

WORD BY HEART

Workbook

by Word By Heart Team, compiled by Paul Childers and Bruce Kuhn

Word By Heart (Core Bible)
Officially called by the University of the
Nations Word By Heart (Gen – Rev) CHR 207
Written by Word By Heart
Compiled by Paul Childers and Bruce Kuhn
Published by Word by Heart

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Word By Heart International
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First Edition: September 2022
Printed in USA





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COURSE OUTLINE

Word by Heart (Core Bible)

Registered at the University of the Nations as
Word By Heart (Genesis - Revelation) CHR207.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course students will discuss, debate, and meditate on Scriptures weekly using the Inductive Bible Study method, in order to find deeper meaning and understanding of the Bible as a whole, and come to the realization of how the overlying message throughout the scriptures ultimately leads to Jesus. This process will result in an experience so deep that students can then re-tell stories from different passages throughout the Bible, word for word in their native language—as if they were an actual eyewitness to the event. In doing this, students will receive new revelations from the Scriptures, and are transformed to be more like Jesus. They will also learn storytelling skills and practice natural memory techniques, by creating imaginary memories to see what the eyewitnesses saw and say what they meant, developing honest, technique-free communication that compels audience attention and understanding of the scriptures. In this way, Word By Heart equips people to work with Oral Mother Tongue projects, as well as contributes to the End Bible Poverty Now movement.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The first disciples must have gripped their listeners. To have seen a blind man healed, and to have heard every nuance of Jesus' word. Can we recapture the power and reality of the eyewitness accounts? Students will internalize word for word from the Scriptures 5-8 minutes per week in their native language, and then share the events as an eyewitness might have. To do this, they will first need a deeper understanding of each story. Each day, we spend time discussing, debating, understanding, meditating on, and then ultimately internalizing word for word and presenting different stories from the Bible. Throughout the course, students will gain understanding of each of the different genres in the Bible and will use the Inductive Bible Study method to interpret the stories for themselves. Students will read, study, and present an overview of a book of the Bible from each of the biblical genres. Students also build storytelling skills, and practice natural memory techniques by creating imaginary memories to see what the eyewitnesses saw and say what they meant. If successful, what we 'see' will spark genuine emotion and rich, subtle communication. This results in honest, technique-free communication that compels audience attention. The point, however, is to profoundly experience the Word and to pass it on.

Through this course, students develop a deeper hunger for the Word, its application and the life transformation that comes through meditating on and internalizing the stories of the Bible, word for word, and sharing these truths with the world around them.

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

In learning 90 minutes of Scripture and being able to present it before a group at the end of the course, the goal is to be able to present the Scripture as a word for word story. To do this the storyteller will have to finely balance reality and engaging story telling. This course will not evaluate the story to an objective standard because people vary in personality and expression. However, the participant will be encouraged to be engaged and exploratory the richness of the Biblical text.

WEEKLY GRADING

• Participation: attendance and openness to learn	10%
• Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments	10%
• OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application	10%
• Coaching	10%
• Presentation	10%
• All Content Presentation	10%
• Total	60%

FINALS IN WEEK 11-12

• Final Application	5%
• Final Coaching	5%
• First Public Rehearsal	30%
• Total	40%

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00-8:45	Campus Worship	Limber Warm-Up	Limber Warm-Up	Limber Warm-Up	Limber Warm-Up	Rest	Attend Church/ Character Study + Textual Analysis
9:00-10:45	Limber Scene Study	Paraphrase	T+L	Coaching	Presentation		
10:45-11:00	Break						
11:00-12:30	Scene Study	Paraphrase Worship	T+L Intercession	Coaching Intercession	Application Worship		
1:15-2:45	Scene Study	Self-Directed: T+L	Self-Directed: T+L	Self-Directed: Journal	Full content presentation		
3:00-5:00	Work Duties						
5:00-6:00	Dinner						
6:00-8:00	Optional: Ministry Night	One on Ones/ Assignments	Self-Directed: T+L	Campus Meeting	Celebrate the Nations		

WORD_{BY}HEART METHODOLOGY

How do we get to know people? Proverbs 20:11 says, “Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure, and whether it is right” (NLT). The Bible tells stories of God’s actions. We watch how actions match up with God’s and people’s words. Politicians make promises, but do they always carry through? What about a salesman? Do we trust them to tell us the whole truth? Or do they tell us just enough to get our money? How can we know a true friend? We watch what they do.

How can we know Jesus? We hear stories of what he did and compare them to his words. In this way, we enter into the reality of a relationship with him.

How can we make Him known? We tell stories of what he did. Anyone can paraphrase a story. However, many of the stories of Jesus are hard to believe – and people today hear them as fairy tales, or worse, a trick to manipulate people into our ‘club.’ In Word by Heart, therefore, we go the extra step: we remember the stories of Jesus from published translations of the exact words of the eyewitnesses – without memorizing – and we do so in our mother tongue! There is power in the Word of God.

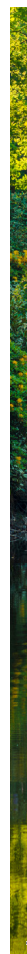
VISION: What if you were there? What if you saw Jesus open the eyes of a man born blind or raise a dead man back to life? OK, OK; you were not there, but you have the words of people who were! You can use your imagination – the attribute our Creator did not give to animals – to experience those events from an eyewitness perspective. You must be yourself – authentic and honest – not playing a role. We deal with actual events – pretending is not allowed. Word

by Heart can help you become a Living Bible as you allow your hearts and minds to be transformed into Christ’s likeness.

FOCUS: To know Jesus through his Word. The Word is a seed. If planted deeply in your heart, it will grow and change you. You will begin to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom. In humbling yourself and allowing Christ-like transformation, your life will become increasingly fruitful for the Kingdom: 30, 60, or 100-fold as you share this Good News with the world.

TOPICS: Creating an imaginary memory of an actual event (which our memories do for us when we hear stories); Personalizing those memories; Learning & remembering the exact words the eyewitnesses used (without memorizing those words); Image work (which our memories do automatically); The practicalities of honestly telling a story for two people or two hundred people (your choice) – without the ‘emotional enhancements’ that fictional stories need (like music, dance, costumes, special lighting, and dramatizing). We don’t dramatize Scripture; we tell stories that happened.

The student must experience the event – not just theologically understand what happened from a Western academic/scientific distance. No. This process is personal. What if you were there? In Word by Heart, trainers gently prod the imagination, allowing students to connect deeply with the events. For example, a staff once asked a student, “How did Jesus actually say that?” “No one knows - we only have writing!” declared the student. “True; so how do



you think he said it?” asked the trainer. The student answered, “Well, I don’t know. I mean, I would be kind of frustrated under the circumstances.” The trainer replied, “Good – yes; maybe Jesus was frustrated. So how did that sound?” The student spoke Jesus’ words with a frustrated undertone, and the trainer said, “Good! Yes, that is a believable choice.” A different student said, “I don’t think he said it like that. He talked about ‘loving your enemy,’ so maybe he was reaching out to these people.” “Good,” said the trainer. “This is called ‘event thinking.’ Really good. So how might ‘reaching out’ sound?” The other student gave it a try. The trainer said, “Excellent – that, too, is a believable choice. You see, both choices are real possibilities – and each flavor flavors the same words differently. Each story portrays the Living God. How will you paint it?”

Word By Heart seeks to take both the storyteller and the listeners on a journey:

1. We aim to experience the real impact of Jesus’ life and teaching.
2. We make it as personal as possible.

3. We want our stories to be accurate to a published translation in our mother language.
4. We expect our listeners to have a personal reaction to the story.

Word By Heart is an experience that not only changes the way we read our Bible – it changes the way we live.

How does Word by Heart help students experience the event’s heart rather than grasp it conceptually?

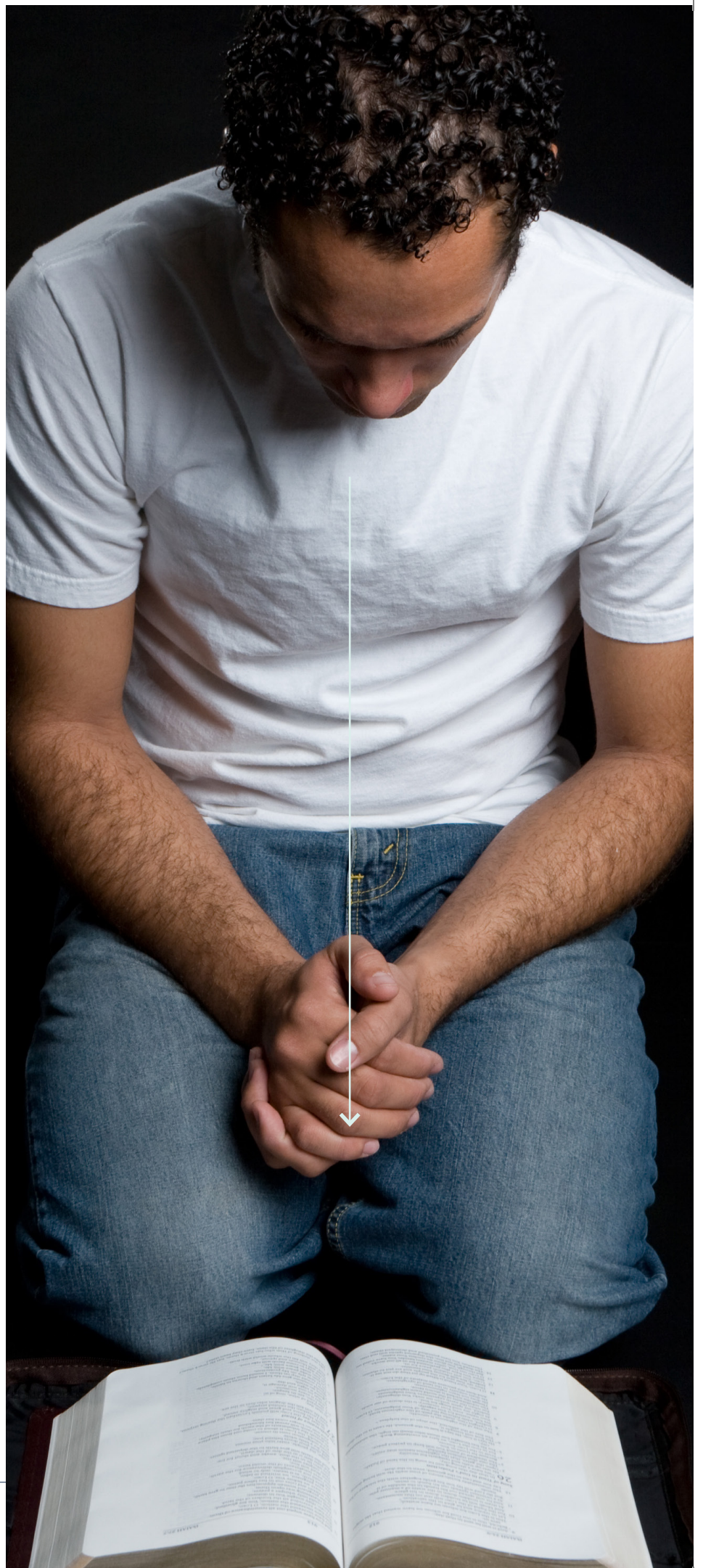
Picture two grassy riverbanks with a vast expanse of water between them. The riverbank on your left is our contemporary culture, with AI, K-pop, and Musk wanting to travel to Mars. The riverbank on your right is the world of the Bible with all the rich complexity of Oriental culture. The river that separates these two worlds is the deep expanse of 2,000 years of history, language, and technology. Now imagine a stone bridge that spans the gulf – allowing us to cross and experience the world of Jesus. There are three leaps to cross this bridge.



