and engage with us during the week. You can share our posts and events with your friends. We love reading your comments and seeing your pictures!



**Instagram:** @harvestCLT

Follow us on Instagram for an inside peek at what goes on behind the scenes during the week and see what’s coming up.



**Twitter:** @harvestCLT

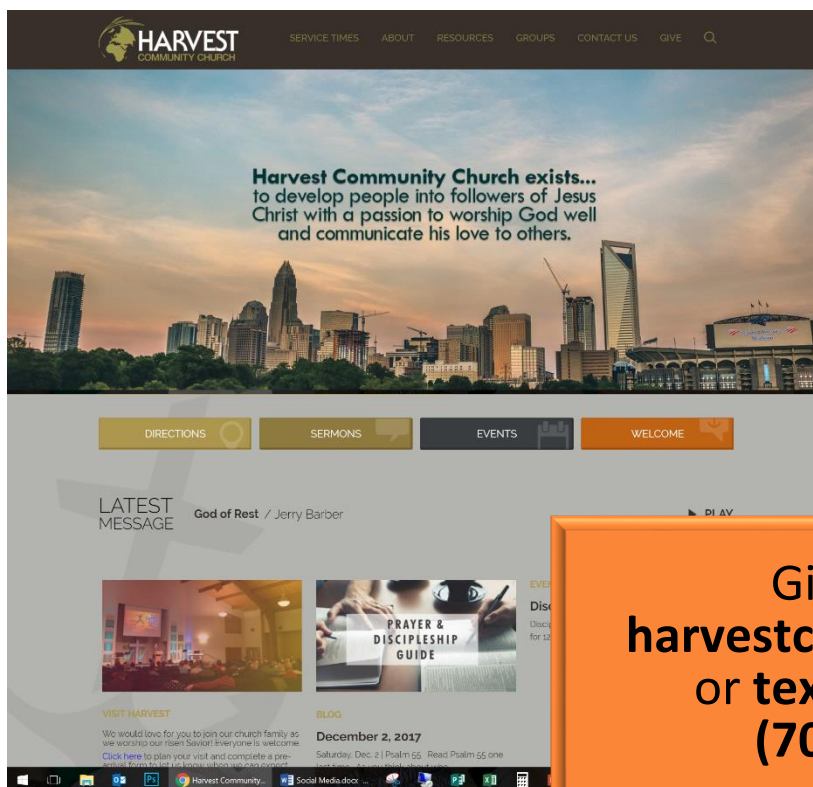
Follow us on Twitter for reminders, encouragement and more! We share a lot of gospel-centered content from our brothers and sisters in Christ.



**SoundCloud:** [soundcloud.com/harvestcharlotte](https://soundcloud.com/harvestcharlotte)

Access sermons and other audio content.

## Website: [harvestcharlotte.com](https://harvestcharlotte.com)



**Looking for something?  
It's probably here!**

- Event calendar
- Sermons audio and notes
- Online giving
- Articles, prayer and discipleship guides
- Small group information
- And More!

Give online at  
**[harvestcharlotte.com/give](https://harvestcharlotte.com/give)**  
or **text** an amount to  
**(704) 312-7803**



# 40 Days of Prayer 2018

40 Days. 6 Pillars. 1 Vision.

Welcome to the 40 Days of Prayer for 2018! This year's theme is unlike any other we have ever attempted. It centers around our six pillars, those six guiding principles on which Harvest Community Church is founded. The idea is not just to learn more about what makes us tick—although that will be a nice side benefit—but to learn how the Scriptures themselves undergird these principles and to lead us all into praying about those six incredibly important pillars: worship, disciple-making, biblical community, Scripture, prayer, and grace.

The six pillars of Harvest form the foundation for the one vision God has given us: To develop people into followers of Jesus Christ with a passion to worship God well and communicate His love to others. In short, to make disciples of Jesus who make disciples everywhere.

Think about how powerful it will be for EVERYONE at Harvest to be studying and praying about the same things at the same time. This is one of the things that make the 40 Days of Prayer so special. Now think how special—and impactful—it could be for EVERYONE to be studying and praying about those things that shape our very identity as a church!

By praying about our pillars, we hope that God will favor us with His power and we will be drawn closer together.

Another benefit of using this guide is that as you study, meditate, and pray about Scriptures each week, you will be better prepared for church-wide worship on Sunday that relates to what has been covered in the days leading up to it. Here is how it works: Each week, we will study and be led into prayer by focusing on two passages that relate to the same theme—three days on each passage. Also, one of those two passages is the text planned for the sermon that follows on Sunday, and as you work through biblical passages PRIOR TO attending Sunday church-wide worship, you will be MUCH MORE READY to worship.

The daily guides for Monday – Saturday are structured as follows:

The left side of the page consists of a Bible-study guide centered on a few verses. We will lead you through the process of discovery so you can be fed and inspired by God's Word.

But then, after you study and meditate on the verses assigned for that day, we will guide you to pray in three ways:

- (1) Praise and Thanks—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?
- (2) Confession and Help—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?
- (3) Intercession—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

The key factor and beautiful thing is that the PRAYER response on the right-hand side of the page is DIRECTLY RELATED to and grows out of the BIBLE STUDY response from the left-hand side of the page.

WARNING—be careful about trying this for forty days, because it could change your life forever!

## Opportunities for Prayer

We are asking you to use these 40 days to increase your involvement and intensity in prayer in three settings: personal, in your home, and with the church body.

- (1) Personal—This prayer guide is designed to help you as an individual connect with God intimately through Scripture and prayer.

- (2) Home—This prayer guide is not *only* a personal guide. For those who are married or have children, we encourage you to come together every day as a family to spend time praying together. You will notice several “family discussions” listed throughout the guide for this purpose.
- (3) Church-wide—We want to capture God’s heart for the church, which is for the church to pray *together*. There are several ways this will happen during the forty days:
- a. Tuesday night Prayer Meetings, 7:00 p.m. —Three special prayer meetings will occur on Tuesday nights in January.
    - Tuesday, January 9—MEN
    - Tuesday, January 16—EVERYONE
    - Tuesday, January 23—WOMEN
  - b. Twenty-four-hour Prayer Vigil, Friday, February 2, 7:00 p.m. –Saturday, February 3, 7:00 p.m.  
We invite you to sign up for a ninety-minute segment of prayer in the Worship Center as part of our twenty-four-hour prayer vigil. Soft music helps create a quiet, soothing atmosphere for you to decompress and spend some extended time with God.
  - c. Sunday morning Prayer Meetings, 9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. —Each Sunday morning, the body is invited to gather and pray. These settings include times of worship, confession, and intercession. Every week looks different, but the most important thing is that GOD IS PRESENT!
  - d. Prayer with your Group—Whatever group you belong to (whether it is a Community Group, men’s or women’s group, or any other type), we encourage you to study and use the truths of Scripture found in this guide to pray with and for each other.
  - e. Moms in Prayer—This group meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month and is open to all women to pray for their children, grandchildren, etc. During the 40 Days of Prayer, this group will meet January 7, 21 and February 4, 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

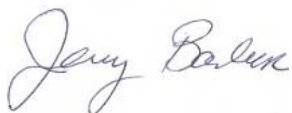
### Special Thanks

Many people contributed to the creation of this 40 Days of Prayer Guide. Thank you so much to everyone who participated so that our body may be strengthened and God’s work furthered:

- Richard Alamia, Jim Bennett, Joe Dowe, Cory Granata, Michael Grande, Bob Hancock, Nathan Hardenbrook, Seth Howard, Nick Macek, Dan Martin, Stan Reckard, and Scott Torres created the Bible-study and prayer guides for Mondays – Saturdays.
- Along with the writers named above, Scott Torres helped create the “Family Questions” used throughout the guide.
- Amy Granata designed the cover.
- Micah Chin came up with the name for the 40 Days.
- Leslie Godshall and Gabe Robinson edited the journal.
- Anna Pierce created the template for the guide and entered all of the components.

As we enter a brand-new year, I encourage you to use God’s Word to help you pray alone and with others, in small groups and with the entire church as it gathers. Let’s understand better from Scripture the kind of church God wants us to be—and let’s call on Him to make it happen!

Blessings,



# **Week 1**

## **January 1-7**

---

# **Worship**

# Worship

Romans 12:1-2 indicates that worship is something that should happen 24/7, not just on Sunday morning. Here is a pretty good definition of worship: “. . . the dramatic celebration of God in His supreme worth in such a manner that His ‘worthiness’ becomes the norm and inspiration of human living” (Martin, R. *The Worship of God: Some Theological, Pastoral, and Practical Reflections*. Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p. 4). We teach people how to worship individually, at home, and with other believers in church-wide settings.

Our worship services are designed to be **awe-inspiring celebrations of God** that are meaningful to children, youth, singles, couples, and families. Children join adults for a portion of this time so that families worship together. We want to provide inspiring music that ministers to people and leads them in their worship, while avoiding an atmosphere in which worshippers are passively "entertained." The goal for our preaching and teaching ministry is to be both biblical and relevant to life. Every sermon is designed to teach people God's Word and inspire them with practical ways to obey.

Everything that happens on a Sunday morning at Harvest is an opportunity to worship: singing to God, prayer, the reading of God's Word, hearing the Bible preached and applying it to life, giving financially to God's work, and fellowshiping with other believers. This means “the worship” on a Sunday is not just music, as is often misunderstood in contemporary North American settings, but worship is holistic, and the entire worship service is worship.

To sum up: worship involves how Christians respond to God all week long and how we respond to Him when we gather for corporate worship (e.g. Sunday morning worship services).

Hopefully, our study of this foundational pillar will transform our lives. Over the next three days we will look into Romans 12:1-2. This familiar passage tells us the **WHAT** and **HOW** of **TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP**.

In Romans 1-11, Paul has written eleven chapters of pure theology. These chapters were penned not just to ponder deep truths but to lay the foundation for the rest of the book. They were to inform the Christians in Rome (and us) about the importance of being declared righteous by God through faith in Jesus Christ. In the final five chapters (12-16), Paul explains how believers can live out the implications of being declared righteous before God.

1. Take a moment to read Chapter 12, and write Romans 12:1 below.
2. What is the first word of Chapter 12? Why might this word be important?
3. Paul states in verse 1, “I urge you brothers...” What does “urge” mean? Why might this be important? What image comes to your mind when you hear the word “urge”?
4. According to verse 1, who is Paul urging? Romans 1:7 also gives a hint.
5. Paul is wanting Christians in Rome to do something. Before we talk about what he wants them to do, we must understand the motivation behind his exhortation. What is the basis or source of Paul’s urging these brothers according to verse 1?
6. What is God’s mercy?
7. What is Paul urging Christians in Rome to do in light of “God’s mercy”?
8. Finally, in your own words, rewrite what Paul is saying in verse 1.

### Family Discussion:

It is easy to equate singing with worship, especially on a Sunday morning. Is worship more than singing? Explain your answer.



# Monday, January 1 | Worship

Prayer Guide, by Scott Torres

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on verse 1?

*His mercies. In particular, His compassion that He continues to show sinners like me. I can also praise Him that he gives me His Word to help teach me WHAT TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP is all about.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*I admit that I continually forget the mercies that God has shown me. The result is not living a sacrificial life to Him.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*I can pray for my brothers and sister to live lives of TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP...that is, sacrificial lives to God.*

## CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will understand that worship is about how we respond to God.

## Pray for our church family:

Every day, we picture some of our church family so you can pray for them. Pray for the individuals/families listed each day, using each day's Scripture as a guide and/or praying for them as God leads you.

Jan Adair



Richard & Norma  
Alamia  
& grandchildren



Zeela & Rodney  
Andrade  
Keenan



Matt & Kristen  
Badeley  
Grady, James, Connor & Rosie



Today we will continue learning **WHAT TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP** entails. We ended yesterday talking about “offering our bodies as living sacrifices.” This was Paul’s appeal (or urge) to the brothers and sisters in Rome. It is also his appeal to us. Today we will expound on this.

1. Rewrite Romans 12:1 below.
2. According to verse 1, what does Paul tell these brothers to offer? What does this entail?
3. According to verse 1, how does Paul tell them to offer their bodies?
4. In order to better comprehend how Paul is asking them to offer their bodies, it helps to understand some Old Testament (OT) history or background. Using a phone, tablet, or laptop, search the Web for animal sacrifices in the OT, and explain why God required them.
5. When it comes to offering their bodies as a living sacrifice, what does Paul mean?
6. How might the phrase “living sacrifice” sound like an oxymoron? How might understanding this phrase help someone to know what Paul is saying?
7. According to verse 1, what does Paul call it when someone offers his body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God?

### Family Discussion:

What is TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP according to Romans 12:1-2?

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on verse 1?

*I praise God because He shows me what true worship is. It doesn't involve sacrificing animals, but it does involve me offering my whole self to Him twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*I admit that I struggle offering my entire self to God. I often hold back and can revert to my old ways of selfish living.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*I can pray for them to live lives of true worship that entail all of these truths all the time.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will empower the volunteers who serve to help us worship corporately.

### Pray for our church family:

Bonnie Banse  
Emily & Garrett



Jerry & Tish Barber



Justin & Natalie  
Barber  
Avla & Judah



Thelma Barber



So far, we have learned **WHAT TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP** is. It is the mercy of God motivating us to live sacrificial lives for Him. Today we will move on to verse 2, which tells us **HOW** we can further offer ourselves in **TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP** to God. In summary, verse 2 tells us to avoid and align. We should avoid the pattern of thinking and behaving found in the world, and at the same time, we should align ourselves with the values of the world to come. When we change the way we think, we will then change the way we live. (Moo, D. (2002). *Encountering The Book of Romans*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. pp. 177-178.)

1. Write out Romans 12:2 below.
2. What does the first part of verse 2 tell Roman believers “not” to do? What do you think this means?
3. Instead of “not conforming any longer to the pattern of this world,” what does Paul say the Roman believers are to do? What do you think this means? How might this look?
4. What is the result of these believers “being transformed by the renewing of their minds”?

### Family Discussion:

Can we worship God with our actions but have a bad attitude in our hearts? Explain your answer.



## Wednesday, January 3 | Worship

Prayer Guide, by Scott Torres

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on verse 2?

*I praise God because He tells me how to offer myself in worship. It is by avoiding living and thinking like the world and by constantly renewing my mind in order to align my thoughts with God's. In the end, this will lead to biblical living.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*I can ask Him to give me a godly hatred for the world and its way of thinking, along with a stronger desire to know His Word. This will lead to testing and approving what God's will is.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*I can pray for them to not be conformed any longer to the world's way of thinking, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will lead us as we search for staff in the music/worship area.

### Pray for our church family:

Debra Barron  
Jacob



Phil & Diane Bechtold



Jim & Jeanni Bennett  
Hannah



Solome Berhe





For the next three days, we will look at Psalm 96. Since the Psalms are poetry, take a moment to read the chapter out loud. As you read, be mindful of repetition often used in Hebrew poetry.

1. This Psalm can be broken down into three sections. What repeated phrases or words seem to start each section, and what are the sections based on them?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Look at verses 1 and 2, and answer the following questions:

- What is to be sung? \_\_\_\_\_
- How are we to sing? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who/what is to sing? \_\_\_\_\_
- When are we to sing? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Take a moment to read Lamentations 3:22-23. What about God's compassion should motivate us to sing a new song and proclaim His salvation day to day?

4. Look at Ephesians 5:19. Where does singing and making music to the Lord originate?

5. Applying what you see in Ephesians 5:19, what does Psalm 96 tell us about the relationship between worship and evangelism in verses 1-3?

### Application:

Worship God by declaring His glory and marvelous deeds to someone else at least once today.

### Family Discussion:

Have each family member share one of their favorite worship songs and explain why.

## Thursday, January 4 | Worship

Prayer Guide, by Michael Grande

As you conclude your time of study and enter a time of prayer, take a minute to write out the attributes of God listed in verses 4-6 that compel us to sing to Him.

- *The LORD is great*
- *The LORD is most worthy of praise*
- *He is to be feared above all gods*
- *The LORD made the heavens*
- *Splendor and majesty are before Him*
- *Strength and glory are in His sanctuary*

Pray verses 4-6 out loud to the Lord, but replace “he” and “him” with “you.”

*For great are you Lord and most worthy of praise; you are to be feared above all gods.*

*For all the gods of the nations are idols, but you Lord made the heavens.*

*Splendor and majesty are before you; strength and glory are in your sanctuary.*

Confess your need for God’s salvation today, and day after day. Thank God for His compassions that are new every morning, and ask Him to stir a “new song” in your heart today.

As you conclude, write down the names of several unsaved friends and family members, and ask God to give you opportunities to declare His glory and marvelous deeds to them today.

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that worship will be a 24/7 way of life for every Harvester, not something that happens only on Sundays.

### Pray for our church family:

Florence Bewayo



Don Billington



Jim & Dee Blyth



Christopher Bousman  
Papua New Guinea



## Psalm 96

As you turn your attention to the second section of this chapter—verses 7 through 10—it is important to remember that each section should not be isolated, but read in the context of the entire chapter. Therefore, be mindful of what is in verses 1-6 as you look at this second section.

1. Who and what are to be ascribed to the LORD, according to verses 7-8?
2. According to verse 8, what is the response to ascribing glory and strength to the LORD?
3. What is the offering we bring, and what are His courts in verse 8? (Hint: recall your study in Romans 12:1-2 from earlier this week.)
4. What is the attribute about the LORD mentioned in verse 9 that is the focus of our worship, why is it important, and what should our response be to that attribute?
5. If the first section addressed our hearts through singing, and the second section addresses our minds through ascribing, what is Psalm 96 telling us about worship?

## Application:

Verse 10 says to tell the nations, “The LORD reigns.” That’s much harder to do when He doesn’t reign in our own hearts and minds, and we often refrain from worshiping because of it. Take some time to examine where He needs to reign in your own life.

## Family Discussion:

Read Psalm 96 together. Afterwards, share an attribute of God that stood out to you and share why.

## Friday, January 5 | Worship

Prayer Guide, by Michael Grande

Begin your time of prayer by asking God to not only transform you to sing a new song, but also to transform your mind (Rom. 12:2) so that you ascribe to Him glory and strength.

Praise God for the splendor of His holiness.

Ask God to start preparing your heart and mind for corporate worship on Sunday.

Conclude your time by asking God to give you an opportunity to tell someone today, "The LORD reigns."

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that we will all worship God well by giving to God financially with joy, faith, and sacrifice, not out of obligation.

### Pray for our church family:

Martin & Lisa Bramell  
Elizabeth & Sarah



Steve & Juanna  
Carpman



Andre & Yuba Bulyhin  
Ukraine



Abraham & Michelle  
Chen



### Psalm 96

If you've attended an Exploring Church Membership class, you'll recall that Harvest Community Church views worship as "adoring Almighty God in our lives and in worship gatherings." This is what the first two sections of Psalm 96 addressed. Now we turn to the third section of the chapter and finish our study as we see the worship of God on a universal scale.

1. The final section starts with several "let the..." statements. What are they?
  - Let the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Let the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Let the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Let the \_\_\_\_\_
2. Looking back at verses 5 and 10, how does this section's appeal to nature's worship of God relate to our own worship?
3. As we have seen throughout this Psalm, our song is based on God's salvation (v. 2) and our worship is focused on His holiness (v. 9). But verse 10, and now verse 13 in the final section, direct our attention to a third consideration that is repeated: His judgment. What/who is it that God will come to judge? Why is the image of God as judge important for our worship?
4. For further understanding, and in preparation for the sermon tomorrow, take a minute to read 1 Chronicles 16.

