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Heb. dabar; Gk. logos [lovgo"] and rhema [rjh'ma]).

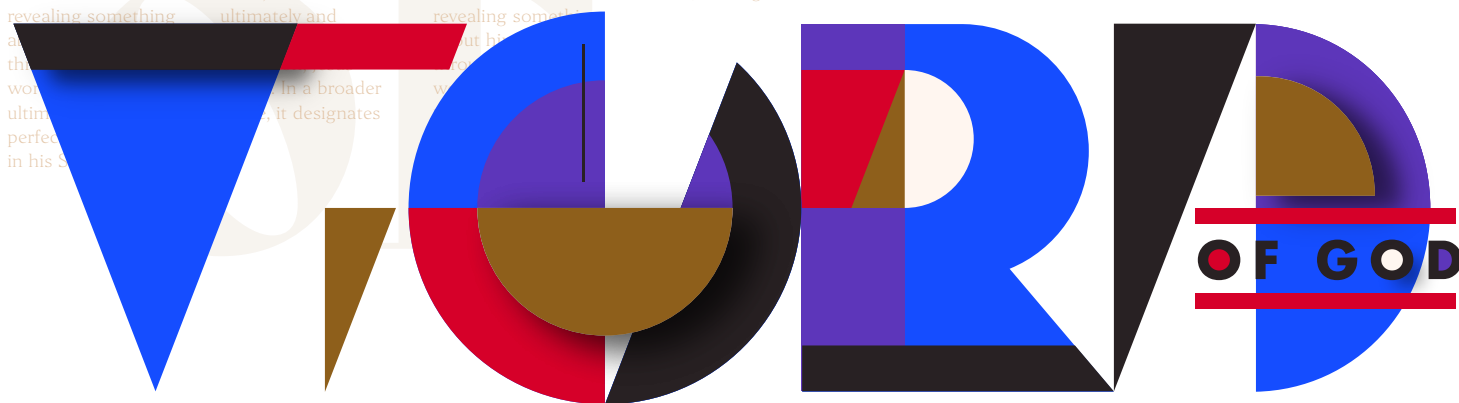
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GOD

Part 1: The Old Testament

Week 1: The Story

Week 2: The Poets and the Prophets

Part 2: The New Testament

Week 3: The Messiah

Week 4: The Church

A 28-DAY JOURNEY
THROUGH THE
STORY OF SCRIPTURE

red
rocks
church

Week 1: The Story

The first three-quarters of the Bible are called the Old Testament—the story of God creating the world, humans messing it up, and Israel trying (and often failing) to return to God. There is a lot to this story, but in week one, we are going to read seven of the most important chapters to get a better understanding of the key moments.

Day 1

Read: Genesis 1

The Bible starts with a really important line, “In the beginning, God...”.

It doesn't say in the beginning me; it says in the beginning, God. God was here before all of this—before your job, your drama, your stress, or anything else going on in your life. Yes, the Bible helps us, guides us, and teaches us, but the starting point for studying Scripture is realizing that it is primarily a book about God.

At the same time, the first page of Scripture also reminds us that there is something special about humans. After five days of creating the heavens and the earth, God shifts gears for day six and says, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness” (Genesis 1:26).

The mountains are magnificent, the beach is beautiful, and animals are amazing, but there is something that sets you and me apart from the rest of creation—we are created in the image of God!

Question: How does knowing that you are created in God's image change the way you view yourself today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: God, thank you for the reminder that you were here before all of us and all that is around us. Throughout my day, would you help me remember that perspective? At the same time, help me remember I am made in your image and that you have a plan and a purpose for my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Talk to your kids about how they are made in God's image. Ask them about something that they love about themselves and emphasize that God made them wonderfully! Pray together as a family and ask God to show you something special about yourself! Spend some time this week trying to memorize Joshua 1:8.

Day 2

Read: Genesis 3

The first two chapters of the Bible are amazing. Adam and Eve live in perfect harmony with each other, creation, and their Creator. But in Chapter 3, the serpent tricks Adam and Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, and suddenly everything changes.

Adam and Eve hear God “walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Genesis 3:8). Their response is to run and hide. They sow fig leaves together to try to cover themselves up and then immediately start playing the blame game. Adam blames Eve, and then Eve blames the serpent.

Scholars call this chapter ‘the fall’ because it’s the moment sin, shame, and fear created separation between God and us. From there, things spiraled out of control. So much so that it only takes one generation for humans to start killing each other. For the rest of the Old Testament, it becomes abundantly clear that humans are hopeless on our own. We don’t just need to clean up our lives a little bit; we need something greater. We need a Savior.