1 | THE FIRST LEAP ACROSS THE BRIDGE: UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

In Word by Heart, we call this step 'scene study.' This step is our Monday class. Every week, our Word by Heart Scripture portions are divided into smaller stories and sections, and each of these sections begins with "Culture Clues and Questions." Please note these will not be read off in class. Read them yourself before class time for your personal use to help you continually go deeper into the stories. Our Monday scene study time in class focuses on the event itself, not possible theological interpretations.

Here is a quick story: In a teaching of Jesus touching the leper, a seminary student said, "This is an example of Isaiah's 'New Exodus' redemption theme!" The trainer said, "Yes...fine. But I am much more interested in the look on the disciples' face when he watched his Rabbi break the Law of Moses by touching an unclean person. Or what it was like to see a skin disease melt into health – maybe a nose or ear forming in front of your eyes. What would it be like for an outcast of five or ten years to suddenly be whole – and to be able to return to his village and family? Or for him to feel the breeze on his skin again?"



To understand the memory, we encourage ‘event thinking.’ What happened that might affect the spoken words or emotions of the teller? Experiencing something is not an academic exercise, but for accuracy at this early stage, we use a modification of Uta Hagen’s Ten Questions to help us understand the event. Each inter-relates to the others.

1. Who are these people? What is the biography of each character? (their occupation, age, status, etc.)
2. What time is it? (century, year, season, day, minute)
3. Where? (place, country, city, by the shore, or in their home?)
4. What is physically present? (animate and inanimate objects)
5. What are the Given Circumstances? (past, present, and future that affect the story)
6. What are the relationships? (professional, personal, social, racial, religious, etc.)
7. What does each character want? (overall and immediate objectives; the ‘desires of the heart’?)
8. What obstacles are in the way of those wants? (find the conflict)
9. What actions will be taken to overcome obstacles to achieve objectives? (What does each character do – usually to someone else – to get what they want? Defend the other person? Comfort, deceive, taunt?)
10. What is the story about? (Why did Jesus ask Peter to throw his nets out? Is this a story about lunch by miraculous provision? Or is it a story about a test of obedience? Same words, but very different stories.)

Beyond Uta’s ten questions, there are five more considerations to see what is happening.

1. Where is the love? (Jesus invented it, and it usually appears somewhere in his actions.)
2. What is new that has not happened yet? (OK, he heals daily, but a woman healed just by touching

him, without him doing anything?! Or is this the first time a Pharisee has mocked him or the tenth?)

3. What just happened that propels this story forward? (It might not be in the story itself.)
4. What would be a modern equivalent of this story? (Knocking at a village door at midnight may be far from your experience but breaking your iPhone and asking a reluctant friend to lend you his.) A second part of finding this story in your own life. How does your life story relate to the stories from the Bible that you are studying? What is an equivalent experience in your own life? This gets close to home. Your life is also a story. Learn to relate personally to this. The more you can make this equivalency the more meaning you will unpack from the stories and the more personally they will touch your life.
5. What do you love most about this story? What happens that makes that clear to you? (Let us hear that in your telling).

Example: For years, a storyteller related Jesus’ raising the Widow’s Son at Nain. For years, he emphasized the word ‘prophet’ when he said, “And all the people said, ‘A great prophet has risen among us!’” But then he learned a culture clue involving “Where” (Uta question no. 3). It turns out that Nain is located just a short walk from where Elijah raised the widow’s son from the dead several hundred years before. Location is intimately tied to Bible stories. It was no accident that Jesus chose that place to raise another widow’s son – this time with a verbal command, not stretching himself out over the dead body and begging God. The villagers likely said, “A great prophet has risen among us!” as in, “This is no ordinary prophet: he did the same as one of the Big Three, but better!” This statement is no mere emphasis shift. It is another small clue to Jesus’ identity for those with ears to hear.



2 | THE SECOND LEAP ACROSS THE BRIDGE: PERSONALIZE THE STORY

How would you tell a friend about an event you saw happen? In this step, you are developing the details of your imaginary memory of the actual event. Your imagination fills in the details of the actual event (just like in life). Exercises include “Tell Me What You See” – an image exercise that some trainers will ask you to do on Monday evening, in your personal time. Other trainers may include this exercise on Tuesday morning, with a drama or other image exercises, as time allows. The one exercise always on Tuesday morning is a Paraphrase; you will use your own words to describe your memory of Jesus to your partner (using the words ‘I,’ ‘we,’ ‘our,’ etc.). We have used this simple technique all our lives with our real memories – whether we have experienced the event ourselves or heard someone else’s version. Each of these exercises helps bring the reality of the event home to your heart.

Please note paraphrasing is not a summary of what you remember from the text, nor a test, sermon, or

explanation. Instead, your paraphrase is simply you telling the story of the event – in your own words as if you’d seen it. You share your personal experience, feelings, perspectives, and responses to each event. This process is precisely how you would tell of something that happened to you. Variations of this exercise include picking a character in the story. That is fine for an activity. Ultimately, however, you ‘play’ yourself – not another person (as actors do). Another variation is the “Expanded Paraphrase,” where you tell the event to a foreigner who needs background information to understand it. Ultimately, every Tuesday morning must include a “Close Paraphrase.” Here, you only share details that the eyewitnesses speak of.

Again, we divide the training of Word by Heart into different ‘leaps’ and exercises – and each activity helps you to experience the event and create a memory that you can then tell others about. Remembering the story in the actual words only comes in the third leap – and very naturally – once the memory itself is solid.





3 | THE THIRD LEAP ACROSS THE BRIDGE: SHARING THE STORY

The final leap across the bridge is Sharing the Memory in the exact words of the eyewitnesses. This step is the core of Word by Heart. Anyone can paraphrase – and God uses paraphrase in many wonderful ways. Word by Heart, however, uses the unaltered Word of God and God uses His pure Word in startling ways.

Quick Story. After a presentation at a university in the US, a non-Christian learned that the translation used was *The Message* by Eugene Peterson. It is excellent, but it is a paraphrase. The student said, “So, this was a paraphrase, it isn’t really the Bible!” In the way he said it, his subtext was clear: “You are changing the words to trick us into your religious club!”

Another Quick Story. A different student heard another presentation; this one used the actual words of the eyewitnesses. The storyteller said, “There are free scripts of tonight’s performance in the back.” The Christians smiled and groaned, knowing it was

just another Bible giveaway. But the non-Christian student did not realize that, of course, and asked for his free script. The staff worker showed him a Bible opened to the Gospel of Luke. In astonishment, the student pointed to the stage and said, “You mean that was the Bible!?”

That is why Word by Heart goes the extra step to tell the exact words of the eyewitnesses. In this step, you will convey the story with the precise words of Scripture according to a published translation. We use translations that are closest to our everyday speaking language, in our own language – this is not a time to work on learning another language for ‘ministry,’ but a time to go deeper personally into who Jesus is in your own culture. (Once a story is mastered in your own language, you can easily paraphrase it for ministry purposes in any other languages you speak.)

Instead of classic (rote) memorizing, we have specific exercises called ‘Talking & Listening’ (and their variations.) The result may resemble memorizing – but there is a world of difference. If you rote

remember words, a train wreck occurs whenever a word falls away. If you memorize memories, however, your brain will quickly insert another word (that carries the same meaning) wherever a word falls away and the story goes on. A good memory does not need to be ‘memorized.’ You remember it! If you saw a paralyzed neighbor suddenly leap to his feet after a few words from Jesus, would you ever forget it? Even ten years later? Or twenty or forty? Would you need to ‘memorize’ what you saw happen? Of course not. Likewise, we encourage students to make their memories vivid and real, wholly based on Scripture.

You will have Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday, and possibly Thursday mornings to complete variations of the Talking & Listening exercise. Paraphrase is over on Tuesday morning; speak only the words of the eyewitnesses, whatever the variation. A student on Wednesday asked, “Can’t I just paraphrase?” The trainer replied, “Yes, in the exact words.” The exact words of Scripture gently replace your own words – without memorizing. Scripture becomes your ‘paraphrase’ in a natural process.