### Application:

As you go about your day, pay special attention to creation and consider the call for all of nature to participate in worship.

### Family Discussion:

Have everybody think about one aspect of nature they admire. Next, have them share how it may glorify God and motivate us to worship Him.



## Saturday, January 6 | Worship

Prayer Guide, by Michael Grande

Read through Psalm 96 again. When you finish, go back through and praise God for things that stand out to you in the chapter.

Take some time to pray for corporate worship tomorrow. Ask God to prepare your heart and mind, and ask that He would also prepare the hearts and minds of other Harvesters.

Pray for Pastor Jerry and the teaching of the Bible, that all Harvesters would learn more about God, and that we would apply what is taught.

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will manifest His presence with us tomorrow as we gather for corporate worship.

Pray for the team leaving on a short-term mission trip to Chad today.

### Pray for our church family:

**Micah & Ruth Anna**

**Chin**

Hickory Cove Bible Camp



**Maribell Chittenden**



**Graham & Katie Clark**

Hannah, Elise, Titus &  
Lillian



**Jared & Becky**

Andru, Justus & Jael  
Coleman

### Psalm 96

<sup>1</sup>*Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.*

<sup>2</sup>*Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.*

<sup>3</sup>*Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.*

<sup>4</sup>*For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.*

<sup>5</sup>*For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.*

<sup>6</sup>*Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.*

<sup>7</sup>*Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.*

<sup>8</sup>*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.*

<sup>9</sup>*Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.*

<sup>10</sup>*Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."*

*The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.*

<sup>11</sup>*Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it.*

<sup>12</sup>*Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.*

<sup>13</sup>*Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.*

*He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.*

Today's sermon is based on Psalm 96, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage—read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?

## Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use Psalm 96 to help guide you.

## First Day Morning: Worship (pages 378-79)

*O LORD,*

*We commune with thee every day, but week days are worldly days, and secular concerns reduce heavenly impressions. We bless thee therefore for the day sacred to our souls when we can wait upon thee and be refreshed; We thank thee for the institutions of religion by use of which we draw near to thee and thou to us; We rejoice in another Lord's Day when we call off our minds from the cares of the world and attend upon thee without distraction; Let our retirement be devout, our conversations edifying, our reading pious, our hearing profitable, that our souls may be quickened and elevated.*

*We are going to the house of prayer, pour upon us the spirit of grace and supplication;  
We are going to the house of praise, awaken in us every grateful and cheerful emotion;  
We are going to the house of instruction, give testimony to the Word preached, and glorify it to the hearts of all who hear; may it enlighten the ignorant, awaken the careless, reclaim the wandering, establish the weak, comfort the feeble-minded, make ready a people for their Lord.*

*Be a sanctuary to all who cannot come, forget not those who never come, and do thou bestow upon us benevolence toward our dependents, forgiveness towards our enemies, peaceableness towards our neighbors, openness towards our fellow-Christians.*

## Ministry Highlight: Harvest Men

We strive to be like the mighty men of valor found in the Bible, battle-ready and equipped with the full armor of God. We are men of prayer, praising our Creator and seeking the wisdom and righteousness that can only come from the Father through Jesus Christ. We are fathers, brothers, sons, husbands, and friends. We are real men, with real problems, who believe in a real God. Opportunities:

- **Wednesday evening 7 p.m. – Men's Bible Study Group & Prayer**  
Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the Café. We are currently working through the book of Romans. We conclude our time together by praying for each other, the church family, and our community. Ed Fritz: edfritz@gmail.com or (803) 984-8411
- **Saturday morning 8 a.m. – Men's Discussion Group**  
Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month in the Prayer and Conference Room. The study is based on the book/video series "Not a Fan" by Kyle Idelman. Robert Spillane: robertspillane@icloud.com or (704) 953-2364
- **Harvest Men's Retreat – March 16-17**



# **Week 2**

## **January 8-14**

---

**Disciple-  
making**



### Disciple-making

The purpose of this church in terms of its ministry to people is to “make disciples of all nations,” which means evangelizing unbelievers, then establishing and equipping Christians to obey all that Christ commanded. The most important aspect of this is for every Harvester to be engaged in disciple-making, which includes both evangelism and discipleship. As for evangelism, we encourage a multifaceted approach, using friendship or “lifestyle” evangelism; holding special outreach services and events such as dinners or seminars; and targeting certain groups for special ministries (e.g., people learning English as a second language). We also encourage the development of ministries that take place **outside the church facilities**.

Once people accept Christ as Savior, the process has only begun, for we must then “disciple” them. This establishing of believers includes teaching them the basics of Christianity, training them in the Christian life, and teaching them not only the content and principles of the Bible, but also such things as how they can feed themselves and grow in Christ. We seek to equip them to reproduce themselves by ministering to both unbelievers and believers. This involves training them for a ministry of evangelism/discipleship, showing them how they can discover and use their God-given spiritual gifts, and deploying them in significant disciple-making ministries.

The Charlotte region has hundreds of thousands to reach, but we must not stop there—we must participate in church planting, evangelism, and discipleship in other needy parts of the state, the country, and the world. Because our field is the massive population of the world, we must never be content with how many people we currently minister to and must always strive to reach more. Because God is much more interested in our producing fully devoted followers of Christ than in gathering crowds, **we must never measure our fruitfulness by the numbers of people that attend, but by how much Christ-likeness is being produced.**

### Matthew 28:16-17

*<sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.*

This week we will be studying DISCIPLE-MAKING. DISCIPLE-MAKING is the MISSION of the church and a foundational pillar of Harvest.

1. To begin, read Matthew 28 to help grasp the context of the verses we will study. Afterwards, list four to six general observations below regarding what is taking place.
2. According to verse 16, why did the eleven disciples go to Galilee?
3. According to verse 17, what were the two responses of the disciples? Why do you think they responded this way? Have you ever both worshipped and doubted God?
4. In your own words, write out verse 18 below and explain what you think it means.
5. According to verse 18, who gave Jesus His authority and what does this imply?
6. Why is verse 18 significant, especially when it comes to disciple-making?

### Family Discussion:

This week we are talking about disciple-making. Verse 16 uses the word “disciples.” Ask each family member to answer the following:

- What is a disciple?
- What is disciple-making?
- How have you seen this in our church family?

## Monday, January 8 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Joe Dowe & Scott Torres

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?

*Praise God that he never leaves us, even when we doubt. Praise God for His power.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Pray for those we are discipling to worship and not doubt God.*

*Pray for all believers to understand and use God's power.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will fill our church body with the Holy Spirit, resulting in bold witnessing for Christ and power to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Pray for the physical and spiritual protection of our Chad team.

### Pray for our church family:

Liz Covington



Marcia Cox



Tim & Linda Daniel



Brian & Janice Dare  
Elie



### Matthew 28:18-19

<sup>18</sup>Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

Yesterday, we looked at verses 16-18. We saw that Jesus asked His disciples to meet him in Galilee. Afterwards, he said to them in verse 18 that “all authority in heaven and earth have been given to me.” Today, we will continue studying the passage by looking at verse 19 and seeing what we can do because of the authority given to Jesus.

1. Write out verse 19 below.
2. What appears to be the main point of emphasis of this verse?
3. Define or describe the word “disciple.”
4. If “make disciples” is the main point of emphasis, HOW does verse 19 tell us to go about doing this? Explain your answer.
5. When Jesus mentions baptizing, whose name does He say the disciples are to use? Why might this be important?
6. What “people group” does Jesus tell His disciples to “make disciples” of? Explain your answer.
7. In your own words, rewrite below what Jesus is telling His disciples and us to do.

### Family Discussion:

Read Matthew 28:16-20 together. Jesus says in verse 18, “I have been given authority in heaven and earth.” What do you think this means? What does this have to do with disciple-making?

## Tuesday, January 9 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Joe Dowe & Scott Torres

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?  
*Acknowledge God as the ultimate authority over all people and things.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?  
*Pray for those who don't have the confidence to "go." Pray for boldness.*  
*Pray for God to lay the names of individuals who need to hear the Gospel on our hearts.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit about befriending, serving, and sharing the Gospel with the lost.

Pray for God to use our Chad team today.

### Pray for our church family:

Chad & Rebecca

DeCasas

Ella, Molly, Sadie & Cody



Joe & Karla Dowe  
Noah & Tyler

Jo Ann Detloff



Nicki Fabry





### Matthew 28:20

<sup>20</sup> *“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

For our final day of studying Matthew 28:16-20, we will look at verse 20. As a reminder, verse 19 emphasized “making disciples.” We do this by “going and baptizing.” Today, we continue to see how we are to make disciples along with a promise for the ages!

1. Write out verse 20 below.
2. What are the first few words of verse 20? Why is “teaching” important to disciple-making?
3. What were the disciples supposed to teach future disciples according to Jesus in verse 20?
4. What was Jesus’s promise to the disciples in the latter half of verse 20? Why is this significant in disciple-making?
5. How long did Jesus say he would be with us? What does this mean?

### Family Discussion:

Read Matthew 28:18-20 out loud again. Have each person name one or two people they would like to help disciple. Remind them that disciple-making involves going, baptizing, and teaching others to obey Jesus’s commands. Encourage them to think of people around us who do not yet profess faith in Christ. When Jesus gave the command, the world was not evangelized, so He was wanting His disciples to go to non-Christians, starting in Jerusalem and ending with people from every nation, tribe, and people group.

## Wednesday, January 10 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Joe Dowe & Scott Torres

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?  
*We praise God for His Word. We praise God for never leaving our side and for helping us as we seek to make disciples.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?  
*Pray that we will become a church who obeys Jesus more and more.*  
*Pray for those in the process of discipleship to feel God's presence at all times.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for receptivity on the part of the *many* lost people Harvesters already know and are concerned about spiritually.

Pray for wisdom for the leader of our Chad team, Tom Muma.

### Pray for our church family:

Zelalem Feleke &  
Emnet Demissie  
Christian & Betselot



Ondrej & Milina  
Franka  
Serbia



Peter & Miriam  
Fretheim  
Nigeria



Ed & Jennifer Fritz  
Phoebe

Paul was one of the most influential leaders in church history. He wrote most of the New Testament along with taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul's driving force in life was to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. He lived a focused life determined to advance the mission of God. During the next few days, we will continue our study of disciple-making by examining Colossians 1:28-29.

1. Write verse 28 below.
2. Who is the focus of proclamation in verse 28?
3. How do Paul and Timothy (1:1) proclaim Christ in verse 28? Why is this significant? How might this be considered disciple-making?
4. According to verse 28, why did Paul admonish and teach everyone with all wisdom? Why is this admirable and something we strive to imitate?

## Thursday, January 11 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Cory Granata

**Praise and Thanks**—How can I praise God and thank Him for Paul's steadfast obedience?

**Confession and Help**—How can I ask God to help me mature in my faith?

**Intercession**—How can WE [the church body] use this truth to pray for each other?

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will help everyone overcome any fears or excuses about making disciples, and start or continue to be used by God in this area.

Pray for the unity of our Chad team.

### Pray for our church family:

Dave & Carol Garrott



Ruth Garrott



Ann Gatewood  
Sarah Willis



Walt & Janet Gillespie

### Colossians 1:28-29

<sup>28</sup> *He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.* <sup>29</sup> *To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*

Yesterday we learned that Paul proclaimed Christ by warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom. We observed that he was motivated to present everyone fully mature in Christ. He was not satisfied with seeing people only profess faith in Christ. He desperately wanted to see them mature. Today we continue our study of disciple-making by focusing on verse 29.

1. Write out verse 29 below.
2. In order to see everyone fully mature in Christ, what does Paul do?
3. How does Paul describe his contending or laboring?
4. What attributes of Christ do you see in verse 29?
5. What effect does Christ's energy have on Paul?
6. What is Paul's primary message to the Colossians in these two verses (which is God's message to us)?

### Family Discussion:

1. Paul says in Colossians 1:28 that he "admonishes and teaches everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ." Why do you think teaching is important in disciple-making?
2. What are some things that disciples of Jesus would need to know in order to be mature or grown up?

## Friday, January 12 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Cory Granata

**Praise and Thanks** – How can I praise God for life's greatest treasure, Jesus Christ?

**Confession and Help** – How can I ask God to help me mature in my faith?

**Intercession** – How can WE [the church body] share Jesus Christ with others?

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that Harvesters will team up and work together in our call to evangelize and make disciples.

Pray for good health for the members of our Chad team.

**Pray for our church family:**

Glendyne Glassman



Oliver & Valerie  
Glover

Madi, Shunnar & Jinan



Leslie Godshall  
Mattie



Pete & Becky Goins





### Colossians 1:28-29

<sup>28</sup> He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

We have examined these two verses, observing what Paul is saying to the Colossians and interpreting the verses for our own understanding. Now we will attempt to apply them to our lives with the hope of maturing in our walk with Christ.

1. Write out both verses below.
2. After studying these verse, how can they help you personally as a disciple?
3. How can these verses help you in discipling others?
4. List the names of some people you are discipling below. Take a moment and ask God to give you insight into areas of their lives where they need to grow. Next, ask Him to help you help them spiritually.

## Saturday, January 13 | Disciple-making

Prayer Guide, by Cory Granata

**Praise and Thanks**—How can I praise God for life's greatest treasure, Jesus Christ?

**Confession and Help**—How can I ask God to help me mature in my faith?

*I personally confess, that at times, glorifying God by disciple-making is not my focus. Shyness, or the reaction I may receive, can play a role in this thought. I'm not sure if disciple-making comes easy to anyone, but not trying at all is complete failure. Trying but having your words rejected is still glory to God.*

**Intercession**—Pray for us [the church body] to mature in our faith in Christ by fulfilling the Great Commission and making all believers in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

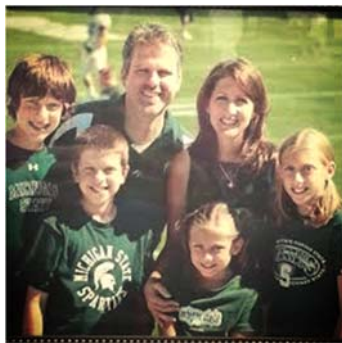
### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that discipleship will reproduce over and over and over—that those who are disciplined will in turn disciple others, who in turn will disciple others, etc.

Pray that God will anoint the Chad team with his Spirit.

### Pray for our church family:

**Phil & Julie Gillespie**  
Michigan State  
University



**Noel & Reina Gomez**  
Honduras



**Lorraine Gould**



**Cory & Amy Granata**  
Bryce, Addy & Ty

### Colossians 1:28-29

*<sup>28</sup> He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*

Today's sermon is based on Colossians 1:28-29, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage—read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?

## Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use Colossians 1:28-29 to help guide you.

## God's Cause (pages 320-21)

*SOVEREIGN GOD,*

*Thy cause, not my own, engages my heart, and I appeal to thee with greatest freedom to set up thy kingdom in every place where Satan reigns; Glorify thyself and I shall rejoice, for to bring honour to thy name is my sole desire. I adore thee that thou art God, and long that others should know it, feel it, and rejoice in it. O that all men might love and praise thee, that thou mightest have all glory from the intelligent world!*

*Let sinners be brought to thee for thy dear name! To the eye of reason everything respecting the conversion of others is as dark as midnight, But thou canst accomplish great things; the cause is thine, and it is to thy glory that men should be saved. Lord, use me as thou wilt, do with me what thou wilt; but, O promote thy cause, let thy kingdom come, let thy blessed interest be advanced in this world!*

*O do thou bring in great numbers to Jesus! Let me see that glorious day, and give me to grasp for multitudes of souls; let me be willing to die to that end; and while I live let me labour for thee to the utmost of my strength, spending time profitably in this work, both in health and in weakness.*

*It is thy cause and kingdom I long for, not my own. O, answer thou my request!*

## Ministry Highlight: Harvest Ladies

Please pray with us:

- That mentoring/discipleship pairs would happen organically in 2018, fostering spiritual growth and deeper connections
- That ladies willing and able to teach the Bible will be raised up to lead or help lead small group studies
- That God would bring additional help to the Harvest Ladies Leadership team

Opportunities:

- **Sunday 6:00 p.m. – Moms in Prayer**  
This prayer group meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month from 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. in Room 103 during the school year. This is open to all women to pray for their children, grandchildren, etc. Carolyn Harrell: tallyharrell@yahoo.com or (704) 490-7907 or Brenda Murphy: bmurphy@finnordna.com or (980) 621-1121
- **Monday 6:30 p.m. – Sharing Hearts**  
Women gather once a month to study, share and learn from women of the Bible. Meets off-campus from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. Maribell Chittenden: mwc@carolina.rr.com or (704) 604-8715
- **Tuesday 11:00 a.m. – Healing Hearts**  
A support group for women who have experienced loss. Meets off-campus at 11:00 a.m. the last Tuesday of each month. The group often goes to lunch together after they meet. Judy Sellers: wgsjds@hotmail.com or (704) 264-5772

### Personal Reflection on Discipleship in my Life, by Katie Clark

Let's divide this self-reflection into three categories:

- 1) How am I doing as a disciple? Is there a “Paul” in my life helping me grow? Someone who is training and challenging me in the faith right now?
- 2) How am I loving and spurring others on towards love and good deeds? How many people represent a “Barnabas,” or close friend in the Lord, who God has provided me for deep, meaningful fellowship?
- 3) How am I passing it on? Is there at least one “Timothy” in my life who I am diligently teaching, training, and caring for as he/she grows in the faith?

## Disciple-making Worksheet cont.

Personal Reflection on Discipleship in my Life, by Katie Clark

<b>Questions to Ponder</b>	<b>What is going well? Current status.</b>	<b>Where do I need to pursue growth and challenge myself?</b>
<b><i>My growth as a disciple</i></b> In what area(s) is the Spirit working on you? Are you consistently reading and studying His Word? How strong is your prayer life? Are you stewarding well what He has given you (resources, finances, time, and gifts)? Are you sharing a testimony of what God has done in your life? Are you striving to obey all that He has commanded? Who is helping you grow and giving you counsel?		
<b><i>Growing with others</i></b> Are you engaged in regular fellowship that encourages depth and accountability, and strengthens your faith and that of others? Are you helping each other be challenged to love God more? Who are these relationships with?		
<b><i>My discipling efforts for others</i></b> Who are you investing in and in what ways? Could there be more depth and intentionality in these relationships? If you aren't discipling, who around you could you be more intentional with? What obstacles are keeping you from investing in the discipleship of others? Are these reasons legitimate?		



## **Disciple-making Worksheet cont.**

**Personal Reflection on Discipleship in my Life, by Katie Clark**

As you reflected, what area(s) must you focus on more intentionally?

What obstacles are you facing that are keeping you from living out these types of relationships?

Who can you ask for help to overcome these obstacles?

**Commit to praying daily over these challenges through the end of the forty days AND to reaching out to at least one person to help you as you work to grow in these areas.**

**Week 3**  
**January 15-21**

---

**Biblical**  
**Community**

### Biblical Community

Biblical community is more than just friendship or connection, although it includes those. When Christians live in relationship with each other and live out the “one another” commands of the New Testament (e.g. love one another, encourage one another), biblical community occurs. Our vision is for ever-expanding numbers of **small groups** of Christians that meet together on a regular basis for the purposes of caring, spiritual growth, and outreach. We seek to unleash the members of the body so they can give and receive spiritual care in the most effective way. The primary role of a pastor/teacher is to equip believers so they can do ministry themselves, as Ephesians 4:12-16 clearly teaches. The pastoral staff are not the only ministers, for they equip the true ministers, the body. Every pastor will have a heart for shepherding the flock God brings together, but we are also firmly committed to the principle that the most effective pastoral care is decentralized care: **one person or the staff alone cannot be responsible for all the caring**; rather, the pastoral staff and congregation must work together to provide the best, most scriptural ministry (cf. Eph. 4:16). For a current listing of our small groups, see the Welcome Desk or our website.