Question: We all have our own ways of running and hiding from God. Some of us stop going to church and stop praying; others use denial and try to convince ourselves and God that everything is fine. What is the number one way you tend to hide from God? Why do you think that is?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

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Prayer: God, Genesis 3 is a sobering reminder of human nature. Even though we are all prone to wander from the plan you have for us, thank you for being so patient with us. Thank you for sending your Son to pay the price for our sins so we can experience forgiveness and a fresh start. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read the story of Genesis 3 with your kids and ask them what they notice when Adam and Eve are tempted and sin. Remind your kids that Jesus came to cover our sins and that we can go to God about everything, including the mistakes and sins we make. Pray together and ask God to remind you of His patience for all of us!

Day 3

Read: Genesis 12

In Genesis 4-11, things get really bad. Even after God saves Noah and his family from the flood, humans continue to rebel against Him. By the end of Genesis 11, it begins to feel like humans are hopeless, but in Genesis 12, a brand-new story begins.

God reaches out to a man named Abraham (his name was Abram at that time) and gives him a new mission. God explains to Abraham that He wants to make a great nation out of Abraham’s lineage. All Abram has to do is leave the place where he is comfortable living and set out into the unknown.

To Abraham’s credit, he obeys. Without much instruction, he sets out and eventually ends up in a land called Canaan, (what we now call Israel).

The rest of Genesis tells the story of Abraham’s descendants figuring out life in Canaan. At the very end of the book, a severe famine hits, and the entire family ends up moving to Egypt. That’s where the book of Exodus picks up.

Question: Do you feel like God is calling you to take a step of faith in this season? If so, what is the step, and how do you feel about taking it? How does Abraham's story inspire you to move forward?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the constant reminder throughout Scripture that you always have more for your people. Would you give me the patience to listen and hear what you want me to do, and would you give me the courage to step out and follow your call? In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Talk to your kids about the rest of Genesis and how Abraham continued to step out in faith and how that means that he listened to what God asked him to do and obeyed. Ask your kids how they can step out in faith today. Maybe it's sharing their toys or sitting with someone different at lunch. Pray together as a family and ask God to show you where you can step out in faith today!

Day 4

Read: Exodus 20

The Book of Exodus begins 400 years after Genesis ends. Unfortunately, the Israelites had become slaves in Egypt. Fortunately, God's plan for His people has always been freedom, so He raises up a man named Moses to bring the people out of slavery and Egypt and bring them to the Promised Land.

In Exodus 20, the Israelites are out of Egypt, and God wants to give them some guidelines to keep them from straying from Him during their journey. We call these the ten commandments, and even if you are brand-new to the Bible, you've probably heard of them.

At times, in the Old Testament, it feels like God is just giving us a list of rules to follow, but that's not true; God uses the law to show the Israelites how to not just survive but thrive. Unfortunately, they didn't do a great job keeping the commands, and as a result, they constantly make their lives more difficult for themselves than they need to.

This law still serves as a roadmap to a thriving life for us today! But it is also a reminder that we will never be able to live a perfect life on our own. The law reminds us again that we need a Savior.

Question: Which of the ten commandments is the most challenging for you to keep? Why do you think that is?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: Father, thank you for always having our best interest in mind. Thank you for the great lengths you've always gone to in order to set us free from the chains that sin and shame create. Lord, teach me today to trust you and the plan you have for my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: As you go over the 10 Commandments today, read them with your kids. Share that the heart of the commandments is not just rules to follow, but that God wants us to live great lives. Ask your kids if there is a rule in your

house that seems frustrating, then explain why it is a rule to help them. Maybe it's holding your hand while in a parking lot or needing an adult present to play in the front yard. Pray together as a family and ask God to show you how to trust His plan for you!

Day 5

Read: Joshua 1

We call the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) the Torah. In addition to everything you've already read, they go on to talk about the rest of the Israelites' time wandering in the wilderness. The journey takes forty years, but they eventually find themselves right on the brink of The Promised Land.

At the end of Deuteronomy, Moses climbs up a mountain and is finally able to see the Promised Land, but then he dies.

Joshua 1 picks up the story from there. Joshua, one of Moses's disciples, is put in charge and told it is his job to lead the people into the Promised Land. That task sounds a lot easier than it actually was. There was a mighty rushing river they had to pass and then enemies to defeat in the land.

Because of these challenges, God gives Joshua a really important pep talk that we should all remember and hold onto today: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Question: God tells Joshua to "be strong and courageous" four separate times in a single chapter. Why do you think God repeated that phrase so many times? What does that tell us about Joshua? How can that encourage you to keep moving forward today, even if you feel scared?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the reminder that I don't have to be afraid today. There may be real threats all around me, but you are walking with me every step of the way. I pray for an increased level of courage and confidence as I step into my calling today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share Joshua 1:9 with your kids. Ask them what it means to be strong and courageous. Ask them how God can help them be strong and courageous throughout their day today. Pray together as a family and ask God to give you the confidence you need today! Continue to practice memorizing Joshua 1:8!