Quick Story. In Australia, a student said to the trainer, “My partner was repeating the words over and over, and all I saw were her fake eyelashes going up and down, up and down. Then you came over and told her to see the event and use the words to help me see what she saw. When she next spoke, her eyelashes disappeared! Suddenly, I was in the story!”

Your Word by Heart coaches can usually tell when the memory is real. It shows up in the teller’s eyes when a student thinks, “What is that next word?” instead of “What happened next in the story?” And if only the ‘right words’ have been pounded in, the story sounds weird. Plastic. Fake. You have likely heard someone quoting Scripture at you. People don’t talk like that – especially when they tell you something that really happened. So, we urge you not to fake it by just pounding in words. Create real

memories – connecting personal memories to the stories so that your emotions and feelings come through as you share these powerful stories about Jesus. Don’t do ‘your own method’ – especially if you’ve had some acting training and think you know better. Trust the Word by Heart process that has been fine-tuned for a decade. It is so much easier than rote memorizing words. And everyone can do it by using the imagination and memory that God made in humans.

Quick story on Authenticity: A Word by Heart storyteller toured Australia and, during an interview on the ABC (Australia Broadcasting Co.), said, “These are real events, as told by eyewitnesses.” A listener wrote, “The Bible is certainly not ‘original eyewitness accounts’; they were written down forty years after they happened!” A week later, the father-in-law of the storyteller told him eyewitness accounts of a Nazi concentration camp. Fortunately, it was not a death camp – but the stories were accurate and completely real, even though the related events happened more than 70 years earlier. You could see it in the teller’s eyes. This story was a tangible memory of an actual event. So, make your memories real. It is not that hard; the actual events were unforgettable.

4 | APPLYING THE STORY TO MY OWN STORY

The fourth step is critical. If you are willing to grapple with your own story, you will be able to re-tell the stories we are learning with truth and authenticity. What would you say if I asked you to tell me your story?

Don’t overlook your own story while learning the biblical stories. God has had and will always have the ultimate authorship of your life. He has crafted an ongoing creative work in our lives through our stories that must not be overlooked. These stories



make us who we are and unlock for us the way we navigate through life. We need to take time to stop and consider our own story. We often overlook it when making decisions, but it holds the clues to God's direction. It can shape our outlook, tendencies, and choices. Invest in yourself and review your life for answers that will amaze, thrill, and sober you.

God is not merely the Creator of our life. He is also the Author of our life, and he writes each person's life to reveal his divine story.¹

Can you believe that there has never been, nor will there ever be, a life like yours, a story like yours? God has intentionally written your story to make something known about Himself to you that others will not and cannot know. Although our lives sometimes may feel like they are random episodes in a poorly put-together TV series, they are not! Our unique stories are more authentic than any other reality, penned by God to show us what he desires, allowing us to uncover surprises, themes, and depths to discover God's profound meaning in our lives. We join God in coauthoring our story, especially when we accept that He has something to say that is very individual and special through you and through your story. Considering our stories impact and influence how we read the Bible and ultimately engage in Word By Heart is a necessity and blessing. God is calling us to fully explore, enjoy, and fully capture the power of the Great Story, the Bible. One way we do this is by listening to our lesser stories.

It is in the plot of our lives that we find meaning. You have survived untold adventures, sacrificed, learned, and grown, and your story is a magnificent bestseller.

The degree to which we embrace that God is the ultimate author of our story is the degree to which we can find His story hidden within our own. As we learn to recognize God's presence in our lives, we begin to understand how our own story fits into the bigger story of God and His plan. We can appreciate and

celebrate the experiences He has given us, trusting that our individual struggles, joys, and triumphs are all part of His divine plan for our lives. As we begin to see God actively at work in our lives, our stories become more powerful, not just to ourselves but to those around us. As we learn to bring God's perspectives and experiences into our own stories, it becomes easier to reveal God in our conversations and experiences. Our story will begin to contain elements of the faith-filled cohesion already inherent in the stories found in the Bible, helping us to more authentically express God's presence and love to the world through our words and, ultimately, how we live. In finding the echo of God's story in our own, we can truly engage and enchant other people with "His-story."

Five questions to consider as you learn God's story in this Word By Heart (Core Bible course).

1. What is my story?
2. Who have been the significant role players in my story?
3. How have they shaped who I am?
4. What might my story bring to the world that I am most uniquely suited to reveal to others?
5. REMEMBER: ENGAGE WITH THE AUTHOR OF YOUR STORY

“Your story has power in your own life, and it has power and meaning to bring to others. Your story helps reveal the Greatest Story, the story that God is telling about himself. God intends for each of us to live for a greater glory, and a greater story, than our own.”²



The Word

Feeling

Immersion

Sharing

WEEK ONE

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting</p>			

from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground." Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame. The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" "Of course, we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like

God, knowing both good and evil.” The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful, and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So, she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So, they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So, they hid from the Lord God among the trees. Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.” “Who told you that you were naked?” the Lord God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?” The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.” Then the Lord God asked the woman, “What have you done?” “The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.” Then the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between



your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.” Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. Then the devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.” But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone.’” Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. “I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them,” the devil said, “because they are mine to give to anyone I please. I will give it all to you if you will worship me.” Jesus replied, “The Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect and guard you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’” Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’” When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came. Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit’s

power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.			
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*Genesis 1:1-3; John 1:1-5, 10-14, 16-17; Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:25; 3:1-15; Luke 4:1-15.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS³

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

³Hagan, Uta. Respect for Acting. John Wiley and Sons Inc, 1973, (pp. 101-105)

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

CREATION OF THE WORLD

1. The Greek term translated word was used by many philosophers to mean reason or the force that structured the universe. In addition, the Jewish people heard from the ‘Word of God every Sabbath.’ By calling Jesus “The Word,” John calls him the embodiment of all God’s revelation in the Scripture and thus encourages his Jewish Christian hearers, marginalized from some of their synagogues, that only those who accept Jesus truly honor the law comprehensively. How would John’s readers react to this claim? Considering this, how might we share this with our listeners?
2. Jewish people considered the Wisdom of the Word divine yet distinct from God the Father, so it was the closest available term John had to describe Jesus. The Jewish people believe this wisdom existed before the rest of creation but was itself created. By declaring that the Word “was” in the beginning and especially by calling the Word “God,” John goes beyond the common Jewish concept to imply that Jesus was not created. How can we share this truth today?
3. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the forces of light and darkness were engaged in mortal combat, but light was predestined to win. How are light and darkness understood today? What do we want our hearers to hear?
4. What attributes/characteristics of Jesus are seen in the first section, and how does this affect my understanding of Jesus?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s one and only Son. From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses, but God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ.

Talking and Listening

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won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked." "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?" The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it." Then the Lord God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it." Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. Then the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread." But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone.'" Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. "I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them," the devil said, "because they are mine to give to anyone I please. I will give it all to you if you will worship me." Jesus replied, "The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'" Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest

point of the Temple, and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect and guard you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'" Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'" When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came. Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

Journal

Your own story can have a significant influence on how you read this week's passages.

For example:

- If your life experience with faith has been positive, you may read this passage with a greater sense of appreciation and joy. You may receive a blessing from God through this reminder of His unfailing love and faithfulness and the assurance that He is always there to protect and guard you. You may also view this passage as a source of hope and strength, drawing on the stories of redemption, forgiveness, and obedience to God to reinforce your own faith. – Do you have stories like this in your life – if you do, spend some time thinking about them.
- If your life experience has been challenging, you may also read this passage with a greater sense of comfort and encouragement – but also get real about your life – spend some time praying for God to help you make sense of these times in your life. Remember, He has always known what you are going through, so be comforted by the reminder that God's unfailing love and faithfulness will always be there, even in the most trying times. These times might align with Jesus' struggle against temptation. Be reassured that you are never alone and have never been alone in your battles. Allow yourself to feel a deep appreciation for the gift of redemption and forgiveness offered through Jesus.

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. What elements of this passage speak to you the most and why?

2. How does your life story shape your understanding of this passage?

3.Has your experience of faith been either positive or negative?

4.Do you find yourself being comforted or challenged by this passage?

5.How has your relationship with Jesus influenced your interpretation of the stories you have read this week?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: The Word

Why is Word By Heart so important? All believers are commanded to commit Scripture to heart—and to communicate it with those around us!

Moses' command from God: "Hear oh Israel":

1. Deut. 6:6-7 "Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise."
The Law (the Torah) will be READ ALOUD every seventh year!
2. Deut. 31:9-13 - Then Moses wrote down this Law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. Moses commanded them: "Every seventh year, in the scheduled year of remission, during the festival of booths, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people—men, women, and children, as well as the aliens residing in your towns—so that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God and to observe diligently all the words of this Law, and so that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess."

How often was this Law practiced? Only three times were recorded! Only two leaders/kings of Israel did this before the fall of Israel in 586 BC...

- Joshua (first leader of Israelites after Moses died in 1406 BC) Renews the Covenant- Joshua 8:34-35, "And afterward he read all the words of the Law, blessings and curses, according to all that is written in the book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the aliens who resided among them."
- Josiah (the last king of Israel to do right in the sight of God, around 621 BC) Reads the Book of God's Law- 2 Kings 23:1-4, 21-25, "He went up to the temple of the LORD with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets--all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the LORD."
- Ezra (The only other record of the Law being read aloud! Around 444 BC): Nehemiah 8:1-12, Ezra, standing before the people of Israel, reads and interprets the Law of Moses. The people rejoice. Nehemiah 9:3, "While they stood in their place, they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God."

For 962 years, the Law should have been read aloud 137 times, but it was only done three times! There is power in the Reading of Scriptures aloud! Imagine: what could it have been like if the Law had been read aloud every seven years?!?