### Romans 12:3-8

<sup>3</sup>For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup>For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup>We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup>if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup>if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

### Observation

1. This week we are studying community. This passage has implications for how you fit into a particular body or community. What body is this referring to?
2. What does the text say about how we should view ourselves?

### Interpretation

3. Give a brief definition of each gift listed in this text.

### Application

4. Take some time to “think of yourself with sober judgement.” How do you view yourself and how you relate to the body of Christ?
5. Do you know what spiritual gift(s) you have been given? List them here.
6. In an area in which you are gifted, how are you using it in Christ’s body? How can you improve in this area?

### Family Discussion

A family is one type of body. Talk about the different responsibilities needed to make a family function. Parents have different responsibilities, and kids, as they get older, take on responsibilities in the house as well. Now discuss some of the functions in a Christian body (use the text to help), and take turns sharing ways you can use them to glorify God.

## Monday, January 15 | Biblical Community

Prayer Guide, by Ryan Kruse

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*Lord, I am a sinful person. I am imperfect. I praise you for using a person like me for your glory. It shows your love, how you can use different people in different ways to fulfill your will. Thank you for equipping me with the gift of \_\_\_\_\_. Use it for your purpose.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Please forgive me, Father, for my pride. I fall into the trap of thinking I am serving in more significant ways than others in the body. Please help me to recognize each person's value in his/her ministry. Please help me understand my gifting and calling. Help me hone the skills needed to use my gifts to be a worthy reflection of Jesus. Keep me from squandering my gifts, Lord.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Lord, use Harvest as one body with many parts. Please unify us and help us work together with a common mission. Please call people to fulfill areas our body is lacking. Help me to show others in our body what it looks like to use their gifts for your glory. Please, Lord, use our body as you reveal yourself to the lost and save sinners.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that everyone will take the initiative in getting to know and ministering to others rather than waiting around to see who will minister to them.

Pray for the safe return and recovery for the Chad team members.

### Pray for our church family:

Michael & Paula  
Grande

Megan, Levi & Jenna



Veronica Grant



Jenny Green



Roy & Susan Green



### Romans 12:9-13

*<sup>9</sup>Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup>Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup>Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

### Observation

1. To what community of people does this selection of Scripture relate? What in these verses suggests that?
2. In yesterday's study, you learned about people with different gifts serving different functions in Christ's body. Do these verses communicate a continuation of those functions, or expectations for all Christians?

### Interpretation

3. What is the common theme of this passage based on the commands given?

### Application

4. Perform an honest self-evaluation of yourself. As you function in the body of Christ, how well are you living out the commands in these verses?
5. Read Romans 6:13 and Romans 12:1. How do these verses shape your attitude toward obedience and commands given by the Holy Spirit?

### Family Discussion

Read today's and tomorrow's passages together. Discuss how or why the commands Paul lists might be important to building Christian community.



## Tuesday, January 16 | Biblical Community

Prayer Guide, by Ryan Kruse

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*Lord, you are a perfect God worthy of unending worship. I praise you for giving me a standard to live by. Thank you for showing me how to serve others through the life Christ lived here on earth. I thank you for the example of godly men and women who follow your commands and show me how to follow you joyfully.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Forgive me for my evil ways. Please rid me of evil and give me a desire only for good. These verses teach me to live sacrificially. Help me turn from my insincere heart and honor others joyfully without ill motives.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Lord, it's hard for us to love others more than we love ourselves. Help Christians become more hospitable and willing to sacrifice for others when they are in need. Rid the Christian body of insincerity, which is self-serving. Help us to love others as worship to you.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that the Holy Spirit will fill every Harvester so that everything we say about others will be useful for building them up rather than tearing down or dividing.

### Pray for our church family:

Jordan & Margaret  
Hall  
John, Peter & Thomas



Bob & Cheryl Hancock



David Hancock  
Peru



Nathan & Becky  
Hardenbrook  
Lydia, Luke, Samuel & Ezra



### Romans 12:14-21

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### Observation

1. Again we see a list of commands as we live in community. What community do these verses refer to? Where do you see that in this text?
2. Identify the types of people mentioned in these verses.

### Interpretation

3. Verse 20 is a reference to Proverbs 25:21-22. Using a study resource of your choice, explain the possible meaning of "heap burning coals on his head."

### Application

4. A key theme here is how we act toward those we don't necessarily like or those who don't like us. Think of people in your own life like this and your interactions with them. What commands in these verses are hardest for you?
5. Read Colossians 1:21-22 and Romans 5:10. What word is used to describe us in our sinfulness? How does Christ's work in your own life inspire you to live out these commands?

## Wednesday, January 17 | Biblical Community

Prayer Guide, by Ryan Kruse

**Praise and Thanks**—What can you praise God for based on these verses? What can you thank Him for? Write out some things below.

*God, I was once your enemy and you chose to love me. Thank you for sending your Son to live a perfect life and die on a cross for me. You are a just God, and your wrath was satisfied in Christ's sacrifice so that I could be spared.*

**Confession and Help**—Based on this passage, what do you need to confess as sin to God? In what area do you want to ask Him for His help in obeying?

*Lord, forgive me for my disregard for people I don't like. Help me to empathize with those who are suffering. Lord, help me value the lives of my enemies and see them the way you saw me when I was your enemy. You saw me as someone worth redeeming, and I ask for help in seeing your image in those I don't like.*

**Intercession**—Based on the passage, how can you pray for others? What truths does God bring to mind that you want to see come to pass in someone's life?

*Lord, please help members of my family live at peace with each other. Please restore unity and humility in my family. I pray also for Harvest. Help us to live at peace with the lost community around us. We need to engage the community and show them your love, not run from them because of their wandering ways.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will commit to a group of other believers with whom they can experience close biblical community—more than acquaintances or even friends, but brothers and sisters doing the “one anothers” of the New Testament together.

### Pray for our church family:

Tim & Carolyn Harrell  
Mike, JJ & Amy



Don & Sai Hill  
Thailand



Joshua & Lauren  
Holey  
Aaron & Andrew



Seth & Jamie Howard  
Ann, Charlie, Elliot & Nelson



### Hebrews 10:19-25

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings ....

Read Hebrews 10:19-25. Then reread Hebrews 10: 19-22

Study Note: "Hebrews 10:19-25 forms the closing of an inclusion that the author started at 4:14-16. In this case the author makes the great central section on the Son's appointment to (5:1-10; 7:1-28) and ministry as a superior high priest (8:3-10:18) by including no fewer than eight parallel elements in 4:14-16 and 10:19-25. Packed in these five verses we find the main points of the author's message. We have a superior basis for drawing near to God and holding fast to our confession, namely, our new covenant relationship with Jesus, the Son of God, who functions as our great high priest." (Arnold, Clinton E., editor, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*. Zondervan. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002.)

1. What do you observe about this passage?

(Notice the "therefore" that begins the section. It is purposefully connecting these verses to the truths that the author wrote about before it. Take some time to read the early verses of Hebrews 10 for more understanding of the context.)

2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
3. Compare a new and living way with its alternative. Fill in the blanks:  
A new and living way is better than an \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ way.  
Notice what the new and living way opens up for us. We get to draw near to God! The author is giving truth about how the old way (sacrifices and religious rituals, etc.) doesn't draw us near to God, but through Jesus we can experience and draw near to God in a confident way.
4. What does the author say we should draw near to God with?
5. Now notice how this invitation is open to "we" and "us." Here's an important question. How do you practice this drawing near to God with others?
6. What steps can you take to improve the regularity of practicing this?
7. What would sincere hearts drawing near to God look like in a group setting? How could living this out as a family change the environment in your household?
8. How would these practices help Christians grow in their faith? Go ahead. Make plans to put it into practice.



**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*List people and experiences that apply to the community-based spiritual life the author is talking about. Praise God for how He has brought these things into your life.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others? How can we pray for true community to be growing in importance at Harvest? Maybe you can pray with someone about this as you begin to practice it.

## CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that Harvesters will experience true biblical fellowship with each other, including doing life and serving God together.

## Pray for our church family:

Grace Hutchinson-  
LaFleur



Bryan & Evelyn  
Huyhua  
Peru



Anne Jamison



Charidi Jamison



### Hebrews 10:19-25

*... Since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.*

Read Hebrews 10:19-25. Then reread Hebrews 10:21b-23 (listed above)

1. What do you observe about this passage?
2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
3. What are possible interpretations of the phrase “having our bodies washed with pure water”?
4. How does baptism show community and fellowship? If you are a follower of Jesus, have you been baptized publicly?
5. Notice again the “us”/“we” language. What are these verses calling us to do together?
6. How can the recognition that we are all sinners loved by God with the hope of Him really changing us affect the environment of your household and family relationships? What would you more likely do to each other in light of this?

Consider Ephesians 4:1-2

7. Make a list of how Harvesters can live these things from Hebrews and Ephesians out together.



**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? Think about how He has made these things true in your life.

*List what you can praise God for, and say/write out a prayer of praise and thanks to Him.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others? How can we pray for true community to be growing in importance at Harvest? Maybe you can pray with someone about this as you begin to practice it.

## CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that our biblical community will be so genuine that unbelievers will be drawn to Christ because of it (“they will know we are Christians by our love”).

## Pray for our church family:

Chris & Debbie  
Johnson  
Eastern Europe



David & Taleayah  
Johnson  
Alivia & Alex



Mike & Jennifer Jolly  
Wesley, Ella & Charlotte



Sheriffe & Hardaye  
Karim

### Hebrews 10:19-25

*<sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Read Hebrews 10:19-25. Then reread Hebrews 10:23-25 (listed above). Read Hebrews 4:14-16.

1. What do you observe about this passage in Hebrews 10?
2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
3. Notice again the “us”/“we” language. What are these verses calling us to do together?
4. Make a list of how Harvesters can live these things out together.
5. Review your list above. Is it specific? If not, how can you make your list specific? You may want to add specific actions, or even names of people to your list. Then pray about how to begin or improve your practice of community with Harvesters.

## Hebrews 10:19-25

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? List what you can praise God for, and say/write out a prayer of praise and thanks to Him.

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others? How can we pray for true community to be growing in importance at Harvest? Maybe you can pray with someone about this as you begin to practice it.

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that we will maintain the unity that the Holy Spirit has already placed in the body of Christ.

## Pray for our church family:

**Todd & Amy Keenan**  
Cohen & Luke



**Jeff & Candie Kisiah**  
Band of Brothers,  
Charlotte



**Bob & Nancy**  
Kluesener



**Ryan & Maggie Kruse**



### Hebrews 10:19-25

*<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Today's sermon is based on Hebrews 10:19-25, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage—read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?

### Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use Hebrews 10:19-25 to help guide you.

### Christian Love (pages 250-51)

*O LOVER OF THE LOVELESS,*

*It is thy will that I should love thee with heart, soul, mind, strength, and my neighbor as myself. But I am not sufficient for these things. There is by nature no pure love in my soul; every affection in me is turned from thee; I am bound, as slave to lust, I cannot love thee, lovely as thou art, until thou dost set me free. By grace I am thy freeman and would serve thee, for I believe thou art my God in Jesus, and through him I am redeemed and my sins are forgiven. With this freedom I would always obey thee, but I cannot walk in liberty, any more than I could first attain it, of myself. May thy Spirit draw me nearer to thee and thy ways.*

*Thou art the end of all means, for if they lead me not to thee, I go away empty. Order all my ways by thy holy Word and make thy commandments the joy of my heart, that by them I may have happy converse with thee. May I grow in thy love and manifest it to mankind.*

*Spirit of love, make me like the loving Jesus; give me his benevolent temper, his beneficent actions, that I may shine before men to thy glory. The more thou doest in love in me and by me, humble me the more; keep me meek, lowly, and always ready to give thee honour.*

### Ministry Highlight: Community Groups

Community Groups are small communities of Harvesters committed to glorifying God by making disciples.

It is more than just a weekly meeting. It's an environment where we share life together. This entails living intentionally in the natural overlap of life. For example, community groups often eat meals together, attend family sporting events, recitals, babysit for one another, etc. They celebrate the good times and help each other through the bad. They basically do life together in ways that normal families do. Community groups are an environment where we are "known." When people know us they are able to help us mature in Christ by speaking the "truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

Finally, not only are we involved in discipling one another, we are also striving to fulfill the Great Commission by going and serving those around us. This is seen by groups serving local missions, non-profits, neighborhoods, etc. It is our hope that we will reach Charlotte and her many communities through these groups. Our plan is to live where God has placed us and serve for the good of our particular communities and the city (Jeremiah 29:1-4). For a current list of our community groups, please visit [harvestcharlotte.com](http://harvestcharlotte.com).

Please pray with us:

- That God would use each member to disciple others in their perspective group
- That God would bless each group with deep and meaningful Christian fellowship
- That a result of living in community would be that each member would be encouraged to further the mission of making disciples with not yet believers
- That God would protect and give wisdom to each group leader
- That God would use each member to protect one another from the lies and schemes of the evil one
- That each group would see someone come to Christ as a result of their prayers and gospel efforts
- That God would raise up new groups to help Harvesters live in community and on mission





# **Week 4**

## **January 22-28**

---

# **Scripture**

# Scripture

We strive to be a church that is **thoroughly grounded in Scripture rather than tradition or expediency**. This means that we will seek biblical guidance for all principles and practice. This also means that people must be taught how to feed themselves from the Word and how to discern sound biblical teaching from unsound teaching. We believe in the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible in its **original autographs**, and in our public teaching and preaching we will use the best modern versions that translate the text accurately and in understandable language (our preference at this point is the New International Version). Though our preaching and teaching will address life issues (e.g., marriage relationships, managing stress), it will be driven by a passion to explain, apply, and obey God's Word.

A church committed to Scripture starts with expository Biblical preaching and continues with groups that study the Bible and individuals who feed on Scripture personally.

### Psalm 1

*<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, <sup>2</sup> but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. <sup>3</sup> That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. <sup>4</sup> Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. <sup>6</sup> For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

1. Two ways are open for mankind to live. What are two ways that people can live with regard to God?
2. Does sin happen all at once? How do people fall into the ways of the wicked?
3. How does the Creator God see the one who is not characterized by evil influence?

### Family Discussion:

- What is the Bible and what does it tell us?
- Why is the Bible important?

## Monday, January 22 | Scripture

Prayer Guide, by Seth Howard

**Prayer suggestions**—*God, help our church (maybe include specific people you are close to) to flee from temptation and sin and into a right relationship with you. Teach all of our minds and hearts to rest in the eternal security and righteousness that Jesus has secured for us.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will feast on the Word of God this week—yes, feast!  
Not read it out of duty but take it in as spiritual food.

### Pray for our church family:

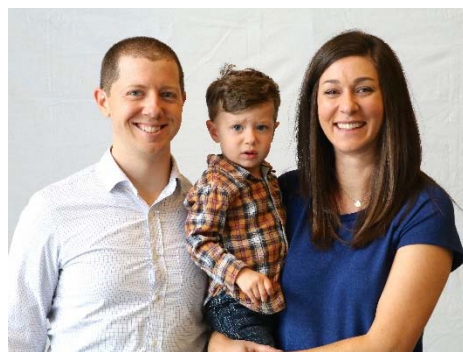
Vicki Lehman



William Lide



Nick & Amanda  
Macek  
Jackson



Rachel Manning  
Allie, TJ & Amelia



### Psalm 1

*<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, <sup>2</sup> but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. <sup>3</sup> That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. <sup>4</sup> Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. <sup>6</sup> For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

1. What influences a godly person?
2. How does taking delight in God's Word affect one's life?
3. When does the fruit and/or prosperity show up?
4. What does it mean to prosper?
5. Does this mean that we won't have troubles?

### Family Discussion:

Read Psalm 1 together and ask the following questions:

- What are the two ways that people can live according to Psalm 1?
- What does verse 2 tell us about the person who lives for God?
- How can we apply this to our lives?

**Prayer suggestions**—*God, teach our church to delight in your Word. Give us a desire to know you more and to know your Word. Take our hearts of stone and give us hearts of flesh so we can drink deeply of the truth of your Word.*

**CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray that every group at Harvest will be guided by the Word of God itself, not just by studies written by humans.

**Pray for our church family:**



Jeanette McKenzie

Jean Meehan



### Psalm 1

*<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, <sup>2</sup> but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. <sup>3</sup> That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. <sup>4</sup> Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. <sup>6</sup> For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

1. What does it mean to be wicked?
2. How does God see the lives of those who are separate from Him?
3. How does God separate the way of the righteous from the way of the wicked?
4. What will be the consequences for the righteous and the wicked?

### Family Discussion:

- Is there someone you know who would enjoy learning more about God through the Bible?
- What can you do to help them?

**Prayer suggestions**—*God, teach our church to be thankful for and content with what you have provided us. Increase in us the desire for the greatest of joys, which is found in you.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will anoint our pastors to preach the Scriptures faithfully and anoint each person who hears the Word to also be a doer of the Word.

### Pray for our church family:

Joe & Maryann  
Mercier



Dava Moore



Gary & Paula Moore



Susie Moore

### 2 Timothy 3:14-17

*<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

1. Background/context: Who is the author and who is the recipient of this letter? “But as for you” indicates that the author is referring back to something mentioned earlier—what might he be referring to?
2. Define the terms used by the author to describe the benefits of “all Scripture” in this text:
  - a. Teaching-
  - b. Rebuking-
  - c. Correcting-
  - d. Training-
3. This passage teaches us that the Scriptures make us wise for salvation and equipped for good works. How is God’s Word accomplishing those things in your life currently?

### Family Discussion:

Paul mentions the importance of the Scriptures in Timothy’s life since infancy. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-15 together. Have each family member answer the following questions:

- Who first introduced you to the Bible?
- When did you get your first Bible?
- What are some things we can do to help elevate the importance of the Bible in our family?

## Thursday, January 25 | Scripture

Prayer Guide, by Nathan Hardenbrook

Take a moment to praise God for how He has used His Word in your life, whether that be a constant diet of Scripture from infancy or a life-changing interaction with God's Word as an adult!

Have you strayed from what you once learned from God's Word, or neglected truth taught in Scripture? Confess that now and return to the truth!

Pray for those in your life who have yet to be made wise for salvation. Also, pray for fellow Harvesters to be thoroughly equipped for every good work!

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will feast on the Word of God this week—yes, feast!  
Not read it out of duty but take it in as spiritual food.

### Pray for our church family:

Joe & Jan Mott



Tom & Shari Muma  
Chad



Delon & Brenda  
Murphy  
Sarah



Anton & Lynette  
Niemand



### 2 Timothy 4:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.*

1. In these verses, what is the main command given by Paul?
2. How does verse 1 give weight to the charge that Paul gives to Timothy in verse 2?
3. In view of the way in which Paul stresses to a young leader how important it is for him to preach the Word, what significance should God's Word have in your life? Is there anything that needs to change in your attitude toward or use of the Word?

### Family Discussion:

In this passage, Paul clearly instructs Timothy, a young pastor, to preach the Word. Is preaching the Word only for pastors or adults? Can you think of any ways or situations where kids can preach the Word?

## Friday, January 26 | Scripture

Prayer Guide, by Nathan Hardenbrook

How can you praise God based on this passage? Maybe God used a faithful servant to preach the Word to your heart. Perhaps God has been growing you in your knowledge of the Word so that you are prepared to correct, rebuke, and encourage. In prayer, give glory to God for the people he has used in your life and the ways in which He is growing you!