Day 6

Read: 1 Samuel 8

Once the Israelites finally make it to the Promised Land, you'd think their lives would be on an easy street from then on out, but nothing could be further from the truth. They constantly struggle because they keep turning away from God.

The design from the beginning was to let God be their King. To love, follow, and worship God. Trusting that the way God marked out for the Israelites is the path to abundant life.

Instead, in 1 Samuel 8, they decide they want a human king to lead them. God has always and will always be ready to be our King, but for some reason, humans have always been drawn to wanting another human to lead them.

What's interesting about this chapter is God doesn't argue back. Instead, He gives them what they want. A man named Saul ends up being the first king, and he does pretty well until the power gets to him, and he goes mad.

After that, David takes over as king, and although he makes a ton of mistakes (which we'll see next week), he's known as a man after God's own heart and leads the Israelites through some very tumultuous times.

Question: Mankind has a pattern of always wanting another human to be in charge, instead of trusting God to lead. How do you see that play out in our world today? Where might you choose to put your faith in God more than man?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: Father, thank you for being a good and gracious God who leads us perfectly, in a way no person ever could. Help me to remember to let you lead my life, even when I want to take matters into my own hands. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Talk to your kids about authority. Remind them that authority is a good thing that helps keep us safe. Explain to them that God gave them parents to help give them guidelines and in the same way God is our Heavenly Father who wants what is best for us. Pray together and ask God to help you honor Him in all you do and say!

Day 7

Read: Ecclesiastes 3

After King David's reign, his son Solomon takes over. Solomon's time is marked by peace. He is incredibly rich, so he builds the Temple, throws large parties, and tries to live life to the fullest. Yet, at the end of his life, he sits down to reflect and realizes that "everything is meaningless."

Ecclesiastes is about that realization. He concludes that even the wealthiest king, who had everything he could ever need, knew he was missing something. Without the Messiah, life still felt meaningless for the king.

Unfortunately, after Solomon, everything falls apart. When Solomon's son Rehoboam takes over, Israel splits in two—the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. From there, it doesn't take long for both Kingdoms to fall. In 721 BC, the Assyrians overthrow the Northern Kingdom, and then in 587 BC, the Babylonians overthrow the Southern Kingdom.

God's people live in exile for several decades until they are finally able to return to Jerusalem and rebuild. By that point, the people are tired and losing hope that the Messiah will ever come and save them.

Question: What should the book of Ecclesiastes, and the story of King Solomon change about how you live your life today? What are some things you might place high importance on, that won't matter to you in 1,000 years?

Weekly Memory Verse: Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Prayer: Thank you for the sobering reminder that nothing on this earth could truly bring me the peace and purpose I'm looking for outside of you. Lord, I re-surrender my life to you today. I trust you. I love you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Talk to your kids about how there is a time for everything, including celebrating, as well as being sad. Explain how Jesus is the reason that we get to enjoy so much in our lives and without Him we would feel that we are missing something. Pray as a family and ask Him to bring peace and purpose to your lives today!

Week 2: The Poets and the Prophets

The Old Testament is the story of God's consistent love for us in spite of our constant rebellion. But there is so much more to these 39 books than just the story. Along the way, we hear from the poets and prophets. The Psalms are songs that the people of the day would sing to worship God and to help process everything that was going on. The Prophets had divine insight about the future. This week, we are going to read a few of the most important moments from the poets and the prophets. As we go, notice how much of what they say foreshadows the coming Messiah.

Day 8

Read: Psalm 1

The Book of Psalms is a songbook consisting of 150 songs. These are the songs God's people grew up singing. Today, we may have different melodies, but we still sing a lot of the same lines.

Scholars call Psalm 1 an introduction to the other 149. It's a reminder that if we "delight in the law of the Lord" and "meditate on his law day and night" (Psalm 1:2), then we will be "like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither" (Psalm 1:3).

Question: What does it look like for you to meditate on God's Word today? What is one practical way you can carry Psalm 1 with you?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Prayer: Father, thank you for your promises and provision. Today, I want to be like a tree planted by streams of living water, so would you help me remember to meditate on your truth as I go throughout my day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read Psalm 1 with your kids! Share with them how Psalm 1 is talking about how following God allows us to have fruit and joy in everything we do. Pray with your kids and encourage them to ask God to be with them throughout their days! Spend some time starting to memorize Jeremiah 29:11 with your family and continue throughout the week!

Day 9

Read: Psalm 23

Psalm 23 is the most famous Psalm in the Bible. It was written by David (who wrote 73 of the 150). In the song, David reflects on his days as a shepherd, reminding us that God is the one who watches over us, keeps us safe, and even disciplines us at times. Psalm 23 is a gift. It's a song that we can hold onto in good times, bad times, scary times, and questionable times. Psalm 23 is a song for every situation.