1. New Testament Examples

- Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."
- Colossians 4:16, "And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans..."

- 1 Thessalonians 5:27, “I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.”
- Timothy 4:13, Paul’s instruction to “...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture.”
- Revelation 1:3: “Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.”

Assessment: Week Two

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK TWO

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>There was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." "Dear woman, that's not our problem," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So the servants followed his instructions. When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over.</p>			

“A host always serves the best wine first,” he said. “Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!” This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him. There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.” Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.” “What do you mean?” exclaimed Nicodemus. “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can’t explain how people are born of the Spirit.” “How are these things possible?” Nicodemus asked. Jesus replied, “You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things? I assure

you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. [Jesus] left Judea and returned to Galilee. He had to go through Samaria on the way. Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"



Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life." "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water." "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband—for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!" "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?" Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether

you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus told her, “I AM the Messiah!” Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” So the people came streaming from the village to see him. Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, “He told me everything I ever did!” When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. Then



they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”			
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*John 2:1-11; John 3:1-17, John 4:3-30, 39-42.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

WEDDING AT CANA

1. Cana probably refers to Khirbet Kana, a village about 8 miles from Nazareth—where Jesus grew up. Isaiah 53:2 says that Jesus’ appearance was nothing out of the ordinary—at that time, the average height of a Jewish man was between 5’ 1” - 5’ 3” tall, likely having curly black hair and light brown skin. Nazareth is not an area with many trees, so a carpenter that day would have worked with stone.

2. Jewish weddings lasted seven days, and hosts invited as many people as possible, especially distinguished guests like prominent teachers. Many guests would come for only part of the time, making it challenging to gauge necessary resources such as food and wine. The wedding host was responsible for providing his guests with adequate wine throughout the seven days of feasting. What happens to the host’s reputation if the wine supply runs out? How can we follow Jesus’ example, standing up to protect the reputation of others—even if it doesn’t feel like ‘the time’?

3. What was Mary’s relationship with the host? How did she learn of the shortage of wine, and why was it important to her? Would this be important to me? “Woman” was a respectful address, similar to Ma’am or madam (also in John 4:21; 19:26), but not a customary address for one’s mother. How did Jesus feel about his mother’s request? How does he speak to her?

4. The stone jars contained enough water to fill a Jewish immersion pool for ceremonial purification. (Note: if you work in liters, be sure to update the measurement: “between 80 and 120 liters.”) Although Pharisees forbade storing water in jars, other Jews were not as strict. Jewish people poured water over their hands to purify them. Such large jars would not have been suitable for direct pouring, although water could be drawn from them. To use water pots set aside for purification for non-ritual purposes violated Jewish custom. Jesus put the host’s honor above ritual purity customs. By using the Jewish ceremonial washing jars for wine, what was Jesus proclaiming? How does this affect the way we are to live today? How can we share this truth?

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Talking and Listening

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Journal

Your life experience and your own story may have positively or negatively influenced how they read this passage.

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. What experiences might be influencing your interpretation of this passage?

2. In what ways has Jesus's example inspired or challenged you?

3. How has your relationship with God influenced your view of this passage?

4. What specific events from your life come to mind when reading this passage?

5. How has your faith journey included both light and darkness?

6. What truths about your own story have you faced while engaging in this passage?

7. In what ways has Jesus's example of grace and love inspired or challenged you?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: The Gospel of John

1. **Structure.** This book progresses chronologically.

1-12	13-21
Public Ministry	Private Ministry
Book of Signs	Book of Glory
~3 years of ministry	~1 week

John also uses 3 Passover festivals (spanning 3 years) to progress through Jesus’ ministry: 1st: 2:13, 2nd: 6:4 and 3rd: 11:55; 12; 13:1.

2. **Key Verse**

John 20:30-31: The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.”

3. **Reason Written**

The Gospel of John was written so that many could read the miraculous signs of Jesus and believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God and that by believing they would have eternal life.

4. **Author, Audience and Dating**

John wrote this gospel ~90AD, which would mean all the other disciples had been martyred and John is older in age. It’s thought he wrote the gospel from Ephesus where he was based for most of his later ministry. There are different opinions on his original audience, some believe it was believers who needed strengthened in their faith, others believe it was written for unbelievers. Some also believe it was a Jewish specific audience, however others believe it was a more universal audience of both Jews and Gentile converts. What is clear, is that the audience would be familiar with the Jewish festivals since they are a key component to the structure of the book.

5. **Main Content of the Gospel**

A. Eight Signs

- Water into Wine (2:11)
- Healing the Official’s son (4:54)
- Healing a Paralyzed Man (6:2)
- Feeding the 5000 (6:14)
- Walking on Water (6:16-21)
- Healing the Blind Man (9:16)
- Raising of Lazarus (11:47 + 12:18)
- Resurrection (20:30)



B. Seven I AM Statements: 7 statements that Jesus uses to reveal his divinity, all referring back to God revealing himself to the world in the Old Testament.

- I AM the Bread of Life (6:48) . Manna in the Wilderness (Exo 16) . God as true sustenance.
- I AM the Light of the World (8:12 + 9:5) . Creation, Light (Gen 1:3) . God as true illumination.
- I AM the Gate for the Sheep (10:7) . Similar to the way, God is the true pathway with an open-door invitation to his sheep.
- I AM the Good Shepherd (10:11 + 10:14). Shepherd imagery throughout OT (Psalm 23). God as true source of care.
- I AM the Resurrection and the Life (11:25) . 3 records of people raised from the dead in the OT, all through Elijah and Elisha. God also promises new life to his people through the Spirit. (Ezekiel 37) . God as the true source of life.
- I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life (14:6) . “The Way” a common theme from Genesis to Malachi, the way to God. Jesus showing, he is the only way to the Father. God as the true pathway to life.
- I AM the True Vine. Common imagery for Israel in the OT was a vineyard, often disobedient. However, there was a promise of a fruitful vineyard to come. God as the true source of fruitfulness.

C. Main themes

- Jesus is God
- Belief
- Life/Eternal Life
- Signs (All pointing to Jesus as God)

6. Type of Literature

Gospels are a different type of literature from other narratives in the Bible, as they contain not only selected events from that time in history, but also, they reveal Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. Each Gospel has a unique audience and situation it was written for, and therefore, focuses on a specific aspect of Jesus’ character. John is unique in how it’s written from the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). John has unique themes and stories, the I AM statements are also unique to John’s Gospel.

So, why Word by Heart? Why not just read it?

- Joshua 1:8 “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”
- Heb. 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
- Job 23:12 “I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.”
- Ps. 119:11 “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”

- Ps. 78:4-8 “We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their ancestors, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.”

Having the Word in our Hearts Transforms Us to be more Like Him!

Word by Heart opens the door for sharing the Gospel with people in a powerful way!

- Students learn a gospel by heart, in their heart languages, in just 3 months, and experience transformation!
- Once a gospel is learned in a heart language, they can share stories in any language they speak!
- With just 1 extra month, they can share the learned gospel in a new language...
- People who speak dialects/languages that have no Bible can begin sharing the gospel with their own people within just a few months’ time!

Bible Translation!

Opportunity to serve OMT and OBT Bible Translation Projects around the globe!

- Doing OMT (Oral Mother Tongue) and OBT (Oral Bible Translation) translation work using the Word by Heart learning/storytelling methods!
- Dramatic readings/presentations. Oral communicators enter the story!
- Dialects over Major Language: When the Bible is heard in a local dialect, it transforms hearts.
- Oral people cannot separate from the story. It’s real to them!

Nations = ethnos = language! Go, and preach to ALL NATIONS, ALL LANGUAGES.

Week Two Assignment

Please begin by reading the entirety of the Gospel of John this week.

Once you have read the Gospel of John, create a timeline of key events.

You should include:

1. The major divide
2. His “I AM” Statements
3. His 7 Signs

Additionally, choose at least one key theme which stands out to you personally and highlight this throughout the timeline.

Assignment due: Friday morning.

Assessment: Week Two

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK THREE

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up. "This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it." When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord told him, "I have certainly seen the</p>			

oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.” But Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?” God answered, “I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain.” But Moses protested, “If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they will ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what should I tell them?” God replied to Moses, “I AM Who I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.” God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal

name, my name to remember for all generations. “So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years. One month after leaving the land of Egypt the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. “If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “I have heard the Israelites’ complaints. Now tell them, ‘In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.’” That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew. When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground. The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. “What is it?” they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, “It is the food the Lord has



given you to eat. So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at the land of Canaan. Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!" Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" "Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, "Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted." So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by

the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, "Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!" When Jesus saw that they were ready to force him to be their king, he slipped away into the hills by himself. That evening Jesus' disciples went down to the shore to wait for him. But as darkness fell and Jesus still hadn't come back, they got into the boat and headed across the lake toward Capernaum. Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, but he called out to them, "Don't be afraid. I AM! Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination! The next day the crowd that had stayed on the far shore saw that the disciples had taken the only boat, and they realized Jesus had not gone with them. They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his



approval.” They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?” Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.” They answered, “Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, ‘Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, Moses didn’t give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “give us that bread every day.” Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. So Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day. He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. Many of his disciples said, “This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?” At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you

also going to leave?” Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”			
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*Exodus 3:1-15; Acts 7:35-36; Exodus 16:1b-3, 11-15, 35; John 6:1-21, 22, 25-35, 53-54, 59-60, 66-69.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

BURNING BUSH

1. Moses lived his first 40 years in Egyptian royalty, then his next 40 years in hiding as a shepherd in the Sinai wilderness. Moses is 80 years old when God appears to him in the burning bush (Ex. 7:7). How does this event affect his idea of his purpose in life? What “burning bush” experiences have we had, and how was our life affected?
2. Jethro, also called Reuel. The word “priest” has a broad meaning. It is used throughout the Bible for both Israelite and non-Israelite cultic leaders. Though Jethro is a priest, he did not necessarily worship Yahweh (Ex. 18:11). A priest’s role was to make sacrifices on behalf of the people to God/the gods. What did Moses’ relationship with his father-in-law look like during these 40 years?
3. Mt. Sinai, also called Mt. Horeb, where God later reveals himself to the people and gives the law to Moses (Ex. 19-34), foretold in Ex. 3:12.
4. The angel of the LORD is the Lord’s officially authorized ambassador; blazing fire often represents God’s supernatural holiness. (Ex. 14:19-20; 23:20-23.) Notice God calls Moses by name. What does this tell us about God’s character?
5. Who were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to Moses, and why did this cause him to fear? (Fun fact: Jesus quotes this in Lk. 20:37) Imagine you were Moses—how would you feel if you were him?