If you have been less prepared, patient, or careful than you should be with your handling and preaching of the Word, confess that now.

Pray for a continued commitment to the Word being preached at Harvest. Plead with God that we would have an eternal perspective that reminds us to stick to the truth of the Word and not stray from it (meditate on Psalm 33:4 and Psalm 19:8 as you pray).

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every group at Harvest will be guided by the Word of God itself, not just by studies written by humans.

### Pray for our church family:

**John & Bonnie  
Nystrom**  
Papua New Guinea



**Gina Pagunuran  
Gabriel, Giselle &  
Griffin**



**Joy Paulsen**  
East Asia



**Terry & Brenda  
Peagler**





### 2 Timothy 4:3-5

*<sup>3</sup>For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup>They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.*

1. The first word in today's passage should immediately make you want to look back at yesterday's passage (unless it's still fresh in your mind!). Restate the main command/idea from 2 Timothy 4:1-2.
2. What reasons does Paul give for maintaining a focus on preaching the Word?
3. When or where have you seen people turning their ears from the truth?
4. You may not be a young pastor preparing to take on a significant role in leading the church right now (or maybe you are!), but can you think of some places or circumstances in your life where you need to maintain a focus on preaching the Word?

### Family Discussion:

What ways do you see people (students, teammates, friends, or coworkers) rejecting sound doctrine? How can you pray for them and exhibit truth in those situations?

## Saturday, January 27 | Scripture

Prayer Guide, by Nathan Hardenbrook

These three verses in themselves deliver a pretty discouraging report about what is coming and perhaps is already here today. The good news is that Paul is reminding Timothy that the truth of God's Word stands ready to defeat the myths and falsities that will arise around us. Praise God that His Word is powerful and able to prevail over the fleeting whims of this age!

Do you need to confess any ways in which you have turned your ears away from truth? Take a few minutes to ask God to search your heart and reveal any lies that contradict sound doctrine!

Now intercede for brothers and sisters in Christ based on this passage. Do you know any followers of Christ who are being attacked with false doctrine or myths? Lift them up in prayer now. Do you have any friends, coworkers, or relatives who are not yet part of God's family? Pray that sound doctrine would overwhelm them and lead them to salvation!

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will anoint our pastors to preach the Scriptures faithfully and anoint each person who hears the Word to also be a doer of the Word.

### Pray for our church family:

Dennis & Lois Pickens



Bonita Pickett



Andy & Anna Pierce  
Aiden, Benjamin & Naia



Moses & Shelly Pitter



### 2 Timothy 3:14-4:4

*<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

*<sup>4</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup> They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.*

Today's sermon is based on 2 Timothy 3:14-4:4, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage—read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?

## Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use 2 Timothy 3:14-4:4 to help guide you.

## Christ the Word (pages 30-31)

MY FATHER,

*In a world of created changeable things, Christ and his Word alone remain unshaken. O to forsake all creatures, to rest as a stone on him the foundation, to abide in him, be borne up by him! For all my mercies come through Christ, who has designed, purchased, promised, effected them. How sweet it is to be near him, the Lamb, filled with holy affections! When I sin against thee I cross thy will, love, life, and have no comforter, no creature, to go to. My sin is not so much this or that particular evil, but my continual separation, disunion, distance from thee, and having a loose spirit towards thee.*

*But thou hast given me a present, Jesus thy Son, as Mediator between thyself and my soul, as middle-man who in a pit holds both him below and him above, for only he can span the chasm breached by sin, and satisfy divine justice. May I always lay hold upon this Mediator, as a realized object of faith, and alone worthy by his love to bridge the gulf. Let me know that he is dear to me by his Word; I am one with him by the Word on his part, and by faith on mine; If I opposed the Word I oppose my Lord when he is most near; If I receive the Word I receive my Lord wherein he is nigh. O thou who hast the hearts of all men in thine hand, form my heart according to the Word, according to the image of thy Son, So shall Christ the Word, and his Word, be my strength and comfort.*

## Ministry Highlight: Harvest Kids

Our mission is to partner with parents as they disciple their children in Jesus Christ. We believe that God has called parents or guardians to be the primary disciplers of their children. Therefore as a ministry, we want to do all we can to help parents in this endeavor.

One of the ways we partner with parents is by helping teach the gospel and instruct their children in the Word of God. We are currently using Children Desiring God's "A Sure Foundation" for babies and toddlers and Lifeway's "The Gospel Project for Kids" for preschool and elementary ages as a teaching resource on Sunday mornings.

We are thankful for the volunteers who share the gospel with our children each week. If you would like to join our monthly rotation, contact Anna Pierce at [anna@harvestcharlotte.com](mailto:anna@harvestcharlotte.com) for more information.

Please pray with us:

- For new volunteers! There is an immediate need for an assistant in K-1<sup>st</sup> and in 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- That all the kids would be engaged in the lesson and hear the Gospel each week
- That our teachers would feel encouraged and energized on the mornings they serve
- That our music leaders would continue to lead the kids well in worship
- For a plan to be in place for the leadership team when Baby Macek arrives in May
- For VBS volunteers



**Week 5**  
**January 29-**  
**February 4**

---

**Prayer**



## Prayer

Correct principles without divine power results in a dead church. It seems that we often try to accomplish God's work in our own strength and abilities. However, we long for a church that **makes prayer its first, rather than its last, priority**, a church in which every corporate and individual need is bathed in fervent prayer. This can be done in a variety of ways—congregational prayer times, prayer in small groups, prayer partners, “prayer chains,” etc. We are likely to use any or all of these methods, as well as others that will develop us into a praying church, dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit. We consider prayer to be a **vital element** in our church life and invite you to participate in our church-wide prayer sessions as much as you can.

- *Prayer Service*—9:00- 9:45 a.m. each Sunday prior to the worship and teaching service at 10:00 a.m.
- *“Pastor’s Prayer Partners”* —those who commit to a unique partnership with the pastoral staff
- *National Day of Prayer*—held the first Thursday in May each year
- *Staff Prayer*—weekday prayer by the staff (and the church body) for each other
- *Twenty-four-hour Prayer Vigils*—occasional twenty-four-hour periods of intense prayer for the body

*“Could it be that one reason we have great problems is that God wants to show us great solutions? God longs to show us the riches of His grace and the poverty of our own resources. Prayer is uniquely designed to demonstrate both truths.” – David Jeremiah, Prayer, The Great Adventure (Multnomah Publishers – 1997)*

Recommended Reading: *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* – Jim Cymbala  
*Prayer, The Great Adventure* – David Jeremiah  
*Desiring God* – John Piper

### Acts 1:12-14

*Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

Read Acts 1:1-11, and let's see what has preceded our Scripture passage today.

Jesus has spent forty days with the apostles between His resurrection and ascension. He could have gone on to heaven after the resurrection to be with the heavenly Father.

1. Can you name a couple of reasons He stayed on earth?
2. What was Jesus's command and gift He told the disciples to wait on?
3. Read Matthew 10:19-20 and Luke 12:11-12. What is the common theme of these two passages?
4. When Jesus was ascending into heaven, what were the encouraging words the two angels had for the disciples?

### Family Discussion:

- Do you ever pray? Explain.
- What is prayer?
- Why is it important?

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?  
*Father, I praise you today for your grace, which was shown to each of us in your death, burial, and resurrection. I thank you for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives to lead and direct us in our daily walk with you.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Lord, please forgive me for not always listening to the Holy Spirit and for trying to accomplish things in my own strength. Please help me to be more focused on you and your will, by seeking you in the Word and in prayer.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Father, instill in me the mindset that prayer really matters. It is not a small thing we can do for others; rather, it is the most important thing we can do. Prayer changes lives. Help our church body to become even more a “house of prayer.”*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every Harvester will come to understand the value and importance of corporate or church-wide prayer.

### Pray for our church family:

Bruce & Karen Porter



Gary & Gloria Powell



Steve & Niki Powers  
Kayla & Evan



Tim & Carol Prewitt  
World Reach



### Acts 1:12-14

*Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

The eleven apostles were obedient and followed Jesus's command to return to Jerusalem to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1. Do you see anywhere in these verses where Jesus commanded His disciples to pray?
2. The disciples had such a great work to do. Can you see in verse 14 what the first action they took was? Please notice they gathered others with them and "they joined constantly in \_\_\_\_\_."
3. Corporate prayer, as you can see, is essential to establishing a healthy church, and prayer is one of our six pillars here at Harvest Community Church. Can you name some benefits of corporate prayer for the body of believers?

### Family Discussion:

Read Acts 1:4-14 together. What did the disciples do in verse 14? Why?

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?  
*Father, I praise you for the gift of prayer and how we can come boldly before your throne of grace to commune with you, knowing that you hear us. Thank you for showing me in the Scriptures how important it is to pray without ceasing.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?  
*Lord, I confess that, many times, I think I am too busy for you. Thank you that you are never too busy to listen to me. Help me to constantly abide in you and your Word, seeking your face.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?  
*Father, continue to teach us the power of prayer working in each of our lives. May all Harvesters desire to be prayer warriors individually and corporately.*

*Please strengthen \_\_\_\_\_ for the work of prayer you have called them to do.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that all Harvesters will grow in our participation in individual prayer.

### Pray for our church family:

Angie Ramirez  
Stephanie & Jonny  
Pretell



Mary Lou Rhodes



Stan & Heidi Reckard  
Catherine, Amy, Emily &  
Kaela



Gabe & Meg Robinson  
Finnegan, Grace & Max



### Acts 1:12-14

*Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

Read Acts 1:15-26

The prayer meeting was also a “business meeting” to appoint a new apostle to replace Judas.

1. Simon Peter probably discussed the fall and death of Judas. It was his falling away and not his death that caused the need to replace him. What are the two requirements his replacement had to have? Please read Acts 1:21.
2. What was the election method the apostles used?
3. What important act in verse 24 preceded the election?
4. Who was added to the eleven apostles?

### Family Discussion:

- Do you think personal prayer and corporate prayer are equally important for us as believers? If so, why?
- What prevents church families and biological families from praying together? How can this be overcome?



**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on these verses? What can I thank Him for?  
*Lord, prayer is important in every aspect of the church. Thank you for having a church that prays even about business decisions. We praise you we have been given a pastor along with a staff/elders who serve you well and desire to seek your wisdom in all situations, business and personal, and to train us accordingly.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?  
*Father, I confess I desperately need you. Please direct me in my decision-making process, whether in business or personal matters. I desire to know your perfect will and to follow it in each of these areas.*

**Intercession**—How can I use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?  
Lord, help us to pray fervently with the body of Christ at Harvest. May we grow in our daily walk with you and be passionate about discipling others and sharing God's love in our community.

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that all Harvesters will grow in our participation in family prayer (if they live with other family members right now; if they do not, pray for them in their individual prayer lives).

### Pray for our church family:

Erin Rockman



Daniel & Kayla Rupp  
East Asia



Ann Rodger



Dean & Barbara  
Seidel





### Ephesians 6:18-20

***<sup>18</sup>And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.<sup>19</sup>Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup>for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.***

### **Psalm 34:15**

*The Eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry*

As we are continuing with our forty days of prayer, my prayer for you is that you have been encouraged and have experienced a refreshed spiritual awakening. Prayer is not only a vital element in our personal day-by-day and moment-by-moment life, but it is a vital element in our church life. We are dependent on the Holy Spirit, and it's the church's desire that all will participate and together continue to be an effective praying church.

### **1 John 5:14-15**

*14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

Read today's passage, and turn your attention to Ephesians 6:18.

1. What observations can you make about verse 18?
2. As you read and meditate on verse 18, what is your interpretation of the different elements in that verse?
3. As you understand verse 18, how can you apply this to your daily walk with God?

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on this verse?

*Father, we do praise you for your abundant blessings in our lives. Father, we praise and thank you that you paid the penalty for our sins and in doing so have afforded us the ability to receive the gift of salvation and eternal life through your Son, Jesus Christ. Father, help us on all occasions and in every situation to continually praise your name and thank you for the love, kindness, and forgiveness that you bestow upon us, even though we do not deserve it.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God because of this truth? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Lord, I pray that as I live my life and dwell in this place, I would always be alert to the fact that I am a sinner, that I need to come before your throne and confess and repent of my sins daily. I pray that I will keep in mind that you are the King of Kings and Lord of All, and that I will know that we only need ask, and you will help us. Thank you, Lord.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truth arising from this verse to pray for others? How can WE help the church pray about our pillars?

*In praying in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests, and living in a world that needs God's powerful influence, I pray that I do not isolate myself from other people. I pray that in every situation I encounter in my daily walk, I would adopt a prayerful response. I pray that I will be faithful in praying for all the Lord's people, both in private prayer and in corporate prayer.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that all Harvesters will grow in our participation in corporate or church-wide prayer.

### Pray for our church family:

Judy Sellers



Jon & Kathleen  
Shoenfeld



Greg & Linda Singerle  
Reece & Seth



Kyle Singerle



### Ephesians 6:18-20

*<sup>18</sup>And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. <sup>19</sup> **Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,** <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.*

In Ephesians 6:19, Paul is asking for prayer, not for his own needs, but for the continued ability to speak fearlessly for Christ despite his circumstances. God can use us in any circumstance we are in to do His will if we are willing to listen and be faithful to Him. Pray that God will accomplish His plan for us no matter where we are. We are commissioned to share the Gospel with others, to help and love each other, always knowing that our God will guide us through our times of difficulties.

Read today's passage, but turn your focus to and meditate on verse 19

1. In Paul's circumstance, what would your prayer request have been?
2. In your circle of influence, how well do you communicate the Gospel to others?
3. What is your interpretation of verse 19?
4. What are some actions that you can take to apply this verse to your life?

## Friday, February 2 | Prayer

Prayer Guide, by Richard Alamia

**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on this verse?

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Thank you, Father, for meeting my needs. Father, you are an awesome God who reigns forever and ever, a Father to be worshiped and glorified, a Father we can trust and who never wavers.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God because of this truth? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Lord, I come with a humble heart this day, asking for your forgiveness for my sins. Lord, I do pray that whenever I speak, words may be given me that I would be bold and fearless in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ accurately and effectively.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truth arising from this verse to pray for others? How can WE help the church pray about our pillars?

*Lord, please give us the boldness and the discernment to pray for those in and out of our circles of influence. Help us in our personal prayer times in praying for all people, and help us to be effective in the corporate prayer setting, knowing and understanding the importance of prayer and how we have incorporated prayer into one of our six pillars. Lord, I pray for complete participation of the body in contributing to Harvest's being a house of prayer.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every group at Harvest—community groups, men's, women's, ministry teams, etc.—will not just go about doing things in a routine manner but will strive together to make Harvest a house of prayer.

### Pray for our church family:

Stan Smith



Eric Snyder



Bob & Dee Spillane



Kyle & Bel Spinner  
Audrey, Harrison & Melissa



### Ephesians 6:18-20

*<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. <sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> **for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.***

In this passage, all indications are that Paul is in prison but still able to write some powerful letters of encouragement and speak fearlessly for Christ despite his chains. He calls himself an ambassador in chains. We too are ambassadors for the cause of Christ, and although we are not physically chained, we do sometimes find ourselves fighting off the fiery darts of the devil. Fervent prayer is our greatest weapon against evil. The power of prayer should never be underestimated. Our church's foundation is built on six pillars, one being prayer.

Read today's passage, but turn your focus to and meditate on verse 20.

1. Do you see yourself as an ambassador? Do you declare the Gospel fearlessly?
2. What is your interpretation of this verse?
3. How can you apply this verse to your life?



**Praise and Thanks**—What can I praise God for based on this verse?

*Lord God, you are worthy of our praise. Father, thank you for the privilege of being your ambassadors in chains for the cause of Christ; through the blood of Jesus we have been set free. May we fearlessly declare that your plan will be accomplished through us.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God because of this truth? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Father, I confess my sins. I pray for your encouragement and wisdom in helping me to be obedient to your Word, to be an example to follow, and to be a person after your own heart. Help me to encourage others to be the people you want them to be. Lead, guide, and direct me in all things that are pure and holy, and protect me from the evil one.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truth arising from this verse to pray for others? How can WE help the church pray about our pillars?

*God, I ask that in every encounter I have with others, I would be faithful and diligent in interceding for them and lifting them up before your throne of grace. Grant me the wisdom to be a faithful servant.*

*Lord, please help \_\_\_\_\_ to boldly proclaim your Gospel.*

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that God will enable us all to overcome sin, apathy, familiarity, laziness, spiritual opposition, and anything else that hinders our prayer lives.

### Pray for our church family:

Laura Stone



Mayfa Stoy



Bob & Peggy Tanner



Steve & Kim Thompson  
Maine



### Ephesians 6:18-20

*<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. <sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.*

Today's sermon is based on Ephesians 6:18-20, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage—read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?



## Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use Ephesians 6:18-20 to help guide you.

## The Throne (pages 272-73)

*O GOD OF MY DELIGHT,*

*Thy throne of grace is the pleasure ground of my soul. Here I obtain mercy in time of need, here I see the smile of thy reconciled face, here joy pleads the name of Jesus, here I sharpen the sword of the Spirit, anoint the shield of faith, put on the helmet of salvation, gather manna from thy Word, am strengthened for each conflict, nerved for the upward race, empowered to conquer every foe; Help me to come to Christ as the fountain head of descending blessings, as a wide open flood-gate of mercy. I marvel at my insensate folly, that with such enriching favours within my reach I am slow to extend the hand to take them.*

*Have mercy upon my deadness for thy Name's sake. Quicken me, stir me, fill me with holy zeal. Strengthen me that I may cling to thee and not let thee go. May thy Spirit within me draw all blessings from thy hand. When I advance not, I backslide. Let me walk humbly because of good omitted and evil done. Impress on my mind the shortness of time, the work to be engaged in, the account to be rendered, the nearness of eternity, the fearful sin of despising thy Spirit. May I never forget that thy eye always sees, thy ear always hears, thy recording hand always writes. May I never give thee rest until Christ is the pulse of my heart; the spokesman of my lips, the lamp of my feet.*

## Ministry Highlight: Local International Ministry

Please pray for God to guide our local international ministries in 2018:

- **Friday 10:00 a.m. – English as a Second Language (ESL): Teaching English**  
Meeting every Friday from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the Café, this ministry is designed to help non-English speaking individuals learn English and the Bible. Lessons are paced to meet members' needs, and our ultimate goal is that people will experience salvation and grow in their faith through our tailored lessons. Volunteers are always needed who can be conversational partners and communicate God's love to the internationals. Tish Barber: tishbarber@bellsouth.net or (704) 947-0848
- **International Students and Scholars**  
Seventy-five percent of internationals never get invited into an American home while they are studying in the US. There are over 1,700 international students at UNCC this year, and there are many ongoing ministry opportunities each week both on and off campus to build relationships and share Christ with these students, visiting scholars, and their families. Tish Barber: tishbarber@bellsouth.net or (704) 947-0848



# **Week 6**

## **February 5-11**

---

**Grace**

# Grace

We want to create an atmosphere that is grace oriented rather than legalistic. In other words, **spirituality should not be measured by one's conformity to an outward list of humanly designed rules**, but by biblical expression of the life and love of Christ. We want everyone to feel acceptance and love from us. Although we will encourage the living of holy lives and the development of Christian character, **we will not impose personal convictions** upon others.

Recommended Reading:

*The Grace Awakening* – Chuck Swindoll

*In The Grip Of Grace* – Max Lucado

*What's So Amazing About Grace?* – Philip Yancey

### Galatians 5:13-6:2

Start by taking a few minutes to pray and ask God to fill you and your church family with the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know Him better (Eph. 1:17).