Question: Does your life currently feel more like you are lying down in green pastures or like you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death? Either way, God is your shepherd. What would it look like to trust Him in whatever season you are in today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Prayer: Lord, thank you for being my shepherd. Today, would you remind me that you are protecting and leading me? Even if I am walking through the valley of the shadow of death, I don't have to be afraid because you are with me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read and talk through Psalm 23 with your kids today! Remind them that God is with us in the good times, the bad times, and everything in between. Remind them that with God, they will be able to find the good in every circumstance. Pray together and ask God to show you His presence today, even in the hard moments!

Day 10

Read: Psalm 51

David wrote Psalm 51 after his greatest moral failure. In a matter of a few months, David (the man after God's own heart) committed adultery, lied, and had someone killed to try to cover up his sins. David isn't an example of perfection, but he is a good example of what we should do when we fall short. Psalm 51 reminds us that even though we all stumble, God's grace is enough for us. All we have to do is turn to Him and ask for forgiveness.

Question: Like David, are you good at confessing when you do something wrong? When you mess up, do you immediately run to God, or do you tend to try to hide?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Prayer: Father, thank you for your love and your grace. I'm sorry for _____. I turn from my sins. Lord, wash them away and strengthen me to get back up and keep moving forward. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Spend some time talking through Psalm 51 with your children. Share with them what repenting is and how when you come to God when you make mistakes and sin, that He will always be there and forgive you. Open the conversation to see if your kids want to ask for forgiveness for anything and welcome this conversation with the same love God would give you. Pray together as a family and ask God to wash your mistakes away and to give you strength in all you do!

Day 11

Read: Proverbs 3

The Proverbs were written primarily by King Solomon to help us understand the heart of God. They are short, clever sayings that offer us wisdom.

One of the reasons the Proverbs are so important for us to read and memorize is because they give us an invitation to surrender. To stop leaning on our own understanding and instead believe in, and rely on God. In a world that screams at us to trust ourselves, Proverbs 3 gives us a freeing invitation to put our trust in God. When we do, He will make our paths straight (Proverbs 3:5).

Question: What is something you have a hard time trusting God with? What would it look like for you to let go?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Prayer: Father, I know you are the source of all the good things in my life. Today, I need your help. Teach me how to surrender and submit all my ways to you and help me lean on your strength instead of my own understanding. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Today, invite your kids into a conversation of what it means to trust God. Share that when we follow Him, we are choosing to trust His plans for us. Sometimes that can be hard because we want to do things our way, but when we surrender our lives to Him, we will be given His strength in all areas of our lives. Pray with your kids and ask God to help you all surrender your lives to Him, even in the hard moments. Don’t forget to keep learning Jeremiah 29:11 as a family!

Day 12

Read: Isaiah 53

About 700 years before Jesus, Isaiah prophesied (a fancy word for predicted) that there would be one coming who would take up our pain and our suffering, and be ‘pierced for our transgressions’. Isaiah went on to prophecy that each one of us, like sheep, will go astray, but the punishment that we deserve will be ‘on His shoulders’. By His wounds, we will be healed.

Who does that sound like?

Hopefully, by now you are starting to see how much of the Old Testament points to a person: Jesus. This is just one of over 300 prophecies about what the Messiah (the deliverer of God’s people) is going to look like. Jesus fulfilled them all. The Old Testament is like a puzzle that is missing a bunch of pieces, and Jesus fits all the pieces perfectly together to complete the picture.

Question: Have you heard of prophecy before? How does it make you feel to know that Jesus fulfilled not a few, but ALL of the prophecies written about Him? What does that mean for your ability to trust Him today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Prayer: Father, thank you for having a plan for my salvation from the very beginning. Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for me. I can’t imagine the pain you endured on the cross; it’s incredibly humbling to stop and realize you did that for me. By your wounds, I am healed. Help me to remember that today and to go live my life to the fullest!

FAMILY CHALLENGE: How special is it knowing that the whole Old Testament points to Jesus? Share Isaiah 53:5 with your kids today. Ask them how they have seen Jesus throughout this devotional so far. Talk to them about how Jesus is the reason our sins are forgiven and how the prophet Isaiah talked about this a whole 700 years before Jesus' time! Pray together as a family and thank God for the gift of Jesus and what He did for us on the cross!

Day 13

Read: Isaiah 61

Isaiah 61 is another good example of a prophecy that points to Jesus. Remember, this prophecy was written over 700 years before Jesus. And yet, in Luke 4, Jesus stood up in a synagogue and read Isaiah 61. When He finished reading He sat down and announced that He was the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Isaiah wrote in the middle of a very tumultuous time. He lived in Jerusalem when the people were far from God and he spent a lot of his time warning them that if they didn't turn back to God, they would suffer the consequences. They didn't listen, and sure enough, the Babylonians defeated Jerusalem and carried them off into exile.