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn’t burn up. “This is amazing,” Moses said to himself. “Why isn’t that bush burning up? I must go see it.” When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, “Moses! Moses!” “Here I am!” Moses replied. “Do not come any closer,” the Lord warned. “Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

EXODUS

1. During Joseph’s time in Egypt, the Israelites prospered (Genesis 41-50), becoming a great nation (Ex. 1:7). Not long after Joseph’s death, Egypt was invaded by the Hyksos people, worshipers of pagan gods Baal and Asherah. The Hyksos and the Israelites were distant relatives, the “Semitic” peoples, descendants of Noah’s son Shem. Seeing that the Israelites were shepherds and they were related, the Egyptians often referred to the Hyksos as “shepherds.” During the 150 years the Hyksos ruled Egypt, the Egyptian people grew an intense hatred toward these “shepherds.” (The Egyptians despised shepherds since long before, as seen in Gen. 46:34.) Once the Egyptians overthrew the Hyksos, having long forgotten Joseph’s legacy, they forced the Israelites into slavery. Before the exodus, the Israelites lived in Egypt for 430 years (Ex. 12:40).

2. A land flowing with milk and honey: The land was agriculturally rich, with pasturage for cattle and crops with blooms from which bees could make honey. Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites were known for immoral living, idolatry, and human sacrifice. This strip of land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert was a vital crossroads for trade and communication between Egypt and the rest of the ancient Near East. For what purpose is God giving this land to the Israelites? Is it wrong for God to give this land, which is occupied by others, to the Israelites? Why or why not?

3. Despite this encounter, Moses argues his perceived incapability to fulfill this calling. How does God respond? Has God asked us to do things we felt were “beyond” our ability? How do we respond? Does God call his people to do something in our own strength?

Then the Lord told him, “I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.” But Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?” God answered, “I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain.”

FEEDING THE 5,000

1. Leading up to this event, Jesus healed an officer’s son (Jn. 4:43-54) and the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda (Jn. 5:1-9). John numbers 5,000 men, as the Greek term is gender-specific, and only men were numbered during this period. The entire crowd, including women and children, may have been as many as four times that number. How many people were there, and what was the atmosphere of the crowd?

2. Rabbi questions: Jewish rabbis were known for asking questions not to gain understanding for themselves but to provoke thought and, ultimately, understanding in their listeners. Does Jesus ever ask a question he doesn’t already know the answer? What is Jesus trying to achieve when he asks Philip about purchasing food for the crowd?

3. Barley was the grain of the poor, the loaves being similar to pita bread. The fish would have been cooked and salted. Five loaves and two fish would be one person’s meal. Does Andrew have any hopes for this contribution?

4. The head of the Jewish household customarily gave thanks before (and at least according to later attested custom, after) the meal. A later standard blessing is, “Blessed are You, Lord our God, who brings forth bread from the earth.” Ancient monarchs gave out food to appease the people and gain political support. Roman emperors often did that at the arena. The people understood the miracle in that light. For Jewish people, this takes on a further significance. Moses, the nation’s recognized leader, gave manna daily to the people. This historical fact conditions the expectations of the people. How would you feel if you saw this take place?

Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, “Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?”

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

1. This dialogue took place in the synagogue at Capernaum (Jn. 6:59) shortly before Passover (Jn. 6:4). According to Jewish custom, this would have been when Jews would read the account of the exodus from Egypt, preparing their hearts for the upcoming Passover celebration. Jesus would have deliberately chosen this particular time to feed the 5,000 to connect the miracle with the festival. What does this tell us about God's character and heart?

2. The Jews believed that when the Messiah appeared, he would duplicate the great miracle of Moses. Manna would again fall from heaven, and everyone would consider it a second exodus. Jesus' discourse here is a midrash, the Jewish form of interpreting and debating the Hebrew Bible. Jewish teachers often employed this way of teaching that included difficult sayings. They deliberately made it hard to understand. If a person were superficial, they would be confused or irritated by the sage and depart. Only those committed and wise enough to continue with the teacher would be able to penetrate the meaning of the teaching. Jesus bases his midrash on Ex. 16:15 and Ps. 78:24, which talks of God raining bread from heaven. What does Jesus want his listeners to hear and understand? What is keeping them from understanding? What does Jesus want us to understand today, and what keeps us from understanding his heart fully?

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the far shore saw that the disciples had taken the only boat, and they realized Jesus had not gone with them. They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval." They replied, "We want to perform God's works, too. What should we do?" Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent." They answered, "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, 'Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Sir," they said, "give us that bread every day." Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."



Talking and Listening

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up. "This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it." When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt." But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" God answered, "I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain." But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" God replied to Moses, "I AM Who I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." God also said to Moses, "Say this

to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations. “So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years. One month after leaving the land of Egypt the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. “If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “I have heard the Israelites’ complaints. Now tell them, ‘In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.’” That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew. When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground. The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. “What is it?” they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, “It is the food the Lord has given you to eat. So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at the land of Canaan. Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, “Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?” He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, “Even if we worked for months, we wouldn’t have enough money to feed

them!” Then Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up. “There’s a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?” “Tell everyone to sit down,” Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.” So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, “Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!” When Jesus saw that they were ready to force him to be their king, he slipped away into the hills by himself. That evening Jesus’ disciples went down to the shore to wait for him. But as darkness fell and Jesus still hadn’t come back, they got into the boat and headed across the lake toward Capernaum. Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, but he called out to them, “Don’t be afraid. I AM! Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination! The next day the crowd that had stayed on the far shore saw that the disciples had taken the only boat, and they realized Jesus had not gone with them. They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don’t be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval.” They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?” Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.” They answered, “Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After

all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, ‘Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, Moses didn’t give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “give us that bread every day.” Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. So Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day. He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. Many of his disciples said, “This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?” At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?” Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”

Journal

Your life story will color the way you read through this passage. Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. How have you seen God's care and protection in your life?

2. Where have you felt let down or abandoned by God?

3. Do any of these questions below make you think twice?

- How can I believe that God cares for me when I have gone through so much pain and suffering?
- Is it possible for God to provide safety and security in the midst of chaos?
- Is there a greater plan for my life, and can God redeem any despair and difficulty I have experienced?

4. How could this passage encourage you? Get specific.

5. How has your experience interacting with this passage renewed or deepened your trust in God's plan for you?

6. How does it shift the way you view your life story?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Exodus

1. Structure

This book progresses chronologically.

1-18	19-40
Egypt & the Exodus	Mount Sinai
The Birth and Call of Moses, the 10 Plagues/Signs, the First Passover, the Exodus, the Wilderness before Mt Sinai.	The Law, Instructions for the Tabernacle, the Golden Calf, Completion of the Tabernacle.

2. Key Verse

“I am the one who brought them out of the land of Egypt, so that I could live among them. I am the Lord their God.”

3. Reason Written

To remind Israel that it was God that delivered them from Egypt, and also, to begin recording the Law that God had given them; in particular, the instructions and building of the tabernacle.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

Moses began writing Exodus after Israel had left Egypt. He completed this work by the time Israel had arrived at the edge of the promise land. It was most likely finished even before Israel set out from Mt Sinai, a year after they had left Egypt. The exodus most likely took place in 1446 BC. Exodus was written to the Israelites: freed slaves and God’s chosen people who had been promised a land (Genesis 15:13), who would be a nation that blesses other nations (Genesis 12:2).

5. Timeline of the Book of Exodus

- i. 14th Day, 1st Month: 1st Passover
- ii. 15th Day, 1st Month: Exodus
- iii. 15th Day, 2nd Month: Manna Given
- iv. 15th Day, 3rd Month: Arrive at Mount Sinai
- v. 1st Day, 1st Month, 2nd Year: Tabernacle Completed (ending of the book)

6. Additional Background

Exodus is the 2nd book of the Pentateuch.

- Genesis: Possibly written after the book of Exodus, by Moses, to remind the people of Israel where they had come from, God’s generational promises to them, and how they had ended up in Egypt
- Exodus: Picking up where Genesis leaves off geographically, but after ~400 years. God frees his people from slavery and takes them to Mt Sinai to worship him. God makes a conditional covenant with Israel at Mt Sinai that will last for generations.
- Leviticus: Written specifically to the Levitical priests illustrating how they should minister to the Lord on behalf of the people of Israel.

- Numbers: Picks up where Exodus leaves off, both chronologically and geographically. The book shows the Israelites' lack of faith, which led to their wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, having the first generation of Israel die in the wilderness.
- Deuteronomy: Moses' final words to the 2nd generation of Israel. Moses reaffirms the covenant God had made with them at Mt Sinai and commissions them into the promise land.

7. Feasts

In the Law, God gave Israel feasts and festivals to remember and celebrate what God had done. There were three main feasts where all Jewish men were required to travel to the tabernacle (and eventually, to Jerusalem and the Temple). Exodus 23:14-17.