Read the entire passage (Gal. 5:13-6:2) at least once. For some context, take time this week to read the entire book.

It is helpful to know that the Galatian church was being influenced to add circumcision and obedience to the Old Testament law, in addition to their faith, in order to be saved (Gal 1:6-7; 3:1-3; 3:9-11; 4:8-11,21; 5:1-4).

1. Meditate on verses 13-15 of chapter 5. Write down three to five observations and/or questions from this passage.
2. What freedom is God (via Paul) talking about in verse 13? Hint: See 5:1-4; 4:8-10; 3:22-25 (see also Rom. 8:1-2; John 8:34-36; Rom. 6:18).
3. What is meant by the word “flesh” here (translated as “sinful nature” in NIV84 and NLT)? For an indication of its meaning, look up the following verses: Matt. 26:41; John 3:6; John 6:63; Rom. 7:5, 25; Rom. 8:1-13.
4. What wrong use of freedom does Paul mention in verse 13? What correct use of freedom is mentioned? What motives are stated or inferred?
5. Why does verse 14 start with “For”? Why do you think only part of what Jesus said in Matt. 22:34-40 about the summary of the law is mentioned in verse 14?
6. What do you surmise to be a problem in the Galatian church based on verse 15?
7. How might a human works-based rather than God's grace-based approach to righteousness contribute to these problems?

### Family Discussion

- What is grace?
- How have you seen grace in your home and with the Harvest church family?

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*Praise God for His grace! He has set you free from sin and spiritual death by the blood of Christ Jesus, His Son. You have been freed from the impossible task of being good enough to earn salvation. You are free to serve one another in love. Praise God in prayer for these things. Pray with someone else if possible.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Pray and ask God for forgiveness for anything that He brings to mind from studying these verses. Ask God for forgiveness for times you may have not used your freedom to serve in love, but instead to selfishly live in a way that has either hurt others or been indifferent to them. Ask God to reveal the motivations of your heart.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Pray for the needs of others in light of the verses you have studied today. Pray for our church to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Pray also that we would have the same attitude as Jesus, humbly considering one another as better than ourselves (Philippians 2).*

## CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that everyone who attends Harvest on Sunday understands the difference between achieving and receiving spiritual life and power—that they will not try to work hard to be spiritual but commit to Christ and allow Him to live in and through them.

## Pray for our church family:

Scott & Andrea Torres  
Boston, Bryce, Bailey &  
Brooks



Ben & Michelle Truitt  
Lily, Heath, Parry &  
Violet



Dean & Nancy  
Treadwell



Sasha & Natash  
Tsutserov  
Russia



### Galatians 5:13-6:2

Today we continue with our study in Galatians 5. Pray and ask God to speak to you and to bear His fruit in your life. Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit.

1. Write down some observations, thoughts, and questions from these verses.
2. What is meant by “walk by the Spirit” (verse 16)? Is this given as something that’s optional for the Christian?
3. Describe the conflict within every born-again child of God (verse 17). [Extra: Read Rom. 8:1-17]
4. From verse 18, what is the solution to the conflict stated in verse 17? What is the implication of being led?
5. Why does it say we are not under the law if we are led by the Spirit?
6. Read Colossians 3:5-16. Note the similarities between that passage and verses 19-26. Do you think the lists in Gal. 5:19-23 are complete?
7. What is the source of the list of evil deeds listed in verses 19-21? What is the source of the list of good qualities and actions in verses 22-23?
8. What does the outward evidence in these lists say about the condition or ruling influence of such a person's heart?

Jesus said the source of evil behavior is the heart (Matt. 15:17-20; LUke 6:43-45). The law does not have the power to change the heart, where the real problem lies (Rom. 2:29; Jer. 17:9). We cannot manufacture this good fruit in our own power. The power to do so stems from having our hearts washed at salvation (Titus 3:3-8). It is something we still need to choose to walk in (Col. 3:12), submitting to God's Spirit (Heb. 12:9) and not resisting or grieving Him (Eph. 4:30-32). Note also that good works don't save us, but they do result from being saved (Eph. 2:8-10).

By saying “against such things there is no law” in verse 23, Paul drives home the point that there is freedom in the Spirit. Holy or righteous living does not come through outward regulations (Col. 2:20-23). It stems from the Spirit and is manifested in love and its overflow (Gal. 5:6).



**Philippians 1:9-11**

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*Praise God for indwelling you with the person of the Holy Spirit and for being at work in you to will and to act according to what is pleasing to Him. Praise God for giving you a new heart and for giving you a desire to please Him and not to live for yourself. Praise Him for His faithfulness to bear fruit in your life.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Ask God to show you any areas of your life that are not fully submitted to the lordship of Jesus Christ. What areas do you struggle with in following the Spirit's leading? Confess specific sins and accept God's forgiveness.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

*Find someone to pray with and together pray for two or three other believers, that God would manifest in them the fruit of His Spirit. Pray through the list in Gal. 5:22-23.*

**CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray that we will react to each other in our daily lives—home, office, play—in ways full of God's grace and forgiveness.

**Pray for our church family:**

Angel & Lucy Velez  
Elian & Eliel



Ben Wahab



Basil Watkins



Lee Ann Wilson  
Amber & Jade



### Galatians 5:24-6:2

Today we finish our study of Galatians 5. Pray and ask God to help you live for Him more completely out of love and gratitude and to follow the Spirit's leading.

1. Write down some observations from this passage.
2. Compare verse 24 to Col. 2:11-14. See also Gal. 2:20 and Rom. 6:6-7. In what sense has the sinful nature been crucified? Notice that this is a past event. What is Paul talking about? In what sense were we involved?
3. What does “live by the Spirit” mean? What about “keep in step with the Spirit”? Note some similarities between verses 25-26 and verses 16 and 18.

Now, after talking about life by the Spirit and how we live not under the law, bound to sin, but under the Spirit, freed from sin, Paul addresses what should happen if someone in the body does fall into sin. We have been shown grace from God. Here is an instance where we can express God's grace to one another.

4. What are some possible meanings for the word “caught” in 6:1?
5. How might Luke 6:39-42 shed further light on Galatians 6:1? In what ways might we need to watch ourselves? What is the goal?
6. From verse 2, what is the law of Christ? Hint: Gal. 5:14; James 2:8; John 13:34
7. What are some practical ways we can carry each other's burdens?

## **Ephesians 3:14-21**

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

**Praise and Thanks (Worship)**—What can I praise God for based on these verses?

*Praise God for a church family that cares about you and wants to help you to walk with Jesus. Praise God for so loving you that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be your Savior and give His life for you.*

**Confession and Help**—What do I need to confess to God as a result of these truths? How do I need to ask God to help me in applying His truth to my life?

*Ask God to show you any areas in which you might be judging a brother or sister and not seeking his/her restoration and/or growth. Confess this if applicable.*

**Intercession**—How can WE use the truths arising from these verses to pray for others?

Also, pray for any believers you know who are struggling with sin.

*Lord, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will live by the Spirit every day and be humble and care for other believers.*

### **CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

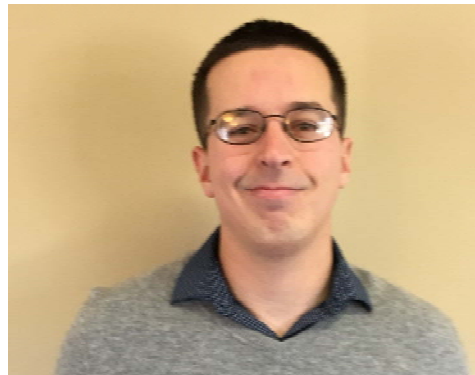
Pray that every Harvester will receive God's grace and give God's grace to others.

## **Pray for our church family:**

**Eric & Kathy Wolff**  
Costa Rica



**Colt Gerard**



**Philemon** is a very personal letter from Paul to a dear friend. In just twenty-five verses, we discover some deep and beautiful truths about grace.

Consider this introduction to the epistle: One of four so-called Prison Letters attributed to the Apostle Paul (the others are Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians). Philemon is Paul's shortest letter (only 335 words in Greek) and the only one that he sends to an individual rather than to an entire church. The letter addresses Philemon concerning his runaway slave, Onesimus, who apparently became a Christian through Paul's ministry.<sup>1</sup>

### Read Philemon, verses 1-3

The Apostle Paul was writing from prison to a dear friend and fellow worker. His letter begins with a warm greeting not only to Philemon, but to other key believers in Colossae. The greeting indicates that Philemon hosts the church in his home. Their relationship was so close that Paul even requests that he prepare a guest room for him.

1. In verse 3, Paul expresses his desire for the church to experience grace and peace from God. In your own words, define biblical grace.
2. Read verses 4-7. How does Paul describe his relationship with Philemon?
3. How does Paul describe Philemon's walk in the Gospel?
4. Read verses 9-22. Describe the tone of Paul's appeal to Philemon in relation to Onesimus.

Read verses 23-35. Notice in these closing verses the relationships that Paul mentions. These are obviously relationships that are dear to Paul, but they are also well-known people to Philemon.

The grace of the Gospel has obviously transformed the lives of the three key personalities in this epistle. Spend some time writing out your observations on how each of the following individuals was transformed by grace.

5. In what ways was Paul transformed by grace? \_\_\_\_\_
6. In what ways was Philemon transformed by grace? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what ways was Onesimus transformed by grace? \_\_\_\_\_

### Family Discussion:

Asking for forgiveness and granting it are both difficult. Do you think one is harder than the other? Why?

<sup>1</sup> Belleville, L. L., & Kuo, J. C. (2016). [Philemon, Letter to](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Begin your time in prayer by worshipping God for His transformative power in your life. List specific areas where you have seen Him bring about change in your heart. Consider attitudes and perspectives as well as actions.

Ephesians 4:20-24 (NIV) states, “That, however, is not the way of life you learned when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Using this passage in Ephesians and our study in Philemon, confess areas that you may still be holding onto. Ask God to reveal areas of your life that He desires to transform by grace.

Finally, spend time in prayer for our church, praying that the transformative power of the Gospel would be evident in the life of each member and attender. Pray for those who have not placed their faith in Christ and have not been reborn. Don't be afraid to pray specifically for individuals that God brings to your mind.

### **CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray that our pastors and leaders will be grace-oriented.

### **Pray for our missionaries:**

Justin & Natalie Barber (East Asia)  
Chris Bousman (Papua New Guinea)  
Andre & Yuba Bulyhin (Ukraine)  
Micah & Ruth Anna Chin (HCBC)  
Ondrej & Milina Franka (Serbia)  
Peter & Miriam Fretheim (Nigeria)  
Phil & Julie Gillespie (MSU)  
Noel & Reina Gomez (Honduras)  
David Hancock (Peru)  
Don & Sai Hill (Thailand)  
Bryan & Evelyng Huyhua (Peru)

Chris & Debbie Johnson (Europe)  
Jeff & Candie Kisiah (Charlotte)  
Tom & Sheri Muma (Chad)  
John & Bonnie Nystrom (Papua New Guinea)  
Joy Paulsen (East Asia)  
Tim & Carol Prewitt (World Reach)  
Daniel & Kayla Rupp (East Asia)  
Greg & Linda Singerle (Greece)  
Steve & Kim Thompson (Maine)  
Sasha & Natasha Tsutserov (Russia)  
Eric & Kathy Wolff (Costa Rica)

### **Philemon**

Today, begin by reading straight through the entire epistle in one sitting.

As you read the book, you probably noticed that verses 9-21 are an appeal by the Apostle Paul on behalf of Onesimus. Verse 18 seems to indicate that Onesimus had wronged Philemon not only in fleeing, but also in possibly causing him some other financial harm as well. Paul refers to Onesimus as formerly useless (verse 11).

As Paul sends Onesimus back to the one he had wronged, it would be easy for all of those involved to fall into fleshly habits and impulses. Easy for Onesimus to avoid facing someone he had offended. Easy for Philemon to be indignant and reject an apology. Maybe even easy for Paul to avoid risking his relationship with both of these men by seeking their reconciliation.

But Paul's appeal to Philemon is that he responds to Onesimus on the basis of their common grace. Go back through the epistle and mark or note the following words: "brother," "fellow," "love," "dear," "welcome," "appeal." These are among the most repeated words in the passage.

1. How does the concept of our communion with one another and with Christ impact our actions when we've been wronged?

Reflect on Paul's basis for forgiveness as he wrote these words to the church at Ephesus: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

Paul's call for reconciliation is one more example of the Gospel paradigm believers are called to live. In grace, Paul doesn't command Philemon to accept his new brother, but he does so through an appeal. Paul doesn't impose an authoritative directive; rather, he trusts the work of the Holy Spirit to bring about His fruit.

2. Philemon 14 says, "But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary." How does Paul's attitude in this verse exhibit grace?
3. Consider the statement, "Grace is allowing God to be God in the lives of others." Does this align with Paul's practice in this relationship?
4. What other passages of Scripture can you think of that might support that statement?

### **Family Discussion**

Now that Onesimus had been saved and was under Paul's teaching, why was it important for him to go back to Philemon and resolve that relationship?



Praise God for the work of the Holy Spirit in your life. As a believer, you are indwelt by God's Spirit, and He actively draws you to God's purposes in your life. Just as Paul was confident of God's continued work in the Philippians (Philippians 1:6), we can be assured of God's work in us. Praise Him for His continual work in you.

Ask God for a changed paradigm. Often, our basis for reconciliation is justice and loss. Ask God to allow you to see that grace and the Gospel call for reconciliation based on our position in Christ. Pray for a heart of humility and true forgiveness. Pray for a spirit of grace rather than of judgment and fairness.

**PRAY!** Pray for God to fill Harvest with a culture of forgiveness and grace. That we would each be quick to forgive. That each Harvester would willingly appeal for the reconciliation of a fellow believer.

### CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that we will all have a strong commitment to holiness without striving to attain it by our own strength and energy, but by relying on the grace of God.

### Pray for our church staff:

**Richard Alamia**  
Administrative  
Support



**Jerry Barber**  
Senior Pastor



**Jim Bennett**  
Student Ministry  
Pastor



**Martin Bramell**  
Facilities





### Philemon

Once again, read the book of Philemon.

Over the past three days we have considered this little epistle from the perspective of grace, one of the pillars at Harvest Community Church. We've considered the transformative power of grace. We've reflected on grace's call to reconciliation and forgiveness.

In a sense, grace is free. It is bestowing favor on someone who doesn't deserve it. Earned grace is not grace at all. Yet in another sense, grace is never free. Grace always comes at the expense of the giver rather than the receiver. For Paul's appeal to become a reality, Philemon would have to absorb the loss he had suffered from Onesimus.

1. However, can you imagine the spiritual benefits that could result from this reconciliation? List some of the benefits that might proceed from this reconciliation.
2. Although this epistle doesn't give us the end of the story, Paul feels confident that Philemon will respond in obedience to the Gospel. "Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask" (Philemon 21, NIV).  
Why could Paul be so confident of Philemon's response?
3. If you were deeply wronged by a member of the community only to later find out that Pastor Jerry had led that person to Christ and was sending him/her to you for forgiveness and reconciliation, how would you respond? Would your pastor have the same confidence in your obedience to the Gospel that Paul had in Philemon? Is this a fair comparison? How does this challenge your inner man?

### Family Discussion:

Paul mentions in Philemon 15-16 that perhaps God's purpose in the addressed situation was for a much greater good. How have you seen God allow difficult things in your life that result in lasting benefit?

WORSHIP! Yes, worship God for His amazing grace and forgiveness. We are freely forgiven because God was willing to pay our redemption price. Don't skim over this segment. Allow the grace of God to overwhelm you.

Confess any personal struggles with forgiveness. Our selfishness demands restitution. Our pride demands recognition and honor. But in grace-based reconciliation, we willingly absorb that loss and often find it difficult. Ask God to make any lack of grace evident to you. Pray for God's grace in you to become abundant towards others.

Pray for your church. Pray for each of us to become very aware of the grace that has been extended to us and that we would generously extend that same grace toward others. Pray that, individually, we would step away from expectations and liberally extend undeserved, unearned grace.

## CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that our services tomorrow will be full of God's grace.

## Pray for our church staff:

**Amy Granata**  
Communications  
Director



**Heidi Reckard**  
Treasurer



**Anna Pierce**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Scott Torres**  
Associate Pastor



Philemon

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— <sup>2</sup> also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

<sup>3</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup> because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. <sup>7</sup> Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, <sup>9</sup> yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus— <sup>10</sup> that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. <sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

<sup>12</sup> I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. <sup>13</sup> I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. <sup>14</sup> But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever— <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup> If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. <sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. <sup>20</sup> I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup> Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

<sup>22</sup> And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. <sup>24</sup> And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers. <sup>25</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Today's sermon is based on the book of Philemon, as you know from using this guide the past week. Today, meditate on the passage – read it over and over again and ask God to reveal His truth to you. Then make a few of your own observations about the passage:

- 
- 
- 

What do we learn about GOD from this passage?

What do we learn about OURSELVES from this passage?

After listening to the sermon (live or via HCC website or phone app) and/or meditating on the text, what is ONE primary way that you can apply some truth mentioned here to your life THIS WEEK?

Based on what you have written above, can you write a brief prayer of response below, asking God in your own words to help you obey His Word and put it into practice?

## Puritan Prayer:

*The Valley of Vision* is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. Each Sunday, we will provide one of those prayers that relates to our theme. These ancient prayers can be challenging because of their language, but they are very rich and full of meaning. We encourage you to read the prayer slowly, then to pray it to God yourself, followed by any other ways God leads you to commune with Him and pray for others. As you pray for the ministry listed at the bottom of this page, please remember to use the book of Philemon to help guide you.

## Grace Active (pages 214-15)

*LORD JESUS, GREAT HIGH PRIEST,*

*Thou hast opened a new and living way by which a fallen creature can approach thee with acceptance. Help me to contemplate the dignity of thy Person, the perfectness of thy sacrifice, the effectiveness of thy intercession. O what blessedness accompanies devotion, when under all the trials that weary me, the cares that corrode me, the fears that disturb me, the infirmities that oppress me, I can come to thee in my need and feel peace beyond understanding! The grace that restores is necessary to preserve, lead, guard, supply, help me.*

*And here thy saints encourage my hope; they were once poor and are now rich, bound and are now free, tried and now are victorious. Every new duty calls for more grace than I now possess, but not more than is found in thee, the divine Treasury in whom all fullness dwells. To thee I repair for grace upon grace, until every void made by sin be replenished and I am filled with all thy fullness. May my desires be enlarged and my hopes emboldened, that I may honour thee by my entire dependency and the greatness of my expectation.*

*Do thou be with me, and prepare me for all the smiles of prosperity, the frowns of adversity, the losses of substance, the death of friends, the days of darkness, the changes of life, and the last great change of all. May I find thy grace sufficient for all my needs.*

## Ministry Highlight: HARVESTUDENTS

The middle school and high school ministry has two goals: [1] To develop middle and high school students into followers of Jesus Christ with a passion to worship God well and communicate his love to others; and [2] to help equip parents as they disciple their students in Christ.