Fortunately, that wasn't the end of their story. As we already read in Isaiah 53 and now in Isaiah 61, the Israelites were looking ahead to a greater hope, a Savior, the Messiah, who would come to set them free from oppression.

Question: How do you think you would've responded if you were in that synagogue in Luke 4 and heard Jesus read Isaiah 61 and proclaimed to be the Messiah?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Prayer: Father, thank you for having a plan for us from the beginning. Jesus, thank you for proclaiming good news to the poor, for mending broken hearts, for bringing freedom to the captives, and for teaching us how to live. Jesus, I want to live like you today. Would you give me opportunities to love others like you?

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Today, try to spend time sharing how Jesus continued to show that He was God's Son. Share the story of Jesus reading Isaiah 61 in the Synagogue and how Isaiah 61 prophesied who Jesus would be. Pray as a family and thank God for the plan that He had from the very beginning. Ask Him to show your family how to live more like Jesus today!

Day 14

Read: Jeremiah 29

Jeremiah is another important Prophet from the Old Testament. He wrote about 600 years before Jesus and witnessed the Israelites defeat and exile in Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:11 is one of the most popular verses in the entire Bible, and for good reason. It's an amazing promise and reminder that God has good plans for our future. When you realize Jeremiah wrote it to the Israelites when they were living as exiles in Babylon, it becomes even more powerful.

Jeremiah writes, "It will be a long time. Therefore build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce" (Jeremiah 29:28). He invites them to settle in and get comfortable where they are because their current season of exile may

take a while, but God will bring them through it. Jeremiah 29 is a reminder that whether we are living in a time of plenty or a time of need, our job is to trust the God who is always faithful to provide.

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

Question: Do you believe that God has good plans for your life today? Why or why not?

Weekly Memory Verse: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Prayer: Lord, thank you for reminding me that you have a plan and a purpose for my life today. Would you give me the faith to trust that no matter what I may be going through, you will always be by my side? In Jesus’ name. Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read today’s devotional as a family. See who in your family was able to memorize Jeremiah 29:11 this week. Spend some time writing out Jeremiah 29:11 and placing it somewhere your family will see and can be reminded of God’s plan. Talk to your kids about how God will always have good plans for each of you and spend time praying to God and thanking Him for His good plans!

Part 2: The New Testament

Week 3: The Messiah

The entire Old Testament points to Jesus, and then the New Testament is about Jesus and the Church. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the first four books of the New Testament, are called The Gospels. Each one gives a unique perspective on the life of Jesus. This week we are going to work through John’s Gospel.

Day 15

Read: John 1

John starts his Gospel with a massive statement, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). John was one of Jesus’ closest friends. He knew Him better than just about anyone. With his opening line, he wants the whole world to know that Jesus (the Word) was not just a good moral teacher—He is God!

The first few verses of Chapter 1 are a little difficult to understand, but the big takeaway is that Jesus is a picture of God stepping out of heaven to dwell with us, teaching us how to be human.

Question: What are some characteristics of Jesus according to this chapter? Does this align with the Jesus you know? How does reading John change the way you picture Jesus?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for stepping out of heaven to show us how to be human. Thank you for not only living a sinless life but laying down your life so that we can live freely. This week, as I read John’s Gospel, would you open my eyes and my heart to understand you more? In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Today, spend some time sharing with your kids that Jesus wasn’t only a good teacher, but He is God! Jesus was sent by God to walk with us and teach us how to follow God. Ask your kids what they want to learn about Jesus this week and pray together as a family! Take this week to memorize John 3:16 as a family!

Day 16

Read: John 3

In John 3, Jesus has a conversation with a Pharisee named Nicodemus. The Pharisees were a religious sect who prided themselves on being set apart from the rest of the world by their good behavior. After spending his whole life trying to earn his way to God, Nicodemus sits down with Jesus and asks Him why nothing he is doing seems to be working. During the conversation, Jesus tells Nicodemus a lot of important truths about the Gospel, including arguably the most famous verse of all time, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

In other words, it’s not our good behavior that saves us; it’s putting our faith in Jesus.

Question: How did you picture Nicodemus when you read John 3? In what ways can you relate to him? If you could sit down with Jesus what would you choose to ask Him?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Prayer: Father, thank you for loving us so much that you sent your son to lay down his life so that we can spend eternity with you. Help that truth sink a little deeper into my heart today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Spend time talking to your kids about how God does not love us because of our actions. He loves us, therefore He gave us His son Jesus, to save us from our sins and mistakes! Open up the conversation about unconditional love and how we still will make mistakes, but God will always love us and be there for us. Pray together and thank God for the gift of eternal life.

Day 17

Read: John 8

At the beginning of John 8, Jesus has a really important interaction with a woman who is caught in the act of adultery. All the religious leaders stand around her armed and ready to stone her to death. Jesus stands between them and offers a challenge, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7). One by one, they all drop their stones and walk away. Then Jesus turns to the woman and invites her to “Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:11).