- Passover: This was a feast that led into the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This was to remember how God had delivered them from Egypt, leading them out quickly. This was when Jesus was crucified.
- The Festival of Harvest (or, Feast of Weeks): This was to be celebrated 50 days after the Passover, where they would bring the first crop of the harvest to the Lord and celebrate God's provision and blessing in the land. This was the festival Israel was celebrating when Pentecost (Acts 2) took place. This also coincides with the date God gave Israel the Law at Mt Sinai after they'd left Egypt.
- Festival of Shelters (or Feast of Booths): This was celebrated for seven days at the end of the harvest season in Autumn after the Day of Atonement. Israel was to present special gifts to the Lord and live in little shelters to remember how God had made their ancestors live in shelters when He rescued them from Egypt.

8. Main Themes

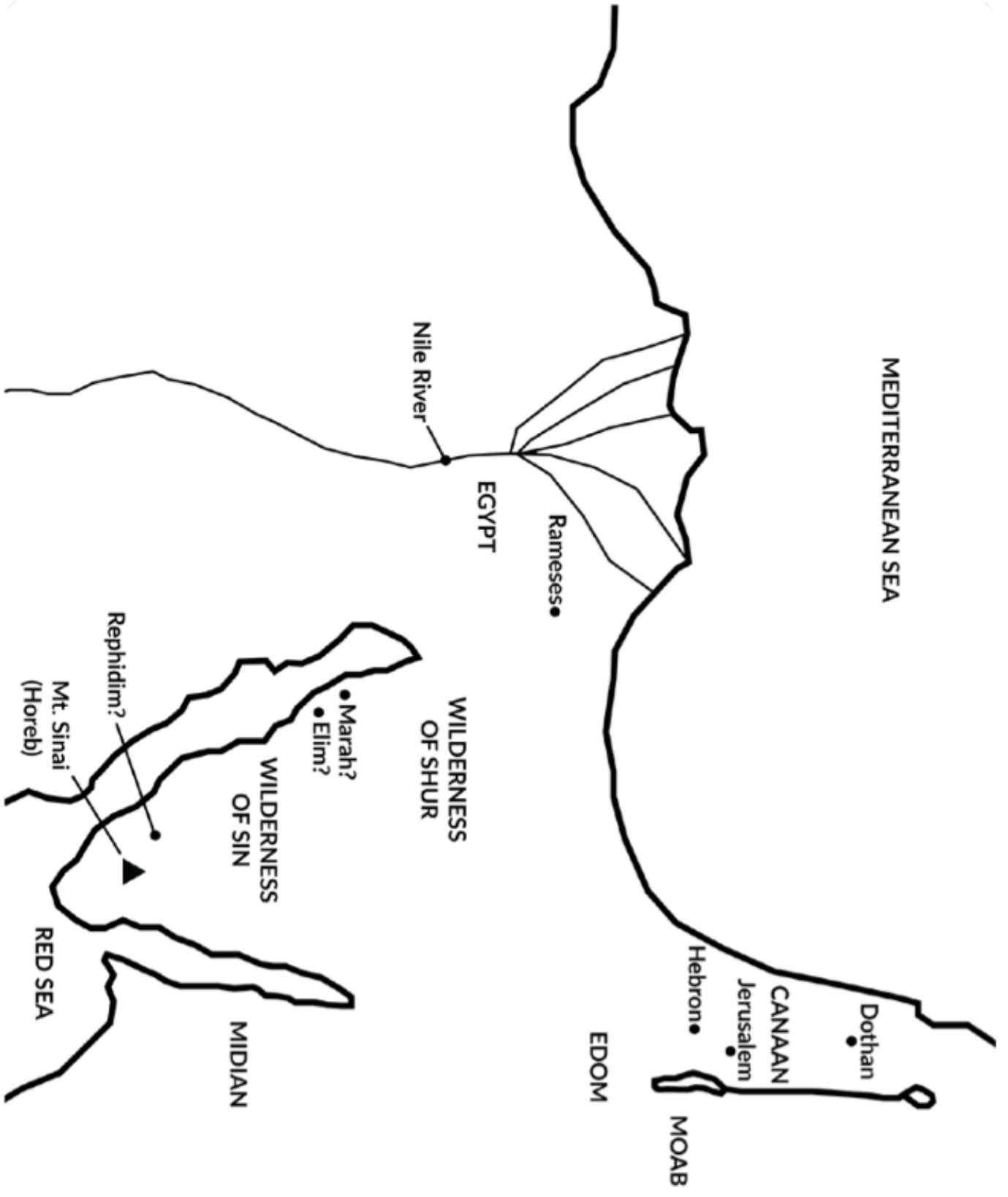
- Deliverance
- God dwelling with his people.
- Worship (The purpose of the Exodus and the function of the Tabernacle)

Week Three Assignment

In this assignment, you will trace the events of the book of Exodus geographically. On the map provided, trace the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Mount Sinai. Then, highlight the places where the following key events took place.

- Birth of Moses
- Call of Moses
- The first Passover
- Manna
- The 10 commandments/Law
- The golden calf
- Moses is face to face with God
- The completion of the Tabernacle

Assignment due: Friday morning.



Assessment: Week Three

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK FOUR

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters. On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, ‘Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.’” (When he said “living water,” he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.) Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery.</p>			

They put her in front of the crowd. “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.” Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.” As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him Then he spit on the ground,

made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied. Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!" Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them. Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?"



The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet." The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?" His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him." So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, "God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner." "I don't know whether he is a sinner," the man replied. "But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!" "But what did he do?" they asked. "How did he heal you?" "Look!" the man exclaimed. "I told you once. Didn't you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" Then they cursed him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from." "Why, that's very strange!" the man replied. "He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he

comes from? We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it." "You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue. When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" The man answered, "Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him." "You have seen him," Jesus said, "and he is speaking to you!" "Yes, Lord, I believe!" the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, "I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind." Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, "Are you saying we're blind?" "If you were blind, you wouldn't be guilty," Jesus replied. "But you remain guilty because you claim you can see. "I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I



sacrifice my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. "The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded." A Psalm of David: The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

*John 7:1-2, 37-39; 8:1-12; 9:1-41; 10:1-2, 11-18; Psalm 23:1-6.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?



WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

FESTIVAL OF SHELTERS

1. In Jesus' day, Galilee and Judea were under separate jurisdictions (Herod Antipas over Galilee, and Pilate, the Roman governor over Judea.) If someone were in trouble in one part of the country, they would be safer to remain in the other. Jesus' time had not yet come, so he stayed out of Judea until the time came for the Festival of Shelters. Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem if his time had still not come?

2. The Festival of Shelters/Feast of Tabernacles (Ex. 23:14-17; Deut. 16:16) was a joyous annual 7-day autumn festival, giving thanks to God for the blessings of the harvest. This festival was one of the three most important festivals of the Jewish calendar, occurring six months after Passover. All Jewish men were required to come to the temple in Jerusalem and live in booths (made of branches and the like) constructed on rooftops or elsewhere, commemorating God's faithfulness to his people when they lived in booths for 40 years in the wilderness. (Women and children were not required to live in the booths.)

3. As a prayer for God to send rain in late autumn, the Jewish people would hold a water ceremony each day of the Festival of Shelters. The priests would march in procession from the Pool of Siloam to the temple and pour water at the base of the altar. The climax was on the 7th day, called "the great day," when the ceremony was repeated 7x. As the water was poured over the altar, the Levites sang Isa. 12:3, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." Jewish teachers often depicted the temple as the navel/center of the world, illustrating these waters proceeding from this belly or center. How is Jesus the fulfillment of the Festival of Shelters? (Jesus references Zech. 4:8.) What does this mean for us today?

4. Most of Judaism did not believe that the Spirit was prophetically active in their own time. Still, Scripture promised the full outpouring of the Spirit in the messianic age of the world to come. When was the Spirit given, and how/why is this significant?

After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters. On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'" (When he said "living water," he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)

WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY

1. The word “adultery” implies this woman was engaged or married. According to the law (Lev. 20:10; Dt. 22:22-24), she deserves the death penalty. However, the law condemned not just the woman but the man as well. Where was the man? What were the Pharisees after? Did they care about the woman? How did Jesus feel about this woman?

2. This was a trap: Jesus was known for compassion. How would the people react if he agreed with the “law of Moses”? What if he rejects the law of Moses? To add to the trap, the Jews were not legally allowed to put anyone to death under the Roman government—all executions were ordered by the Romans alone. What were the Pharisees trying to achieve?

3. Why did Jesus write in the dust? What was he writing, and how did it affect the atmosphere? It was commonplace in Jewish teaching that even the most religious had committed sins. God had the power to judge or forgive sins.

4. During the Festival of Shelters, which is only just finishing, four large lamps were lit in the court of the women. Here, men holding torches would dance and sing all night long in remembrance of God leading the Israelites through the wilderness at night by a pillar of fire (Ex. 13:21). Scripture speaks of God being the light: Ps. 27:1, 119:105; Is. 60:19; Rev. 22:5. What is Jesus claiming, and what are his listeners hearing?

Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.” Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

MAN BORN BLIND

1. The people at this time believed that suffering, including blindness, was often (if not always) associated with sin. Jewish people acknowledged punishment for ancestral sin, and some allowed even for prenatal sin (Ex. 20:5; Dt. 5:9). Public charity was the only possible income for a blind person. Beggars were often turned down and despised; Judaism emphasized charity, but the shame attached to begging deterred those who did not need to resort to it. Beggars who sat near the temple, where many people passed and tended to think charitably, would have had a better chance of receiving. What did Jesus say about the purpose of this man's illness? Thoughts?

2. Notice Jesus says, "We" must quickly carry out the tasks assigned "us" by the one who sent "us." When Jesus says, "The night is coming, and then no one can work," what does he mean?

3. Many people in the first century believed the saliva of heroic figures held magical powers. For this reason, the Jewish community forbade the use of saliva. Why did Jesus choose to heal in this way?