We believe that our mission as the local church is to make disciples. This includes equipping students and parents to understand and apply Scripture better. That's why we take time each week to study the Bible in a thorough and relevant way. The Bible teaches that Christians should "be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Our weekly Sunday night gatherings consist of an in-depth Bible study for middle school students (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) and a separate one for high school students (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade), fun indoor or outdoor field games and other random craziness! It's also a great time for your student to experience community as they meet other students their age, make friends, and get connected in a safe and caring environment where our trained leaders are ready to love your teenager. Join us Sunday evenings from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

## Please pray with us for our student ministry:

- For spiritual growth for the middle school and high school students
- For the salvation for several students who don't know Christ
- For unity and friendship among the students, and for a growing sense of being on mission for Christ



# **Answer Key**

## January 1 | Worship Romans 12:1

1. Take a moment to read Chapter 12, and write Romans 12:1 below.
2. What is the first word of Chapter 12? Why might this word be important?  
*"Therefore." The word "therefore" is there for a reason. It serves as a connector and transition point of the book. It connects all the mercies of God written about in chapters 1-11. It also serves as the foundation for every practical command that will follow.*
3. Paul states in verse 1, "I urge you brothers..." What does "urge" mean? Why might this be important? What image comes to your mind when you hear the word "urge"?  
*"Urge" means to appeal or plead. This appeal is an exhortation. Paul is earnestly pleading with the believers in Rome to do something. He is appealing to them with his whole being.*
4. According to verse 1, who is Paul urging? Romans 1:7 also gives a hint.  
*He is urging the "brothers" in Rome (12:1), or "all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints" (1:7).*
5. Paul is wanting Christians in Rome to do something. Before we talk about what he wants them to do, we must understand the motivation behind his exhortation. What is the basis or source of Paul's urging these brothers according to verse 1?  
*God's mercy. As a side note, a better translation of the word mercy would be "mercies," because in the original Greek, the word is found in its plural form. "The NIV obscures the fact that the word translated as "mercy" is plural in the Greek (oiktirmon). Paul uses the plural form to emphasize the many aspects of God's mercy that he has highlighted in Romans." (Moo, D. (2002). Encountering The Book of Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. p. 176)*
6. What is God's mercy?  
*God's mercy is His undeserved compassion shown towards sinners. This is one of the themes that Paul talks about in Chapter 5.*
7. What is Paul urging Christians in Rome to do in light of "God's mercy"?  
*He is urging them to "offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God." This is Paul's fundamental demand in verses 1-2.*
8. Finally, in your own words, rewrite what Paul is saying in verse 1.  
*Because God has shown undeserved compassion towards sinners, spiritual worship is offering one's body as a living sacrifice to Him.*

## January 2 | Worship Romans 12:1

1. Rewrite Romans 12:1 below.
2. According to verse 1, what does Paul tell these brothers to offer? What does this entail?  
*Their bodies. When it comes to their bodies, Paul wants these believers to offer up their whole being. This includes their thoughts, emotions, and wills. (Moo, D. (2002). Encountering The Book of Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. p. 176)*
3. According to verse 1, how does Paul tell them to offer their bodies?



*As living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.*

4. In order to better comprehend how Paul is asking them to offer their bodies, it helps to understand some Old Testament (OT) history or background. Using a phone, tablet, or laptop, search the Web for animal sacrifices in the OT, and explain why God required them.  
*Animal sacrifice was the offering up of an animal to God. The animal had to be prescribed by God and then killed on an altar for the purpose of temporarily covering sins. ("Why Did God Require Animal Sacrifices in the Old Testament". (n.d.). Retrieved from Got questions?org: <https://www.gotquestions.org/animal-sacrifices.html>)*
5. When it comes to offering their bodies as a living sacrifice, what does Paul mean?  
*As opposed to a dead sacrifice, a living sacrifice is someone who is alive to Christ as mentioned in Romans 6:4. They will not be put to death as the OT sacrifices that temporarily covered sin were. ("Why Did God Require Animal Sacrifices in the Old Testament". (n.d.). Retrieved from Got questions?org: <https://www.gotquestions.org/animal-sacrifices.html>)*  
***A living sacrifice is someone who offers his whole self to God at all times. Worshiping God with one's body is not just an occasional thing that takes place on a Sunday morning. It happens **twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.*****
6. How might the phrase "living sacrifice" sound like an oxymoron? How might understanding this phrase help someone to know what Paul is saying?  
*It sounds like an oxymoron because sacrifices are killed. They do not continue to live once they are offered up. Understanding this phrase helps one to know that God is not asking him to sacrifice his life on an altar like in the OT. However, He is asking him to live for Him continually, all day, every day.*
7. According to verse 1, what does Paul call it when someone offers his body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God?  
*Paul calls this one's spiritual act of worship. When a person lives this way (offering his whole entire self sacrificially to God 24/7), this is TRUE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.*

## January 3 | Worship

### Romans 12:2

1. Write out Romans 12:2 below.
2. What does the first part of verse 2 tell Roman believers "not" to do? What do you think this means?  
*Paul tells them "not to conform any longer to the pattern of this world." It means that believers must understand the way the fallen world operates. In turn, they must resist the pressure and temptations of the present evil age, which ultimately threaten their worship of God. (n.d.). In ESV Study Bible (p. 2178). Wheaton: Crossway Bibles. *The Greek word here carries the idea of forming or shaping one's behavior. (1988,1989). In J. P. Louw, & E. A. Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains. New York: United Bible Societies. p. 41.29. Another way to say this would be that Christians are not to shape their behavior according to the standards of the fallen world.**
3. Instead of "not conforming any longer to the pattern of this world," what does Paul say the Roman believers are to do? What do you think this means? How might this look?  
*They are to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind." Believers' lives are changed as their minds are made new. (n.d.). In ESV Study Bible (p. 2178). Wheaton: Crossway Bibles.*

*The Greek word for transformed means to "change the essential form or nature of something, to be changed into." (1988,1989). In J. P. Louw, & E. A. Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains. New York: United Bible Societies. p. 13.53*

*A believer's mind is not immediately changed when he comes to Christ. He still possesses a worldly way of thinking, because it is primarily all he knows. He continually renews or changes his mind through consistent exposure to God's Word. This can happen in many ways. For example, it can take place in personal Bible study, interaction with other Christians, listening to preaching, or singing.*

4. What is the result of these believers "being transformed by the renewing of their minds"?  
*The result will be believers testing and approving what God's will is. The person transformed by the renewing of the mind is able to discern and put into practice the will of God. (Moo, D. (2002). Encountering The Book of Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. p. 178.)*

## January 4 | Worship

### Psalm 96

1. This Psalm can be broken down into three sections. What repeated phrases or words seem to start each section, and what are the sections based on them?
  - *"Sing to the LORD" is repeated three times in verses 1 and 2, and it starts a first section that includes verses 1 through 6.*
  - *"Ascribe to the LORD" is repeated three times in verses 7 and 8, and it starts a second section that includes verses 7 through 10.*
  - *"Let..." is repeated four times in verses 11 and 12, and it starts the final section that includes verses 11 through 13.*
2. Look at verses 1 and 2, and answer the following questions:
  - What is to be sung? A new song
  - Who/what is to sing? All the earth
  - How are we to sing? Praising God's name and proclaiming His salvation
  - When are we to sing? Day after day
3. Take a moment to read Lamentations 3:22-23. What about God's compassion should motivate us to sing a new song and proclaim His salvation day to day?  
*God's compassions are new every morning, and a new song is based on those new compassions each and every day. Ours is not a faith that is stagnant, but it is vibrant and worthy of singing about with freshness day after day.*
4. Look at Ephesians 5:19. Where does singing and making music to the Lord originate?  
*Our singing and music to the Lord comes from the heart. Incidentally, it is noteworthy that verse 19 follows the imperative command in verse 18, "be filled with the Spirit." If we are filled with the Spirit, one of the first evidences is that our speech is marked by "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" to one another, as we "sing and make music in [our] heart to the Lord." Jesus even reminds us in Matthew 15:18 that "the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart."*  
  
*We also know this intuitively as things like music, poetry, and such have more to do with the heart, as they make more of an appeal to our emotions than regular speech that appeals to our intellect.*
5. Applying what you see in Ephesians 5:19, what does Psalm 96 tell us about the relationship between worship and evangelism in verses 1-3?  
*While evangelism can happen absent of worship, we are certainly more motivated when it is preceded by worship. Much in the same way that we are quick to tell others about things such as a good restaurant, a useful product, or a wonderful experience, our enthusiasm for declaring God's glory and telling of His marvelous deeds increases when our hearts are inspired to worship the Lord day after day by singing a new song of His salvation.*

1. Who and what are to be ascribed to the LORD, according to verses 7-8?

*The families of nations, and glory and strength.*

*Side note about "ascribe":*

*The Hebrew word used here is yahab, which is a root word meaning "to give." So, this could be translated "Give to the LORD..." But what can we give to the LORD that He does not already have? In a discussion on the Hebrew word nathan (for deliver, or give, or ascribe), W. E. Vine points out, "Obviously, nothing is passed from men to God; nothing is added to God, since He is perfect. This means, therefore, that a worshipper recognizes and confesses what is already His." (W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, Jr., Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984, 56-57.) In other words, we may restate these verses by saying that the families of the earth, glory and strength, and glory due His name already belong to Him. Therefore, we ascribe them unto the LORD...or give Him what is already His in worship.*

2. According to verse 8, what is the response to ascribing glory and strength to the LORD?

*We bring an offering and come into His courts. While we don't perform animal sacrifices for offerings at the tent, tabernacle, or temple as they did in Old Testament times, we still offer sacrifices of our service to Him and praise in a gathering of other believers.*

3. What is the offering we bring, and what are His courts in verse 8? (Hint: recall your study in Romans 12:1-2 from earlier this week.)

*We offer our "bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God." We value the service of God more than the well-being of our physical bodies. As Jesus said in John 12:25-26, "The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me."*

*We also recall that Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4, "A time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem...yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (verses 21, 23). John MacArthur says of this, "Jesus's point was that, under the new covenant, the place of worship will not be an issue, but rather the nature of worship." (John MacArthur, Jr., The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: John 1-11, Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2006, 149.) So, the "court" for us now is our very bodies, or "temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19).*

4. What is the attribute about the LORD mentioned in verse 9 that is the focus of our worship, why is it important, and what should our response be to that attribute?

*God's holiness is the focus of our worship. When given glimpses of the throne of God, both Isaiah and John record creatures unceasingly repeating, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty" (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). Throughout all of Scripture, the only aspect or attribute of God that is repeated three times is "holy." But the holiness of God is more than a single attribute. As R. C. Sproul states, "When we use the word holy to describe God, we face another problem. We often describe God by compiling a list of qualities or characteristics that we call attributes. We say that God is a spirit, that He knows everything, that He is loving, just merciful, gracious, and so on. The tendency is to add the idea of the holy to this long list of attributes as one attribute among many. But when the word holy is applied God, it does not signify one single attribute. On the contrary, God is called holy in a general sense. The word is used as a synonym for his deity. That is, the word holy calls attention to all that God is. It reminds us that His love is holy love, his justice is holy justice, his mercy is holy mercy, his knowledge is holy knowledge, his spirit is holy spirit." (R.C. Sproul, The Holiness of God, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1985, 57)*

*We see in both the Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4 pictures of the throne room worship that worship results in a quake of the temple, and those around God fall down before Him. And in Psalm 96, we see that worshipping God's holiness results in trembling. While God's grace and mercy allow us to come before Him with confidence, let us never lose sight of His awesome holiness when worshipping.*

5. If the first section addressed our hearts through singing, and the second section addresses our minds through ascribing, what is Psalm 96 telling us about worship?

*We are to engage both our hearts and our minds in worship. Some approach worship as a purely aesthetic endeavor, seeking emotional experiences that define the quality of their worship. Others suppress emotions and pursue intellectual assent toward God. True worship involves a balanced blend of the two, as noted above when Jesus said we are to worship "in spirit and truth."*

*Paul also spoke of this in 1 Corinthians 14:15 with regards to certain activities done during corporate gatherings. He said that if he prays or sings, he does both in his spirit (heart) and with his understanding (mind). They are complimentary to each other.*

## **January 6 | Worship**

### **Psalm 96**

1. The final section starts with several "let the..." statements. What are they?

- Let the heavens rejoice.
- Let the earth be glad.
- Let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
- Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.

2. Looking back at verses 5 and 10, how does this section's appeal to nature's worship of God relate to our own worship?

*The Psalmist reminds us that the LORD made the heavens (verse 5) and, by implication, also the world. Therefore, creation itself worships God. And as caretakers of God's creation (Genesis 1:28), we should also find creation as a source of worship to God.*

*Included in the Ten Commandments, which was the first enumeration of God's standard for worship and righteous living, is a reminder of God's creation. In the fourth Commandment, we see a reference to God's rest after creation as a reason for the Sabbath. But more than being simply a day of rest for rest's sake, the Sabbath was to remind the Israelites (and us) of God's work of creation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1) is a statement of worship, for in it God's authority over everything in the heavens and the earth is established, as He is the Creator of it all.*

*And the Psalmist reminds us in verse 10, "The LORD reigns."*

3. As we have seen throughout this Psalm, our song is based on God's salvation (v. 2) and our worship is focused on His holiness (v. 9). But verse 10, and now verse 13 in the final section, direct our attention to a third consideration that is repeated: His judgment. What/who is it that God will come to judge? Why is the image of God as judge important for our worship?

*When God finished creation, He declared everything "very good" (Genesis 1:31). But as a VBS song my kids are fond of playing in the car says, "Sin messed everything up. Oh no!" However, we are assured that the holy God who offers salvation will also come to right the wrongs by judging people, the earth, and the world with equity, righteousness, and truth.*

*Charles Spurgeon commented on this passage, "All the world will be under the jurisdiction of this great Judge, and before his bar all will be summoned to appear. At this moment he is on the road, and the hour of*

*his coming draweth nigh. His great assize is proclaimed. Hear ye not the trumpets? His foot is on the threshold. His essential rectitude will determine all causes and cases, there will be no bribery and corruption there, neither can error or failure be found in his decisions. Honesty, veracity, integrity, will rule upon his judgment-seat. No nation shall be favoured there, and none be made to suffer through prejudice. There shall be true judgment given without fear or favour. In all this let the nations be glad, and the universe rejoice.” (C.H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, Vol. 2, McLean, VA: Macdonald Publishing Company, 184)*

*While we may lament the trials, tribulations, and pains in this world, we can join creation and rejoice and resound, be glad and jubilant with joyful singing with a new song.*

4. For further understanding, and in preparation for the sermon tomorrow, take a minute to read 1 Chronicles 16.

## **January 8 | Disciple-making**

### **Matthew 28:16-17**

1. To begin, read Matthew 28 to help grasp the context of the verses we will study. Afterwards, list four to six general observations below regarding what is taking place.
  - *At dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and another Mary (probably not Jesus’s mother) went to look at the tomb. (verse 1)*
  - *There was a violent earthquake, and the angel rolled back the stone and sat on it. (verse 2)*
  - *The angel says to the women not to be afraid and that Jesus has risen. (verses 5-6)*
  - *The angel tells the women to go and tell his disciples, “He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.” (verse 7)*
  - *Jesus meets the women and tells them to go and tell the disciples to go to Galilee, where they will see Jesus. (verses 8-10)*
  - *While the women were on their way to tell the disciples about Jesus rising from the dead, the guards reported to the chief priests what happened. They in turn spoke with the elders and decided to pay the soldiers to report that Jesus’s disciples stole his body while they were sleeping. (verses 11-15)*
2. According to verse 16, why did the eleven disciples go to Galilee?  
*Because Jesus told them to go (verses 10, 16). The angel also informed them to go (verse 7). The disciples were also afraid of the religious rulers and the soldiers who were trying to cover up Jesus’s resurrection by blaming it on the disciples.*
3. According to verse 17, what were the two responses of the disciples? Why do you think they responded this way? Have you ever both worshipped and doubted God?  
*Worship and doubt. They responded this way because some were still amazed at His resurrection and others (Thomas) doubted it (John 20:24-31). According to Luke 24:36, John 20:24-31, 21:1-14, Jesus appeared to them prior to this meeting in Matthew 28.*
4. In your own words, write out verse 18 below and explain what you think it means.  
*Jesus has been given supreme power or authority over everything created in heaven and earth. This means that he is King and in control over all things.*
5. According to verse 18, who gave Jesus His authority and what does this imply?  
*The Father. Jesus is humble, honors authority, and remains subject to His Father even though He is God.*
6. Why is verse 18 significant, especially when it comes to disciple-making?  
*The book of Matthew emphasizes Jesus’s authority. This ranges from his teaching (Matthew 7:29), to healing (the human body), to casting out demons (spiritual realm), nature (wind, water), the Sabbath, sin, death, etc. The resurrection is the validation of Jesus’s deity and authority. He now extends this authority to His followers. The task of making disciples of Jesus is linked to His authority, because all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him.*

## **January 9 | Disciple-making**

## Matthew 28:18-19

1. Write out verse 19 below.
2. What appears to be the main point of emphasis of this verse?  
*The main point of emphasis is to "make disciples."*
3. Define or describe the word "disciple."  
*The word disciple was the most popular name for the early believers. It means apprentice or follower. To be a disciple in the first century meant more than being a convert or church member. A disciple would attach himself to his teacher in order to identify with, learn from, and live with him. A disciple would learn by watching, listening, and doing. (Wiersbe, W. (1989). Bible Exposition Commentary, Victor Books. p. 1.108)*
4. If "make disciples" is the main point of emphasis, HOW does verse 19 tell us to go about doing this? Explain your answer.  
*Verse 19 tells us to "go" and "baptize." We make disciples by going to the lost people God has put us around. When Jesus gave this command, the world was not evangelized, so He was wanting the disciples to go to non-Christians. The next part of the process of making disciples is baptizing those who repent and believe in Jesus. Baptism is a public profession attesting to what Jesus has done in dying for our sins and rising from the dead.*
5. When Jesus mentions baptizing, whose name does He say the disciples are to use? Why might this be important?  
*The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Trinity). A person's name identifies who he is and who he belongs to. When someone is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, he takes on their identity and publicly professes he belongs to the godhead. Finally, the use of the three names in one (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) was an open proclamation of Jesus's deity. (n.d.). In ESV Study Bible (p. 1888). Wheaton: Crossway Bibles (2008). Therefore, when someone is baptized in the name of the Trinity, he is proclaiming that Jesus is God.*
6. What "people group" does Jesus tell His disciples to "make disciples" of? Explain your answer.  
*All nations. Jesus desired for the Gospel message to go to all people and nations. It would begin in Jerusalem and move to Judea and Samaria and then to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The word used for "nations" means people.*
7. In your own words, rewrite below what Jesus is telling His disciples and us to do.  
*Go to all people and make followers of Jesus who will themselves make more disciples.*

## January 10 | Disciple-making Matthew 28:20

1. Write out verse 20 below.
2. What are the first few words of verse 20? Why is "teaching" important to disciple-making?  
*"...and teaching." The word "teaching" is important because it is one of the ways disciples are made.*
3. What were the disciples supposed to teach future disciples according to Jesus in verse 20?  
*The disciples were commanded to teach those they would disciple TO OBEY everything Jesus commanded them. This was more than just passing on information. It was sharing these commands to the point where disciples practiced them and were transformed.  
Information + Application = Transformation*

4. What was Jesus's promise to the disciples in the latter half of verse 20? Why is this significant in disciple-making?

*Being a Christian means that Jesus is the Lord of one's life. This means that Jesus is ruler or master. But Jesus is not just master. He says in verse 20, "And be sure of this: I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS." Jesus is present. As a matter of fact, He is ALWAYS with his people, especially as they are obeying His command to "go, and make disciples." He will never leave His people. This is a sign of His faithfulness, and it is a comfort that we can take with us daily wherever we go. He will never leave us or forsake us, no matter what.*

5. How long did Jesus say he would be with us? What does this mean?

*To the very end of the age. The end of the age would be the second coming of Christ. Therefore, as long as Jesus does not return, He is with those who are involved in the mission of making disciples.*

*Jesus wants you to finish what He began. He came to the disciples and taught them. He then died on the cross and rose from the dead. But before He ascended into heaven, He gave them, and us, the commission to make disciples. He did not ask them or us to do something that could not be accomplished without His help. When we seek to accomplish God's will, He will bless our efforts because we are seeking to obey Him!!!*

### January 11 | Disciple-making Colossians 1:28-29

1. Write verse 28 below.
2. Who is the focus of proclamation in verse 28?  
*Christ. Paul uses the word "He."*
3. How do Paul and Timothy (1:1) proclaim Christ in verse 28? Why is this significant?  
How might this be considered disciple-making?  
*Paul says that they do it by "admonishing" and "teaching" with all wisdom. Admonishing is warning people that without Christ they are without hope in this life and are destined to eternal separation in the life to come. Teaching is one of the ways we instruct people in the Gospel and inform them that salvation is found by faith in Christ. Admonishing and teaching others are considered disciple-making because they involve teaching others the good news of Jesus and seeing them come to maturity in Him.*
4. According to verse 28, why did Paul admonish and teach everyone with all wisdom? Why is this admirable and something we strive to imitate?  
*Paul wanted everyone to be presented mature in Christ. He did not just want them to become believers and remain spiritual babies. He wanted more for them. This is admirable because helping people mature in Christ is part of disciple-making. It is something every Christian should desire.*

*Colossians 1:9 states, "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with **the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.**" Paul proclaimed Jesus Christ everywhere he went. He wanted people to know and grow in Christ.*

### January 12 | Disciple-making Colossians 1:28-29

1. Write out verse 29 below.
2. In order to see everyone fully mature in Christ, what does Paul do?  
*Paul labors, or he contends.*
3. How does Paul describe his contending or laboring?