Jesus’s life is the ultimate picture of love. But love is both grace and truth. He shows her grace by sticking up for her and then challenges her with truth, inviting her to leave her life of sin behind with all the stones lying on the ground.

Question: Who do you resonate with the most in John 8? Why do you think that is?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your love. Thank you for the grace that sets me free and the truth that keeps me from going back to the things that used to hold me down. Would you help me understand that love a little more today? In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read John 8 with your kids and share the story of the adulteress woman (You can tell them she made not good choices if you don’t feel comfortable talking about adultery with them). Talk about how Jesus was grace and truth in this story and how He stood up for her and also told her to stop sinning. Pray together thanking God that His truth and grace are what set us free from sin.

Day 18

Read: John 13

In John 13, Jesus is at the final night before He goes to the cross, and He’s in a private room with His disciples about to eat the Passover meal. We find out from Luke’s Gospel that before Jesus walks into the room, all the disciples argue about which one of them is the greatest. But then Jesus enters, gets a basin of water, and begins washing the disciple’s feet.

That’s a beautiful picture of what it looks like to be great. The world tries to tell us that greatness looks like power, money, and being the ‘best’, but according to Jesus, true greatness looks like serving. “But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant” (Matthew 20:26).

Question: Who is one person in your life you find it difficult to love? What is one possible way you could serve or encourage them today?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for leading the way and showing us what true greatness looks like. Would you help me to lead like you today? Would you teach me how to keep my eyes open for opportunities to serve people today and give me creative ideas and words to encourage them? In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share the importance of serving others today. Talk to your kids about how Jesus washed the feet of His disciples and how Jesus was the perfect picture of serving others. Ask your kids how they can serve someone else this week. Pray together and spend time asking God to give you eyes to see and serve others around you! Don't forget to keep memorizing John 3:16 as a family!

Day 19

Read: John 19

John 19 tells the story of the darkest hour the history of the world has ever recorded, the moment Jesus took on the sins of the world, and laid down His life to be the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. Paul later summed up that moment in his second letter to the church in Corinth. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus went to the cross for YOU. Even if you've heard that a thousand times, stop for a moment and let that truth sink in.

Question: What do you think Jesus meant when he declared, "it is finished"? What did Jesus finish?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for laying down your life for me. Thank you for going to such great lengths to pay the price for my sins. Today, I pray that you would remind me that because of your work on the cross, I get to be the righteousness of God. Would you help me believe that amazing truth, even more today? In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share with your kids the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made. Talk to them about how He died to release us from the weight of our sins, so we can spend eternity with Him in Heaven. Ask them what they think Jesus dying for our sins means. Pray together as a family and thank God for sacrificing His one and only Son to spend eternity with us!

Day 20

Read: John 21

The final chapter of John's Gospel is a fantastic reminder that no one is ever too far gone for God's love to reach. The night Jesus is betrayed Peter runs away, leaving his best friend to fend for Himself, and then, when asked, he denies Jesus three times. As you can probably imagine, Peter thought he was too far gone to be saved. So, he returns to what he knows best, fishing. In a perfect picture of grace Jesus conquers the grave, defeating sin and death once and for all, and then returns right back to the beach to remind Peter that He loves him. .

We are all imperfect people pursuing a perfect God. John 21 reminds us that God loves us exactly where we are.

Question: Have you ever felt like Peter in John 21? If so, how does this story encourage you to run back to God instead of away from Him?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for reminding us over and over again that we are never too far gone for your love. Thank you for loving me even when I fall short. Would you help me to feel and believe that love today? In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share the story of Peter with your family. Open up the conversation about how Peter went back to fishing because he thought he made too big of a mistake for Jesus to forgive him. Share with your children that there will never be a mistake too big for God to stop loving them. That's what unconditional love is! Pray together as a family thanking God for His unconditional love!

Day 21

Read: Acts 2

The first few chapters of Acts set up the rest of the New Testament. They are a bridge between the life of Jesus and the story of his disciples building the church. After Jesus ascends into heaven, the disciples are all together in an upper room, praying and trying to figure out what to do next. Suddenly the promised Holy Spirit shows up and empowers them to go preach the Gospel with boldness.

Peter goes first. He stands up in the middle of Pentecost (a Jewish festival that brought people to Jerusalem from all over). A few weeks earlier, Peter was so scared that he ran away and denied Jesus three times. But in Acts 2, he steps up and preaches a bold and unapologetic message about how Jesus really was the Messiah.

The message hits home with the people. They repent, get baptized, and 3,000 people are added to the church in a single day!

At the end of Acts 2, we get a snapshot of the early church. We'll read all about the church next week, but for today, notice they meet together, share meals, worship, and live in community, just like we try to do today.