*The word used in the Greek New Testament to describe Paul's laboring is agonizomenos. We get our English word "agony" from this. Paul describes the labor of admonishing and teaching everyone so that they may become fully mature in Christ as agony or strenuous. Paul models what it takes to see people become mature in Christ.*

4. What attributes of Christ do you see in verse 29?  
*Christ's power, or energy.*
5. What effect does Christ's energy have on Paul?  
*It powerfully works in him to fulfill the task.*
6. What is Paul's primary message to the Colossians in these two verses (which is God's message to us)?  
*Jesus Christ is not only a means for us to achieve glory, but He is also life's greatest treasure, the way people reach maturity, and God wants to use us in that process.*

### **January 13 | Disciple-making**

#### **Colossians 1:28-29**

1. Write out both verses below.
2. After studying these verse, how can they help you personally as a disciple?  
*They help me understand that each Christian is to mature. This maturity happens with the help of others.*
3. How can these verses help you in discipling others?  
*These verses give me perspective on the cost of helping others mature in Christ. It involves agony and can be strenuous. These verses also inform me of the power of Christ that I can call and rely on to help me in this process.*
4. List the names of some people you are discipling below. Take a moment and ask God to give you insight into areas of their lives where they need to grow. Next, ask Him to help you help them spiritually.

### **January 15 | Biblical Community**

#### **Romans 12:3-8**

1. This week we are studying community. This passage has implications for how you fit into a particular body or community. What body is this referring to?  
*The book of Romans was addressed by Paul to the Roman Christians. When he uses the pronoun "we" in verse 4 to describe the body, he refers to the body of Christ.*
2. What does the text say about how we should view ourselves?  
*We should view ourselves with humility and sober judgement.*
3. Give a brief definition of each gift listed in this text.  
*Prophesying: Many different perspectives on this gift. Foretelling of future events or declaring something that can only be known through divine revelation. Prophecy is directed by the Holy Spirit.*  
*Service: Helping others in practical ways that fulfill a need.*  
*Teaching: Imparting knowledge or skill to someone. In this context, biblical truth.*  
*Encouragement: Supporting others with words and deeds that comfort them and help them grow in their own Christian life.*  
*Giving: Contribution of personal material, money, and time joyfully and without expecting anything in return.*  
*Leadership: The ability to oversee and direct others in a ministerial capacity.*

*Mercy: Expressing compassion to someone who is suffering or to someone who has committed wrongdoing.*

4. Take some time to “think of yourself with sober judgement.” How do you view yourself and how you relate to the body of Christ?

*Personal answer. If you don’t know the answer to this question, take some time and talk with a Christian friend or mentor who knows you well. Ask them to help you identify your gifts.*

5. Do you know what spiritual gift(s) you have been given? List them here.

*Answers will vary.*

6. In an area in which you are gifted, how are you using it in Christ’s body? How can you improve in this area?

*Answers will vary.*

## **January 16 | Biblical Community**

### **Romans 12:9-13**

1. To what community of people does this selection of Scripture relate? What in these verses suggests that?  
*Based on verse 13, Paul uses “the Lord’s people.” This points to the community of believers.*

2. In yesterday’s study, you learned about people with different gifts serving different functions in Christ’s body. Do these verses communicate a continuation of those functions, or expectations for all Christians?  
*Nothing in these verses suggests that these commands are for certain people. There is no qualifier in these verses. The commands are for all Christians.*

3. What is the common theme of this passage based on the commands given?  
*These verses contain a series of attributes of a Christian. They point to an attitude of love, humility, and honor toward God and our fellow believers. As the NASB puts it in verse 9, we should love “without hypocrisy.”*

4. Perform an honest self-evaluation of yourself. As you function in the body of Christ, how well are you living out the commands in these verses?  
*Answers will vary.*

5. Read Romans 6:13 and Romans 12:1. How do these verses shape your attitude toward obedience and commands given by the Holy Spirit?  
*Answers will vary. These verses suggest that our obedience to God is not done to earn His favor. Our obedience is an act of worship to God and a sacrifice to Him for His purposes.*

## **January 17 | Biblical Community**

### **Romans 12:14-21**

1. Again we see a list of commands as we live in community. What community do these verses refer to? Where do you see that in this text?

*I believe this portion primarily talks about Christians’ interactions with non-believers. I see this in the language used in “those who persecute you,” “do what is right in the eyes of everybody,” “If your enemy...”*

2. Identify the types of people mentioned in these verses.

*Those who persecute you, everybody (includes non-believers), your enemy.*

3. Verse 20 is a reference to Proverbs 25:21-22. Using a study resource of your choice, explain the possible meaning of “heap burning coals on his head.”  
*There are a few different views on what this means. One view is the idea that heaping burning coals on someone’s head would be restorative. In this act, he might feel shame and repent for his sinfulness. Some believe this relates to an early Egyptian custom of carrying a bowl of ashes on your head to express remorse. A different view seems to keep with the theme in the verse of serving your enemy. In the time the Proverb was written, fire was generally used for many basic life tasks. If your fire went out overnight, you’d need to ask your neighbor for some of his hot coals to relight your own fire. In this view, heaping burning coals is an undeserved gift.*
4. A key theme here is how we act toward those we don’t necessarily like or those who don’t like us. Think of people in your own life like this and your interactions with them. What commands in these verses are hardest for you?  
*Answers will vary.*
5. Read Colossians 1:21-22 and Romans 5:10. What word is used to describe us in our sinfulness? How does Christ’s work in your own life inspire you to live out these commands?  
*We were once considered God’s enemies. Answers will vary.*

## January 18 | Biblical Community

### Hebrews 10:19-25

1. What do you observe about this passage?
  - *A “therefore” connects these verses to what has come just before.*
  - *Jesus’s blood gives us confidence to approach God.*
  - *He is our great High Priest.*
  - *Faith brings full assurance that God will accept us because of Jesus’s work on our behalf.*
2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
  - *Jesus’s sacrifice for us counted!*
  - *In Christ, we can approach God and be confident He will receive us!*
  - *Faith brings full assurance that God will accept us because of Jesus’s work on our behalf.*
3. Compare a new and living way with its alternative. Fill in the blanks:  
*A new and living way is better than an **old** and **dead** way.*

Notice what the new and living way opens up for us. We get to draw near to God! The author is giving truth about how the old way (sacrifices and religious rituals, etc.) doesn’t draw us near to God, but through Jesus we can experience and draw near to God in a confident way.

4. What does the author say we should draw near to God with?  
*Sincere hearts*
5. Now notice how this invitation is open to “we” and “us.” Here’s an important question. How do you practice this drawing near to God with others?
  - *Praying with others*
  - *Accepting others and confessing sin with others, etc.*
6. What steps can you take to improve the regularity of practicing this?  
*Community groups, intentional time with others to pray and study the Word, asking spiritual questions about each other, etc.*

7. What would sincere hearts drawing near to God look like in a group setting? How could living this out as a family change the environment in your household?
  - *Praying with others*
  - *Accepting others and confessing sin with others, etc.*
  - *More peace at home. Quicker resolution to arguments. More honor for God and more honor for one another.*
8. How would these practices help Christians grow in their faith?
  - *We'd be less likely to play games and pretend we're okay when we are not okay.*
  - *Confession of sin would lead to more accountability and more honest pursuit of honoring God with others. We'd be living in the light. See 1 John 1:1-10*

**January 19 | Biblical Community**  
**Hebrews 10:19-25**

1. What do you observe about this passage?
  - *Jesus's blood gives us confidence to approach God.*
  - *He is our great High Priest.*
  - *Faith brings full assurance that God will accept us because of Jesus's work on our behalf.*
  - *Jesus provides the means necessary for us to be cleansed.*
  - *There's something about being washed with pure water. A likely reference to baptism.*
  - *God is faithful, so we can hold tight to His hope—His promises.*
2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
  - *Jesus's blood gives us confidence to approach God.*
  - *He is our great High Priest.*
  - *Faith brings full assurance that God will accept us because of Jesus's work on our behalf.*
  - *Jesus provides the means necessary for us to be cleansed.*
  - *God is faithful, so we can hold tight to His hope—His promises.*
3. What are possible interpretations of the phrase "having our bodies washed with pure water"?
  - *Likely a reference to baptism.*
  - *Allusions to Old Testament covenant purification rituals, now perfected in Christ's cleansing of us.*
  - *Other thoughts? See commentaries on this passage.*
4. How does baptism show community and fellowship? If you are a follower of Jesus, have you been baptized publicly? (Yes/No)  
*We are united into His family, so there is automatic fellowship with other believers and with God then as our Father. Being united into His family brings automatic community as we now belong/participate in Him together.*
5. Notice again the "us"/"we" language. What are these verses calling us to do together?  
*Draw near to God, and hold unswervingly to the hope we have.*
6. How can the recognition that we are all sinners loved by God with the hope of Him really changing us affect the environment of your household and family relationships? What would you more likely do to each other in light of this?  
 Consider Ephesians 4:1-2  
 Make a list of how Harvesters can live these things from Hebrews and Ephesians out together.
  - *Accepting others and confessing sin with others, etc.*

- *More peace at home. Quicker resolution to arguments. More honor for God and more honor for one another.*
- *We'd be less likely to play games and pretend we're okay when we are not okay.*
- *Confession of sin would lead to more accountability and more honest pursuit of honoring God with others. We'd be living in the light. See 1 John 1:1-10*
- *More kindness, patience, forgiveness, and gentleness from parents to children, and vice versa. More honoring one another instead of selfish pursuits with our time and resources.*

## January 20 | Biblical Community

### Hebrews 10:19-25

1. What do you observe about this passage?
  - *God is faithful. We have something good (hope in Jesus) to hold onto without compromise.*
  - *We should consider how to spur each other on to passionate living that shows love to others.*
  - *We should meet together regularly.*
  - *We should encourage one another.*
  - *The Day is approaching! Jesus will return, and we should anticipate that and together stay ready for it.*
2. What are the implicit promises/hope in these verses?
  - *God is faithful.*
  - *The Day is approaching! Jesus will return!*
3. For more biblical information on "The Day of the Lord," see many verses from the Old Testament Prophets.  
 Here's a list: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Day-Of-The-Lord>
4. Notice again the "us"/"we" language. What are these verses calling us to do together?
  - *We have something good (hope in Jesus) to hold onto without compromise.*
  - *We should consider how to spur each other on to passionate living that shows love to others.*
  - *We should meet together regularly.*
  - *We should encourage one another.*
  - *We should anticipate Jesus's return together and together stay ready for it as His people.*
5. Review your list above. Is it specific? If not, how can you make your list specific? You may want to add specific actions, or even names of people to your list. Then pray about how to begin or improve your practice of community with Harvesters.

## January 22 | Scripture

### Psalms 1

1. Two ways are open for mankind to live. What are two ways that people can live with regard to God?  
*They can seek to follow God (righteous) or the ways of this world (wicked). The way of the righteous is one that centers on the law of the Lord, which would have been the revelation from God at that time. Today we have the entire inspired Word as opposed to just the early books of the Old Testament.*
2. Does sin happen all at once? How do people fall into the ways of the wicked?  
*Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me (Psalm 51:5). We are born sinners but the path of the wicked is also a progression. Blessed is the man who does not walk, stand, or sit—in step, in the way, or in the company of the wicked. With each analogy the expression becomes more intense. This shows the progression from a casual influence of ungodly people to collusion with them in scorn against the*

*righteous. Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.*

3. How does the Creator God see the one who is not characterized by evil influence?  
*He is blessed and enjoys the spiritual peace and joy that results from being right with God.*

## **January 23 | Scripture**

### **Psalm 1**

1. What influences a godly person?  
*The Word of God. The progression of a godly person is a growing delight and love for God's Word. An increasing love for God increases a love for His Word, and vice versa.*
2. How does taking delight in God's Word affect one's life?  
*One's life is like a tree that has all the nutrients it needs to prosper. God's Word promises us that He has plans to prosper us and give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). Delighting in God is drawing life and fulfillment from the Giver of life and Creator of every good thing. What better place to receive that which we need to live than the source?*
3. When does the fruit and/or prosperity show up?  
*Yields its fruit in season. Not necessarily right after planting.*
4. What does it mean to prosper?  
*What the godly person does will be controlled by the Law of God. If a person drinks of the Word of God, his or her actions will be godly and the activities that are controlled by God will prosper, that is, come to fruition in the way that God desires.*
5. Does this mean that we won't have troubles?  
*By no means. "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:28).*

## **January 24 | Scripture**

### **Psalm 1**

1. What does it mean to be wicked?  
*We may think of it as grossly evil, but here it is used to describe anyone not in a covenant relationship with God. They live according to their passions. They may do kind and charitable deeds, but they are not godly and God's evaluation of them is that they are without eternal merit.*
2. How does God see the lives of those who are separate from Him?  
*They are worthless husks of grain to be blown away by the wind. This is a stark contrast to the fruitful, valuable, righteous person.*
3. How does God separate the way of the righteous from the way of the wicked?  
*The way means one's whole manner of life, including what directs it and what it produces. The basis for this judgment is the Lord's knowledge of someone's life.*
4. What will be the consequences for the righteous and the wicked?  
*The righteous are those who are related by covenant with the Lord, who live by His Word, and who produce things of eternal value. They will be with God eternally. God will separate the righteous from the wicked in the judgment. He will divide the righteous and sinners as a man separates the grain from the chaff. The Lord is on the side of those who seek Him, but He will destroy the wicked.*

## January 25 | Scripture

### 2 Timothy 3:14-17

1. Background/context: Who is the author and who is the recipient of this letter? “But as for you” indicates that the author is referring back to something mentioned earlier—what might he be referring to?  
*Paul is writing to Timothy to encourage and instruct the young leader as he matures in his leadership role. In verses prior to this passage, Paul had advised Timothy that anyone who desires to live a godly life will suffer persecution. He further stated that evil men will grow worse and worse, further and further from the truth. This is the context of Paul’s encouragement to Timothy to stick to the truth he has learned from Scripture.*
2. Define the terms used by the author to describe the benefits of “all Scripture” in this text:
  - a. Teaching—*passing on information, ideas, lessons*
  - b. Rebuking—*a stern instruction to modify a behavior or thought*
  - c. Correcting—*pointing out something that needs to change*
  - d. Training—*further developing a thought, trait, action, idea, etc.*
3. This passage teaches us that the Scriptures make us wise for salvation and equipped for good works. How is God’s Word accomplishing those things in your life currently?  
*Answers will vary.*

## January 26 | Scripture

### 2 Timothy 4:1-2

1. In these verses, what is the main command given by Paul?  
*Preach the Word!*
2. How does verse 1 give weight to the charge that Paul gives to Timothy in verse 2?  
*Paul’s choice of words in his charge to Timothy implies that eternal matters are at stake here. Preaching the Word is not just a fun pastime or exciting new hobby or solemn duty. It has eternal significance.*
3. In view of the way in which Paul stresses to a young leader how important it is for him to preach the Word, what significance should God’s Word have in your life? Is there anything that needs to change in your attitude toward/use of the Word?  
*God’s Word should be the go-to source of truth, wisdom, and instruction in my life. But as more than just a book of rules or guidelines for me to follow, it is the means by which God reveals Himself to people today. (Answers will vary more for the second part of this question about what might need to change in your life.)*

## January 27 | Scripture

### 2 Timothy 4:3-5

1. The first word in today’s passage should immediately make you want to look back at yesterday’s passage (unless it’s still fresh in your mind!). Restate the main command/idea from 2 Timothy 4:1-2.  
*Preach the Word—the fact that people will turn away from sound doctrine and turn to myths or whatever else they want to hear is why it is so important that Timothy preaches the Word. The Word of God is TRUTH that will overthrow all myths and false doctrine.*
2. What reasons does Paul give for maintaining a focus on preaching the word?  
*Paul says that people will abandon sound doctrine and find teachers who will tell them what they want to hear—what makes them feel good. He also states that people will turn aside from the truth and follow myths.*
3. When or where have you seen people turning their ears from the truth?  
*Answers will vary based on individual experiences.*



4. You may not be a young leader preparing to take on a significant role in leading the church right now (or maybe you are!), but can you think of some places or circumstances in your life where you need to maintain a focus on preaching the Word?

*Again, answers will vary. Perhaps you have regular interactions with family members or coworkers or students who don't know Jesus. It's sometimes hard to remember to preach the Word during those interactions. Maybe well-meaning Christians are unknowingly propagating false doctrine in a Bible study or small group you attend. You can preach the Word in those situations "with great patience and careful instruction."*

#### **January 29 | Prayer**

##### **Acts 1:12-14**

1. Can you name a couple of reasons He stayed on earth?  
*To prove to His followers that He was truly alive. He wanted to teach His followers and prepare them for the task of telling the world about Christ and His Gospel message.*
2. What was Jesus's command and gift He told the disciples to wait on?  
*Go to Jerusalem and wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them.*
3. Read Matthew 10:19-20 and Luke 12:11-12. What is the common theme of these two passages?  
*The Holy Spirit teaches and speaks through us. We are powerless in witnessing if we try in our own strength.*
4. When Jesus was ascending into heaven, what were the encouraging words the two angels had for the disciples?  
*Jesus is coming back in the same way He left.*

#### **January 30 | Prayer**

##### **Acts 1:12-14**

1. Do you see anywhere in these verses where Jesus commanded His disciples to pray?  
*No*
2. The disciples had such a great work to do. Can you see in verse 14 what the first action they took was?  
*Pray. Please notice they gathered others with them and "they joined constantly in prayer."*
3. Corporate prayer as you can see is essential to establishing a healthy church and prayer is one of our six pillars here at Harvest Community Church. Can you name some benefits of corporate prayer for the body of believers?  
*These are just a few of them: encouragement, unity, worship, repentance, and seeing answered prayers.*

#### **January 31 | Prayer**

##### **Acts 1:12-14**

1. Simon Peter probably discussed the fall and death of Judas. It was his falling away and not his death that caused the need to replace him. What are the two requirements his replacement had to have? Please read Acts 1:21.  
*This replacement had to be a follower of Christ throughout His ministry and had to witness Christ's resurrection.*
2. What was the election method the apostles used?