Question: Reread the passage about the early church (Acts 2:42-47). What stuck out to you the most about the church? What did they do really well that you want to apply to your own life? What is one practical step you can take today to do that?

Weekly Memory Verse: John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Prayer: Father, we thank you for the early days of the church and the powerful movement in Acts 2 that began it all. Today, we humbly ask that you do something similar. Give us the strength and the courage to preach the Gospel everywhere we go and to make heaven more crowded!

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share the story of the early church with your kids! Tell them about how after Jesus died, the Holy Spirit came and gave Peter the strength to share the story of Jesus and 3,000 people got saved! Ask your kids how they can share Jesus' story this week. Encourage them to tell one person about how much Jesus loves them. Pray together to ask God for the strength to share His love with those around us! Go over the memory verse one more time.

Week 4: The Church

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave the disciples a really important mission we call the Great Commission: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

To carry out Jesus’ commission, His followers head out and start planting churches all across the known world. The Book of Acts is packed full of stories of all their adventures.

Day 22

Read: Acts 5

After Peter’s sermon in Acts 2, things start moving quickly for the church. They make some massive waves in Jerusalem, and people get saved and healed left and right. But not everyone is happy about this. The religious leaders of the day are threatened by this movement, and they bring Peter and John in for questioning.

It’s worth noting once again that just a short time ago, Peter was running away, scared for his life. Now he’s saying things like, “As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

By Chapter 5, Peter and John are thrown in prison, and are about to be killed for their faith. But a wise Pharisee named Gamaliel speaks up and points out a really profound point:

“Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God” (Acts 5:38-39).

One of the really fun parts about reading this story two thousand years later is that we get to see just how wise Gamaliel’s words were. They tried to stop the church from moving forward, but they weren’t able to. In fact, for two millennia, people have tried to stop the church, but they haven’t been able to, because whenever they do, they find themselves fighting against God.

Question: What stuck out to you from this story in Acts 5? Are you facing any challenges or battles today? How does this story and Gamaliel’s words encourage you to move forward with confidence today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for this reminder that you always have and always will win. Today, would you help me remember that and rest knowing that although there are battles still to fight, you are going to win the war. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read the story of Peter and John and how the movement of people coming to know Jesus was huge! There were people who did not like what Peter and John were doing and threw them in jail. Talk to your kids about how even 2,000 years later there are still people who have tried to stop the church. Remind them that God is always with the church and He will protect it no matter what. Pray together as a family and thank God for all the people who have come to know Him and ask for His protection over His church!

Day 23

Read: Acts 16

Throughout the book of Acts, the church continues to take ground and spread from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria. In Acts 9, something really important happens. A Pharisee named Saul (who later changed his name to Paul) does a complete 180 and goes from persecuting the church to becoming a sold-out follower of Jesus.

Paul was an incredibly strategic, smart, and bold person, so when he began preaching about Jesus, the church's growth picked up exponentially. By Acts 16, Paul and his companions are over a thousand miles away, trying to build a church in Philippi.

Paul and his friends face a lot of trials as they try to build the church, but their faith helps them persevere through it all. They eventually get the church up and running, and about ten years later, Paul writes them a letter we call the book of Philippians. In the letter, he reminds them of one of the many lessons they learned together in the early days: "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:12-13).

Question: When they got locked in prison, Paul and Silas just kept praying and worshiping. Are you going through anything challenging or painful right now? What would it look like to keep singing even in the middle of the trial?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you for the reminder that even when we go through trials and persecution, we can still be confident because we know that you are going with us the whole time. God, give me the faith to keep praying and singing, even when I'm going through a difficult season. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Share the story of Saul turning into Paul and all the amazing things that he did for the Kingdom of God, like building churches, writing letters, and having strength to stand firm, even when people treated him poorly for being a Christian. Ask your kids how they can worship God even in the hard moments, like Paul and Silas did when they were in prison. Pray together as a family and ask God for His strength even in those hard times.

Day 24

Read: Romans 8

Romans 8 is one of the most victorious chapters in the entire Bible.

Romans is the longest letter Paul wrote. This makes sense, because all his other letters were written to churches he had already been to or people he already knew. However, when he sat down to write Romans, he still had never been to Rome. So, he had to start from the beginning and spend more time explaining the Gospel to them.

For much of the first seven chapters, he talks about how prone we all are to sin and rebel against God. But then, in Romans 8, he gets to the really good news, reminding us:

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans” (Romans 8:26).

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Question: Which of those verses stuck out to you the most? Why do you think that is? How can you apply that verse to your day?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Father, no matter what I’m going through today, thank you for the reminder that I am more than a conqueror because the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in me. No matter what comes my way today, remind me of that truth. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read the verses above with your kids. Spend a moment explaining what each one means and ask them which verse they like most. Ask them how they can apply that verse to their life. Maybe it’s remembering how much God loves them or asking the Holy Spirit to fight for them, or even being able to do hard things because of God’s strength! Whatever it is, ask your kids to spend time today praying for that specific application over their life!