*Cast lots. Mentioned seventy times in the Old Testament to determine the will of God. Joseph's and Matthias's names were put on lots, placed in an urn, and then the one that fell first from the urn was taken to be the Lord's choice. (Dr. Charles Ryrie, The Acts of the Apostles, Page 16).*

3. What important act in verse 24 preceded the election?  
*Earnest prayer preceding the casting of the lots.*

4. Who was added to the eleven apostles?  
*The lot fell on Matthias.*

## **February 1 | Prayer**

### **Ephesians 6:18-20**

1. What observations can you make about verse 18?  
*Example: That we should pray to God all the time with all kinds of prayers and requests and for everyone. This can be accomplished in your personal devotional time and/or in a corporate prayer setting. I find that journaling is a good way to pray, because you are focused and your prayer is recorded, which gives you the ability at some point to confirm an answered prayer.*
2. As you read and meditate on verse 18 what is your interpretation of the different elements in that verse?  
*Example: That God desires to hear our prayer requests, which we should be open to pray at any time. (It's okay to have a set time every day to pray, but we must be alert to pray anytime we are prompted.) God wants us to pray for others—"all the Lord's people."*
3. As you understand verse 18, how can you apply this to your daily walk with God?  
*Example: To fervently pray for all people with a lot of different types of prayers. The more you make it a routine, the more effective you will become in consistently praying.*

## **February 2 | Prayer**

### **Ephesians 6:18-20**

1. In Paul's circumstance, what would your prayer request have been?  
*Example: My prayer request would have been the same as Paul's. I would have put the need for encouragement and boldness to present the Gospel first.*
2. In your circle of influence how well do you communicate the Gospel to others?  
*Example: It is talked about, but not always with the boldness and passion that it should be, and not always when the opportunity presents itself. Sometimes we forget that all that is required of us is to plant the seed.*
3. What is your interpretation of verse 19?  
*Example: That we all need prayer for boldness in presenting the Gospel of Christ.*
4. What are some actions that you can take to apply this verse to your life?  
*Example: Praying for yourself and others, sharing the Gospel, discipling others, and helping them to reach others. This can be done with anyone willing to listen, especially within your own family.*

## **February 3 | Prayer**

## Ephesians 6:18-20

1. Do you see yourself as an ambassador? Do you declare the Gospel fearlessly?  
*Example: Yes, but I don't always declare the Gospel fearlessly. But we are all called to share the Gospel and to make disciples who make disciples.*
2. What is your interpretation of this verse?  
*Example: Paul was a prisoner, but really a prisoner for the Lord. He needed prayer in order to proclaim the Gospel fearlessly. All of us need that same boldness and approach to prayer.*
3. How can you apply this verse to your life?  
*Example: Pray, act, be in the Word daily, find someone to mentor you if needed.*

## February 5 | Grace

### Galatians 5:13-6:2

1. Meditate on verses 13-15 of chapter 5. Write down three to five observations and/or questions from this passage.  
*Example Answer: Paul speaks to them as family (brothers and sisters). We were called to be free. We choose what to do with our freedom. One option is to indulge the sinful nature. The other is to serve others in love. Only part of Christ's summary of the law is quoted. Why? Does verse 15 give a reason not to indulge the sinful nature? Why is this here?*
2. What freedom is God (via Paul) talking about in verse 13? Hint: See 5:1-4; 4:8-10; 3:22-25 (see also Rom. 8:1-2; John 8:34-36; Rom. 6:18).  
*Freedom from having to obey the OT law (including circumcision) with its regulations for daily life, ceremonies, procedures, and requirements. The law is good as a standard of righteousness (Rom. 3:31; Rom. 7:7,11-13), but because of our sinful, rebellious natures, it only brought out more sin (Rom. 5:20). The law was not a means of righteousness (Gal. 5:21; Rom. 8:7; Rom. 3:19). It was powerless to save (Rom. 10:4; Rom. 8:3; Col. 2:23). It was meant to drive us to God for mercy in Christ (Gal. 3:19; Rom. 3:20; Acts 13:38-39). Praise God, Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law (Matt. 5:17-20; Rom. 8:4), setting us "free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). We who have put our faith in Christ Jesus are no longer slaves to sin. We are God's children, fully accepted and dearly loved.*  
  
*We are free from the bondage of trying to keep the law in order to be saved. This even includes the Ten Commandments (Rom. 7:4-8; Rom. 13:8-10). Yet we are not lawless (1 John 3:4), because we are bound to Christ (Rom. 7:6), fulfilling the law by the Spirit of love (Rom. 13:10; Gal. 6:2) as a result of salvation, not to earn it. We are saved only by faith.*
3. What is meant by the word "flesh" here (translated as "sinful nature" in NIV84 and NLT)? For an indication of its meaning, look up the following verses: Matt. 26:41; John 3:6; John 6:63; Rom. 7:5, 25; Rom. 8:1-13. John MacArthur states, "In this context, flesh does not refer to the physical body but to the sinful inclination of fallen mankind, the old self, whose supreme desire is to do its own will and to satisfy its sinful appetites. It is a synonym for sinful self-will." (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Galatians*, Chicago IL: Moody Publishers, 1987, p146).
4. What wrong use of freedom does Paul mention in verse 13? What correct use of freedom is mentioned? What motives are stated or inferred?  
*Wrong use: indulge the sinful nature (Rom. 6:15). Correct use: serve one another in love. Selfishness or a self-centered mindset could be inferred as the motive for indulging the sinful nature. Love is stated as the motive for serving one another.*

*Paul is basing this argument on their freedom from trying to earn salvation. We, like them, are freely accepted by God because of Christ. Now that we are free, what do we do with that? How should we respond to God's grace? Live for ourselves, or live for God and live out who He has remade us to be?*

5. Why does verse 14 start with “For”? Why do you think only part of what Jesus said in Matt. 22:34-40 about the summary of the law is mentioned in verse 14?

*This point, coming right after verse 13, gives the reasoning behind not indulging in the flesh but rather serving others in love. The Galatians were trying to be righteous by obeying all these external laws, but the whole law and prophets (Matt. 22:40) are contained in the command to love one another. This moves the focus from an external system of rules to a heart-level issue. They were trying to be righteous using a system that set them up for failure. True righteousness comes by grace through the Spirit and overflows from the heart.*

*He may have mentioned only part of Matt. 22:34-40 in order to highlight that part they were most clearly failing at—i.e., loving one another (see verse 15). Love comes from God and is a result of the new birth (Gal. 5:6b & Gal. 6:15; Rom. 5:5). Another possible reason is that we show we love God (the part Paul left out) when we love our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 4:20-21), so in a way it really was included after all.*

*Paul also may have had in mind the Last Supper, where Jesus served his disciples by washing their feet and then gave them the new command to love one another (John 13:1-17, 34-35).*

6. What do you surmise to be a problem in the Galatian church based on verse 15?

*It seems from verse 15 that the Galatian church members were not getting along with each other (“if you bite and devour each other”). The picture painted is one of antagonism, selfishness, and harm. This is the opposite of love, and its path results in mutual destruction. This is an incorrect use of freedom and does not fulfill the law. The Galatians were being influenced by the Judaizers to submit to circumcision and to keep the law in order to be righteous before God. However, look at the result. It did not result in righteous living (see also Col. 3:23). Also, not surprisingly, in Gal. 4:15, Paul notes they have lost their joy (a fruit of the Spirit).*

7. How might a human works-based rather than God's grace-based approach to righteousness contribute to these problems?

*Works-based righteousness, which is not possible, is man-centered and inevitably results in comparison to see how you are doing relative to others. It results in self-righteousness, boasting, and pride, which God hates (see Rom. 3:27; Luke 18:9-14). This viewpoint is the opposite of the attitude of humility and love that Jesus demonstrated in Philippians 2. Living under the law by trying to work to be good enough stems from and results in fear of punishment, but living in the Spirit is living in love without fear of God's wrath (Rom. 8:15; 1 John 4:16-18; Heb. 2:14-15). We are freed to love others just as God loved and loves us.*

## **February 6 | Grace**

### **Galatians 5:13-6:2**

1. Write down some observations, thoughts, and questions from these verses.

*Example: What is walking by the Spirit? Note “walk by” (verse 16; Rom. 8:4), “led by” (verse 18), “live by” (verse 25), and “keep in step with” (verse 25). The flesh and the Spirit are at odds with one another. What are the differences between being led by the Spirit and being under the law (internal leading versus external conforming to law).*

2. What is meant by “walk by the Spirit” (verse 16)? Is this given as something that’s optional for the Christian?

*The word “walk” indicates an ongoing, steady, purposeful reality for the Christian. It should be a continual reality. It speaks to how we should live our lives and under what power and control. It is only by the power*

of the Holy Spirit that we can “not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” Although it is only by the power of the Spirit, the fact that this is a command speaks to our involvement (Col. 2:6-7; Eph. 4:1). Since this is a command, it is not optional. We must yield to the Spirit in obedience. Growth toward being more like Jesus (Rom. 8:29) requires allowing God to be in control (Eph. 5:18; Rom. 8:9). It requires actively working to get rid of sin (Rom. 13:14; 1 John 3:1-3), but not from the standpoint of trying to be accepted by God (fear-based) but from the basis of thankfulness and love for Him. (1 John 3:1-3; Rom. 12:1; 2 Tim. 2:19-22). But this is done in full reliance upon the power of the Spirit in us to obey. And when we fall (1 John 1:8; James 3:2), we confess our sins to Him (1 John 1:9; John 13:10) and He brings us back into fellowship with Him and our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 1:6-7).

3. Describe the conflict within every born-again child of God (verse 17). [Extra: Read Rom. 8:1-17]  
*We received a new nature, born of God, when we were saved. Yet we still have the remnants of the sinful nature. There is a war within us (James 4:1). God's Spirit is opposed to our sinful desires. The Spirit inside us convicts us of sin (rebukes/chastens—Heb. 12:5-6), often using His word to do so (2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12).*

*An unbeliever will not have this same kind of conflict, because they don't have the Spirit. They do have a conscience and may have a short-term shallow regret or sorrow over consequences (2 Cor. 7:10), yet apart from God's restraint or the convicting work of His Spirit (John 16:8), an unbeliever lives according to the flesh.*

4. From verse 18, what is the solution to the conflict stated in verse 17? What is the implication of being led?  
*The solution is being led by the Spirit. The implication is that we have a choice of whether or not to follow. James 4:1 mentions one aspect of this internal battle, and 4:7 says to submit to God in humility. Note: God does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).*

*In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). Note also that before Jesus went to the cross He prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). Part of being led by the Spirit is seeking God's will above our own.*

*Note also that Rom. 8:14, which says, “For those who are **led by the Spirit of God** are the children of God,” is mentioned in the context of this battle (e.g., Rom. 8:12-13).*

5. Why does it say we are not under the law if we are led by the Spirit?  
*We don't need an external system of requirements and regulations anymore. When we have and are led by the Spirit of God, we have an internal driving motivation to love. And this from verse 14 fulfills the moral requirements and intent of the law. See also Rom. 13:8-10; Rom. 7:4-12.*
6. Read Colossians 3:5-16. Note the similarities between that passage and verses 19-26. Do you think the lists in Gal 5:19-23 are complete?  
*Based on the similarities and differences between Gal. 5:22-23 and Col. 3:12-14, I don't think the lists given in Gal. 5:19-23 were meant to be exhaustive. They were probably meant to be representative of the results of living by the flesh and of living by the Spirit.*
7. What is the source of the list of evil deeds listed in verses 19-21? What is the source of the list of good qualities and actions in verses 22-23?  
*The sinful nature is the source of evil behavior. The Spirit is the source of love, etc.*

*Note that the word used for love is the Greek word agapē (<http://biblehub.com/interlinear/galatians/5-22.htm>). This kind of love is not based on feelings or emotions, but on the will. It is a giving love (John 3:16—“God so loved...that He gave...”) that acts for the good of the object of love. It is a love that is not conditioned on the response of others (Matt. 5:44—love your enemies). It is a love that God demonstrates and that originates in Him. This is a kind of love that people don't have apart from the work of God in their hearts.*

8. What does the outward evidence in these lists say about the condition or ruling influence of such a person's heart?

*The lifestyle we live and the deeds we practice reveal the condition of our hearts (1 John 1:6). If our lives are characterized by sin and not the life of Christ, then we have to question whether we are really saved to begin with (see 2 Cor. 12:20-13:5). Note the warning in verse 21b.*

*Christians still do fall into sin (1 John 1:8; James 3:2), but God disciplines his children to lead them toward holiness (Heb. 12:7-11). Also, baby Christians may have a lot of worldliness to overcome (1 Cor. 3:1-3). True Christians will bear at least some fruit, and the Father will prune us so that we bear more fruit to His glory (John 15:1-8). We bring glory to God when our lives look more and more like Jesus's.*

## **February 7 | Grace**

### **Galatians 5:13-6:2**

1. Write down some observations from this passage.  
*Example: We belong to Jesus by faith. "Have crucified" is a past action. "Since we" in verse 25 links it to verse 24. He is continuing to talk to believers. What is the meaning of "caught"? Who should do the restoration? What other Scriptures talk to this? What is the law of Christ?*
2. Compare verse 24 to Col. 2:11-14. See also Gal. 2:20 and Rom. 6:6-7. In what sense has the sinful nature been crucified? Notice that this is a past event. What is Paul talking about? In what sense were we involved? *He is talking about salvation: the new birth by the Spirit. Our involvement was to believe in what Christ did at the cross to pay for our sins and to save us from the punishment we deserved. The sinful nature is in some ways like a zombie—it is dead in the sense that it has lost its control over us. And yet we are still living in these bodies that have yet to be glorified, and so we are still tempted to sin. There is now this conflict within us that verses 17-18 detail. The sinful nature has received its death blow. We don't have to follow its desires anymore (Rom. 8:12). You don't have to do what you sometimes want to do, because the real you wants to live for God, and God gives us the power and teaches us to say no to the flesh (Titus 2:11-14). Note that Rom. 6:11-16 follows after Rom. 6:6. Although the sinful nature has been crucified, we still must "put to death the misdeeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13). This is reminiscent of how God gave the Israelites the promised land and gave them victory over their enemies in the land, but God required them to fight and walk by faith.*
3. What does "live by the Spirit" mean? What about "keep in step with the Spirit"? Note some similarities between verses 25-26 and verses 16 and 18.  
*This seems to continue the thought from verse 24. We now live by the Spirit. That is, we have new spiritual life, and God lives in us by his Spirit as a result of salvation. Christ is our life (Col. 3:4).*

*Since we have been made new in our inner being, let us follow after God. This means choosing to follow the Spirit's leading and effort on our part to "keep in step." I think the idea is to follow closely like a child walking in his/her father's footsteps—to imitate closely. Eph. 4:1 says to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord." If we are walking closely with God, abiding in Christ, we will be growing in the process of sanctification—that is, He will be bearing fruit in us, and we will be putting to death the misdeeds of the body and becoming more like Jesus. God wants our cooperation in this process of spiritual growth.*

*Note that Gal. 5:26 follows after Gal. 5:25 in a similar way that Rom. 6:11-15 follows after Rom. 6:6. That is, we have had a heart changed by the Spirit. Now choose to live accordingly. Clothe yourselves with Christ (Rom. 13:14) so that you look more and more like Him.*

*To summarize verses 24-25, Paul is saying that since we belong to Christ and have crucified the flesh and have a new life, we should live like it by closely following the Spirit.*

4. What are some possible meanings for the word “caught” in 6:1?

*The word “caught” in verse 1 could refer to the fact that the sin becomes known, but I like how the NLT renders it—“overcome.” So, this could be talking about a believer being ensnared in a pattern of sin from which they either are unable or unwilling to escape.*

5. How might Luke 6:39-42 shed further light on Galatians 6:1? In what ways might we need to watch ourselves? What is the goal?

*A spiritual person is someone who is walking in the Spirit, and from the Luke 6 passage, he is someone who would not be in slavery to the same kind of sin (or to a larger degree). Note that Jesus didn't say not to help with the speck in a brother's eye, but to first remove the plank from your own eye before you do.*

*From the context of Gal. 6:1-5, we need to watch ourselves so that we don't become prideful when assisting someone else, as we may be tempted to think of ourselves as better than the person who fell (pride goes before a fall). It is helpful to realize that “there but for the grace of God, go I.” We are all sinners saved by grace. Also, there is the need to be watchful so that we are not enticed by the same sin as the person we are helping.*

*The goal is for the restoration of the sinning brother or sister. Note that the way the restoration is done is important as well—it should be done with gentleness (which, by the way, is a facet of the fruit of the Spirit).*

6. From verse 2, what is the law of Christ? Hint: Gal. 5:14; James 2:8; John 13:34

*To love and serve one another sacrificially and humbly (like Jesus did). Since Christ fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law for us, we are free by faith in Him to obey God from the heart (Rom. 6:17) out of love and gratitude. Jesus said His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Love is our motivation (2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 John 4:19).*

7. What are some practical ways we can carry each other's burdens?

*Praying for each other is a big one. Helping each other overcome sin (6:1) by prayer, exhortation and encouragement, and sharing God's Word. In addition, serving each other in big and small ways (verse 13) is another. Bearing with each other by not being easily angered and forgiving one another (1 Cor. 13:5; Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:2). There are many possibilities here.*

## **February 8 | Grace**

### **Philemon**

1. In your own words, define biblical grace.

*Suggested answer: Undeserved kindness*

2. How does Paul describe his relationship with Philemon?

*Suggested answer: A loving brother who has brought him great joy.*

3. How does Paul describe Philemon's walk in the Gospel?

*Suggested answer: He loves fellow believers and has strong faith.*

4. Describe the tone of Paul's appeal to Philemon in relation to Onesimus.

*Suggested answer: Warm, humble, as a friend.*



5. In what ways was Paul transformed by grace?  
Suggested answer: *Not using his authority, but addressing his brother in love (verses 8-10).*
6. In what ways was Philemon transformed by grace?  
Suggested answer: *Generous, loving the brethren, partner in ministry (verses 4-6).*
7. In what ways was Onesimus transformed by grace?  
Suggested answer: *No longer an unprofitable slave, now a brother and fellow man in the Gospel. Useful to Paul (verses 11, 16).*

## **February 9 | Grace**

### **Philemon**

1. How does the concept of our communion with one another and with Christ impact our actions when we've been wronged?  
Suggested answer: *We are all equal in Christ. As eternal coheirs with Christ, we must find reconciliation.*
2. How does Paul's attitude in this verse exhibit grace?  
Suggested answer: *Paul does not demand this or manipulate.*
3. Consider the statement, "Grace is allowing God to be God in the lives of others." Does this align with Paul's practice in this relationship?  
Suggested answer: *Yes, Paul allows God's Spirit to bring obedience to the Gospel.*
4. What other passages of Scripture can you think of that might support that statement?  
*2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 4:32*

## **February 10 | Grace**

### **Philemon**

1. List some of the benefits that might proceed from this reconciliation.  
Suggested answer: *An encouraging brother, a fellow minister in the church, an employee/partner he could trust.*
2. Why could Paul be so confident of Philemon's response?  
*His past history and his devotion to Christ.*
3. How does this challenge your inner man?  
Suggested answer: *I am challenged to consistently live in obedience to the Gospel so that it would only seem natural that I would obey in this area as well.*