Day 25

Read: Galatians 5

Galatians 5 is a really important chapter in Scripture. Paul reminds the Galatians, and in turn us today, that we are set free. He then encourages them to continue the fight to live free. He says the secret to living this way is to learn how to be led by the Spirit instead of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

The good news is, when we walk by the Spirit, we will naturally start to see the fruit of the Spirit in our life. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Have you ever met someone who wanted to be less loving or less joyful? No, of course not. We all want the fruit of the Spirit in our life. Our job is to surrender each day and allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit instead of the flesh.

Question: When you read the list of the fruit of the Spirit, which one seems to come most naturally to you? Which one do you need to work on the most? What is one practical way you can work on that today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Father, thank you for setting me free. Now would you help me live free? Today, I pray you will give me the strength to stand firm and fight to be an agent of love, peace, and joy in a world that desperately needs it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Read the Fruit of the Spirit verse with your kids! Ask them what fruit of the Spirit they want more of? Which one do they think that they are really good at? Take a moment and pray as a family and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the Fruit of the Spirit today!

Day 26

Read: Philippians 4

Philippians is a really important letter Paul wrote to the church in Philippi. The final chapter, Philippians 4, is one of the most famous chapters of all of Scripture, and for good reason; it's packed full of quotable verses.

Remember, when Paul was planting the church in Philippi, he went through a tremendous amount of persecution along the way. Through all his trials he learned he could turn to God in any and every situation. We can follow his example by taking the things we worry about and giving them to God through prayer.

Question: What is one thing you are worried about today? What would it look like to stop and pray about it?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Father, I have a lot of things going on in my life that I'm worried about right now. I thank you that my worry is actually just a reminder to pray. So right now, I bring all the things I'm worried about before you and ask that you would give me provision for the future and peace along the way. In Jesus' name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Take some extra time to keep memorizing Philippians 4:6 with your kids today! Ask them if they are worried about anything. Tell them how feeling worried can be normal, but God is with them in those moments. Encourage them to take time to pray every time they feel anxious throughout the day. Check in with them tonight to see if praying helped them feel less anxious. Pray together as a family and ask the Lord to give you peace throughout today!

Day 27

Read: James 1

The book of James is short, but as you probably noticed from reading the first chapter, it packs a punch. James wrote to an audience that was going through tremendous persecution, which is why he starts the letter by reminding us to, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance" (James 1:2-3).

James reminds us that following Jesus isn't just about saying all the right things; it's about putting our money where our mouth is. "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says" (James 1:22). It's about actually taking action steps to serve, love, and give to those who need help.

At Red Rocks, we talk a lot about changing the world, and in James 1:27, we get some good insight into how to do that, “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (James 1:27).

Question: Over the last four weeks, you’ve been reading and learning a lot about the Bible. What is one practical step you can take today to put your faith into action?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the reminder that my faith isn’t just about hearing and learning; it’s about action. Would you give me an opportunity today to put my faith into action? Lord, I pray for an open door to share my faith, encourage someone, and help someone in need. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: The book of James talks about having true joy even in the hard moments, because of Jesus! It also talks about how to take action in loving and serving others. There is so much to unpack, so spend a moment asking your kids what they have learned so far in this devo. Encourage them to find one way to put what they’ve learned into practice today! Pray together and ask God to give your family eyes to see where others need to be loved and helped.

Day 28

Read: Revelation 21-22

Revelation is the final book in the Bible. John wrote it after God gave him a vision of the future. For the last two thousand years, scholars have debated many pieces of Revelation. It’s a very mysterious book, and a lot of it is left up to debate and interpretation, but there are a few things that everyone agrees on. The first is John’s objective for writing it; he makes it clear right from the beginning that this book is a picture of the future God gives to us for today. He wants us to see where we are heading, so we can live today with forever in mind.

The second thing everyone agrees on is that God wins in the end! Although there is a lot of debate about how and when it’s all going to take place, the important thing to remember is that God wins!

In the final two chapters, we get to see a picture of where we are heading. One day, God will “wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

Question: How does the end of the story change the way you live today?

Weekly Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Prayer: Father, thank you for the reminder that you win in the end. Life is crazy sometimes, so I pray you will give me a deep sense of peace, reminding me that everything is going to be okay in the end. Lord, I love you, and I praise you forever and ever. Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE: Spend some time sharing the story of Revelation with your kids. Explain to them how it is a book of Hope for God’s future plans for us! We also get to celebrate that God will win at the end and we get to spend eternity with Him! Invite your kids into a conversation about how knowing that God wins in the end can change our perspective in every aspect of life! Pray as a family! Thank God for teaching you so much about His word and the story He is continuing to write through us. Ask Him to be with your family as you choose to live lives that represent His love for us!