4. The Pool of Siloam was inside Jerusalem's walls in Jesus' day, not too far from the temple, with large masonry and four porches. On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the water of Siloam was the sacred water used for this feast. Jesus, the one "sent" from God, told the blind man to wash in the pool "sent," not long after Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of the Festival of Shelters. Thoughts?

5. Instead of celebrating the miracle, the people wanted an explanation. When do we do this today?

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. "Rabbi," his disciples asked him, "why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents' sins?" "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. He told him, 'Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam' (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied. Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him.



6. Local leaders were called upon to judge the sins within the communities before 70 A.D. The response of the Pharisees is natural. The Pharisaic school of Hillel allowed praying for the sick on the Sabbath, but the Pharisaic school of Shammai was dominant in Jesus' day and forbade it. However, all would have viewed what Jesus did as violating the Sabbath. Kneading dough and clay was one of the thirty-nine classes of work forbidden on the Sabbath. Why was there division among the leaders?

7. Were the leaders genuinely wanting to know what this man thought of Jesus? Why did they call his parents? What were the Pharisees after? Pharisaic rules were meticulous about cross-examining witnesses fairly and without prejudice; these interrogators thus violated their ethical teaching. Why were they so adamant in their opinions?

8. Synagogues were allowed to enforce discipline on members violating Jewish laws. Capital punishment, however, belonged to Rome. Synagogues served as a place of learning and a layer of protection from the Roman authorities. What was at risk for the parents?

The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!" Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them. Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet." The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?" His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him."

MAN BORN BLIND (CONTINUED)

9. There is a change in the healed man’s perspective of Jesus, from “the man they call Jesus,” to “a prophet,” and finally, “a man ... from God.” What does this tell us about the man who was healed?

10. God spoke through the prophet Isaiah about Israel’s blindness (Is. 42:18-20). Is there anything that blinds us from the truth today?

So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.” “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!” “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?” “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.” “Why, that’s very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from? We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.” “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue.

When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.” “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!” “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, “I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.” Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?” “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.



I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1. Jesus compares himself, the “good shepherd” (Ps. 23, 78:52; Isa. 40:10-11), with the “bad shepherds” (Ezek. 34:3; Isa. 56:11; Jer. 23:1-4). “Thief” carries the idea of deception, while a “robber” uses force. To whom is Jesus speaking, and what is he wanting them to understand?

2. “I AM” statement, stimulating Jesus’ listeners to connect to the Scriptures while revealing Jesus’ true identity, bringing understanding to his ministry. What does Jesus’ statement “I am the good shepherd” mean to his listeners?

3. Who are these “other sheep?” What is Jesus saying to his listeners, and what are they hearing? How might they be reacting?

4. Did Jesus have control over his coming death and resurrection? What is the significance of his statement here?

“I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. “The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.”

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

1. This Psalm was written by David, who grew up shepherding sheep in the wilderness, whom God later used to shepherd the people of Israel. A good shepherd ensures their flock gets all their needs met. They don't overwork their sheep, allowing them to rest when needed. Sheep only drink from still water, as a rushing stream would quickly engulf them. What can we learn from this picture?

2. How does the picture of a shepherd guiding their sheep along the right paths bring honor to their name? How would they be viewed if they were to lead their flock purposely through trails leading to death? Sometimes, dangerous ways are unavoidable. How does a shepherd's rod and staff protect and comfort?

3. What can we learn from illustrating a feast in the presence of enemies? Anointing the head with oil was a ritual of bestowing honor. What can we learn from this illustration of extravagance?

4. Take each element of this Psalm and ask yourself when you experienced this. What is your emotional response to the Lord?

A Psalm of David: The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Talking and Listening

After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters. On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, ‘Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.’” (When he said “living water,” he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.) Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.” Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.” As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,”

Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?” Some said he was, and others said, “No, he just looks like him!” But the beggar kept saying, “Yes, I am the same one!” They asked, “Who healed you? What happened?” He told them, “The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.’ So I went and washed, and now I can see!” “Where is he now?” they asked. “I don’t know,” he replied. Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, “He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?” So there was a deep division of opinion among them. Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, “What’s your opinion about this man who healed you?” The man replied, “I think he must be a prophet.” The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. They asked them, “Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?” His parents replied, “We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don’t know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That’s why they said, “He is old enough. Ask him.” So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus

is a sinner.” “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!” “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?” “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.” “Why, that’s very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from? We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.” “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue. When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.” “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!” “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, “I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.”

Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?” “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see. “I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. “The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I

have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.” A Psalm of David: The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Coaching

Festival of Shelters

Woman Caught in Adultery

Man Born Blind

Handwriting practice lines for the text 'Man Born Blind'.

I AM the Good Shepherd

Handwriting practice lines for the text 'I AM the Good Shepherd'.



The Lord is My Shepherd

Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. Do any of the characters and their stories resonate with your life experiences?

2. In what ways can you relate to the experiences of the characters, and how do those stories shape your beliefs?

3. How does the current chapter of your story inform your reading of this passage?



4. In what ways has this story challenged, encouraged, or inspired you?

5. What themes or ideas in this story have a special meaning for you and why?

6. What responsibilities do you have to others who are less fortunate to ensure that justice and mercy are extended to all?

7. How can you use this passage to remind you to focus on loving and serving others rather than yourself?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Psalms

1. Structure

A collection of 150 Hebrew poems, songs, and prayers. The book of Psalms has been compiled into five books. Psalms 1 & 2 act as an introduction, with two main ideas:

- A. Blessed is the one who meditates on the Law, the Pentateuch (Psalm 1)
- B. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in the Messianic King (Psalm 2)
- C. Psalm 146-150 act as a conclusion of praise. Each book of the Psalms also finishes with a doxology of “Amen” or “Praise the Lord” or both.

2. Main Themese

- Book 1 (Psalms 1 - 41): Covenant faithfulness and the Law
- Book 2 (Psalms 42 - 72): Faith, the future kingdom of the messianic king and Temple
- Book 3 (Psalms 73 - 89): God’s faithfulness to a faithless Israel
- Book 4 (Psalms 90 - 106): God as king and deliverer, God’s coming justice & kingdom
- Book 5 (Psalms 107 - 150): Praise the king and deliverer.

3. Author, Audience and Dating

Authors:

David	73	God’s chosen king, a man after his own heart (1 Samuel 14:13).
Asaph	73	Asaph sounded cymbals before the ark of the covenant when it was moved from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:16-19). Following the Babylonian exile, 128 singers from his family returned from Babylon and conducted the singing when the foundations of Zerubbabel’s temple were laid (Ezra 2:41 & 3:10).
Sons of Korah	11	Levites descended from Korah; they served the Lord in the tabernacle/ temple.
Solomon	2	David’s son, famous for his wisdom, who authored many of the Proverbs.
Moses	1	Although only one psalm, Moses’ writings in the Pentateuch also contain some songs.
Ethan the Ezrahite	1	A renowned wise man in the time of Solomon (1 Kings 4:31) or an ancestor of Asaph (1 Chronicles 6:42).
Heman the Ezrahite	1	Possibly one of the first of three chief Levites to conduct the vocal and instrumental music of the tabernacle during the reign of David (1 Chronicles 16:41-42).
Anonymous	49	Jewish tradition is that some of these Psalms could have been written by Ezra.

The Psalms were written throughout a long period of Israel’s history.

It is thought that David compiled some portions of the Psalms together. However, Psalms in the structure of the five books as we have it today was compiled after Israel returned to their land, after the exile in Babylon. This means that it was the returning exiles who would have been reading the Psalms in their current groupings and structure and it would have been structured with them in mind. Jewish tradition is that Ezra could have been the compiler, and may have authored some of the anonymous Psalms. Both before and after the exile the Psalms were sung to worship God in the temple.

4. **Type of Literature**

Hebrew poetry rhymes using a form called parallelism.

This form rhymes ideas rather than sounds.

Three types of parallelism are:

- **Synonymous parallelism:** The idea in the second line repeats what has been said in the first. Psalm 49:1 “Listen to this, all you people! Pay attention, everyone in the world!”
- **Synthetic parallelism:** The second line adds to the first and often leads to a logical conclusion and/or completes the thought. Psalm 19:7 “The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.”
- **Antithetic parallelism:** Where the second idea contrasts or says the opposite of the first “but” often connects the two ideas. Psalm 1:6 “For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.”

5. **Types of Psalms**

- **Lament psalms** are poems of pain, confusion, or anger. These poems tend to focus on what’s wrong in the world or what injustice has happened and asks God to move and do something about it. Lament psalms show us an appropriate response to evil and injustice, the atmosphere at the end of a lament psalm is often very different from the beginning, not because their situation has changed, but because the truth of God’s character has shifted the perspective of the psalmist. Lament psalms are more common in the first 3 books of the psalms.
- **Praise psalms** are prayers of joy and celebration; they focus on what’s good in the world and praise God’s character and name simply for who he is.
- **Thanksgiving psalms** retell of things God has done and thank God for doing them. They are more common in books 4 & 5.
- Other types of psalms include wisdom, trust, messianic and vindication psalms.

Assessment: Week Four

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK FIVE

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. Jehoiachin did what was evil in the Lord's sight, just as his father had done. In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had said beforehand, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasures from the Lord's Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple. King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including all the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans—10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land. On July 31 of my thirtieth year, while I [Ezekiel] was with the Judean exiles beside the Kebar River in Babylon, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the</p>			

Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.'" So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath



came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army. Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.’ Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!’”

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord’s feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.” But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.” But his disciples

objected. “Rabbi,” they said, “only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?” Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light.” Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.” The disciples said, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!” They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.” Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go, too—and die with Jesus.” When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” “Yes,” Martha said, “he



will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” So Mary immediately went to him. Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. “Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?” Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone

rolled across its entrance. “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.” Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. When all the people heard of Jesus’ arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. Then the leading



priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.		
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*2 Kings 24:8a, 9, 12b-14; Ezekiel 1:1; 37:1-14; John 11:1-45; 12:1-3, 9-11.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?



WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

JUDAH EXILED

1. For a thousand years, the Israelites had disobeyed God’s laws and commands. Being a holy God, the people must be judged for their wickedness. Being a loving and patient God, he calls them back to himself through his prophets. Thoughts?

2. Isaiah prophesied to King Hezekiah in 2 Ki. 20:16-18 and Is. 39:5-7 that Babylon would strip his palace of all treasures. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had sieged Jerusalem in 605 BC, where he took some of the treasures from the temple (2 Chron. 36:7; Dan. 1:2). Now, in 597 BC, he took away all remaining treasures and exiled King Jehoiachin of Judah along with 10,000 of his best men. Discuss the atmosphere here.

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. Jehoiachin did what was evil in the Lord’s sight, just as his father had done. In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had said beforehand, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasures from the Lord’s Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple. King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including all the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans—10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land.

VALLEY OF DRY BONES

1. This is a vision given to Ezekiel, the priest, while in exile in the land of the Babylonians (Ezek. 1:3). Ezekiel was 30 years old when he received his first vision, which is significant because a priest began his priestly responsibilities in the temple only from the age of 30. Thoughts?
2. Ezekiel was one of the 10,000 exiled with Jehoiachin in 597 BC by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The vision of the valley of dry bones is understood to have happened about 12 years into captivity, which would have been just after King Nebuchadnezzar's final siege on Jerusalem in 586 BC, resulting in complete devastation by the hand of the Babylonians (Ezek. 33:21). The temple was destroyed. The remnants of the people of Israel were exiled throughout the Babylonian empire. The Israelites were in exile for 70 years (Jer. 25:11; 29:10), so they would have remained in exile for another 58 years following this vision. How would you feel if you were an Israelite during this time? Would you have any hope of returning to your land?
3. How would Ezekiel have felt, living his life in exile? Would he have felt like he was in a valley filled with dry bones? How did the valley look, smell, sound? How would you feel if you were walking in this graveyard?
4. How would you respond if you were Ezekiel, and God asked you if these bones could become living people again? Would you have obeyed if God asked you to prophesy to the bones to come to life? In what ways are we surrounded by "death" today, and how are we called to speak life?

On July 31 of my thirtieth year, while I [Ezekiel] was with the Judean exiles beside the Kebar River in Babylon, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" So I spoke this message, just as he told me.

VALLEY OF DRY BONES (CONTINUED)

5. Can you imagine the sound of the rattling bones? How loud is it? If you were Ezekiel, how would you feel watching these dry bones rattling themselves into place to become complete skeletons? Imagine what it must have looked like, having muscles and flesh form over the bones, and then skin forming to cover the bodies...!

6. This word “breath” can also be translated as “spirit” or “wind.” Discuss how this idea, as well as the power of the spoken word and the idea of the bodies being “formed/breath of life,” parallel with the creation story. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them. Then he said to me, “Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.’” So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army.

Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.’ Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!’”



LAZARUS

1. Visiting and praying for the sick was an obligation in Judaism. Still, Jesus' reputation as a healer is undoubtedly the main reason for informing him of Lazarus' sickness. (Ancient Near East culture was very indirect in asking for favors.) How would the sisters have responded to the delay in their request? Why did Jesus delay? What did he want?

2. The religious leaders were hunting for Jesus and wanted to kill him. He was safe in Galilee because Herod Antipas would not allow interference in his kingdom of Galilee, so Jesus was safe from direct threats there. Bethany, however, was just down the road from Jerusalem. Why would Jesus risk his life here?

3. Sleep was a common metaphor for death in Jewish texts and throughout the ancient world. Greek myth even portrayed Sleep and Death as twin brothers. Why did Jesus use a metaphor here?

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick." But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?" Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up." The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him." Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too— and die with Jesus."

LAZARUS (CONTINUED)

4. Lazarus would have been buried on the day of his death. At this time, popular belief stated the soul left the proximity of the body three days after death. On the fourth day, the spirit had gone for good. The first week of deep grief after a close relative's burial would be spent mourning in one's house, sitting on the floor while others brought food and sympathy. The custom called shivah (for "seven" days) is continued in Jewish tradition and is very helpful for releasing grief. Mourners abstained from adornment for the next three weeks and everyday pleasures for the following year. Visiting and consoling the bereaved in the days immediately following a close relative's loss was an essential part of Jewish culture. The neighbors would provide the meal after the funeral. Discuss the atmosphere of this section.

5. The common belief of Palestinian Judaism in this period was that the dead would be raised bodily at the end; indeed, Pharisees considered those who denied this doctrine (specifically Sadducees) to be damned for doing so. What did Martha understand in her proclamation, and to what depth did she believe it?

6. In Greek and Roman culture, philosophers emphasized sobriety and remaining calm and untroubled by bereavement. In contrast, the Jewish culture encouraged people to express their grief emotionally. Most people regarded it as praiseworthy, someone of Jesus' status able to share another person's grief. Why did Jesus weep, and what angered him?

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask." Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?" "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."



7. When a person was buried in a cave, the body would be wrapped and lying on the floor in the tomb's front chamber. After four days, decomposition was well underway—especially if winter had passed. Whatever spices they may have used to delay the stench would no longer be sufficient. The body would decompose for one year; then, its bones would be placed in an ossuary (bone box), which would typically be slid into a slot on the wall. Stones (often disk-shaped) covered many tomb openings and would keep out animals and occasionally robbers. How did Martha feel about Jesus wanting the stone removed?

8. The wrapping of the deceased was done with long cloth strips, often mentioned in ancient Jewish texts. This wrapping was thorough, binding limbs to keep them straight. The head cloth would have been tight enough around the cheeks to keep the mouth shut; the facecloth may have been a yard square. Men could not wrap women's corpses, but women could wrap both men and women. Lazarus was probably wrapped by his sisters. John's ancient audience would recognize that this tight wrapping would have made it hard enough for a living person to walk, not to mention a formerly dead person coming forth from the entrance of a tomb, which would have been down several steps into the ground. This complexity emphasizes the miracle. Can you imagine how you would have felt had you been there to witness this event?

Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." So Mary immediately went to him. Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see." Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?" Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible." Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!" Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen.

MARY ANOINTS JESUS

- 1. Why was this dinner prepared in Jesus' honor? Why, how, and when can we honor Jesus today?
- 2. It was common to anoint the heads of important guests, but for their feet, a host would typically provide water, and the lowest of the servants would wash their guest's feet. Using such expensive perfume on the feet was unheard of. A wealthy monarch might do this, but not a regular teacher or person. Why would Mary do this?
- 3. Nard was expensive, originating from a rare flower that grew in the Himalayas (Nepal). Each flower would be crushed, and a sweet oil was secreted. The oil was collected, bottled, and sent down the Silk Road to Jerusalem. It was incredibly expensive when it went through all the tax borders. A flask would typically contain no more than an ounce. A flask of 12 ounces was very rare. Mary is extravagantly generous here. Is there anything we are holding back from Jesus today?
- 4. For a woman to let down her hair in front of men was comparable to becoming naked in their presence. Usually, only a husband would be able to see the hair of the wife. Mary lets down her hair in the presence of all the disciples, the other guests, and Jesus. Then, she humbles herself by wiping his feet with her hair. Are we willing to humiliate ourselves for Jesus?
- 5. Why did the leading priests want to kill Lazarus? In what ways are we like the leading priests? How can we act more like Jesus instead?

Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. When all the people heard of Jesus' arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.



Talking and Listening

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months.

Jehoiachin did what was evil in the Lord's sight, just as his father had done. In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had said beforehand, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasures from the Lord's Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple. King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including all the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans—10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land. On July 31 of my thirtieth year, while I [Ezekiel] was with the Judean exiles beside the Kebar River in Babylon, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four

winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.” So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army. Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.’ Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!’” A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord’s feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.” But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.” But his disciples objected. “Rabbi,” they said, “only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?” Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light.” Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.” The disciples said, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!” They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.” Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples,

“Let’s go, too—and die with Jesus.” When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” So Mary immediately went to him. Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. “Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?” Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.” Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside.

Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. When all the people heard of Jesus’ arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.

Lazarus

Mary Anoints Jesus



Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. What in your life experience has caused you to feel rejected by society or others?

2. How has Jesus accepted and loved you despite your mistakes and shortcomings?

3. How can you love and forgive those who may have wronged you in the past?

4.How can you show love and grace to those around you who may feel rejected and judged?

5.What has happened in your life that brings you comfort when reading this story?

6.Is there anything in your life experience that makes it hard for you to relate to the stories of Jehoiachin, Lazarus, and Mary?



7.If so, how did Jesus respond to the situation, and how can you apply that to your own experience?

8.How would Jesus respond to your situation, and what do you think he would want to do to help you?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Kings

1. Structure

Originally one book following on from the events of Samuels, Kings progresses biographically. After the kingdom divides, the author interchanges between the kingdom of Israel and Judah until Israel's exile when the author focuses on Judah's history.

1-11	12-16	17-8	9-17	18-25
Jerusalem in the United Kingdom.	The beginning of the Kings of Judah and Israel.	God's prophets and the Kings.	The continued downfall of Judah and Israel's kings. (Israel is exiled)	Jerusalem's continued downfall and exile to Babylon.

2. Key Verse

2 Kings 17:13-14 "Again and again the Lord had sent his prophets and seers to warn both Israel and Judah: "Turn from all your evil ways. Obey my commands and decrees—the entire law that I commanded your ancestors to obey, and that I gave you through my servants the prophets." But the Israelites would not listen. They were as stubborn as their ancestors who had refused to believe in the Lord their God."

2 Kings 23:27 "For the Lord said, "I will also banish Judah from my presence just as I have banished Israel. And I will reject my chosen city of Jerusalem and the Temple where my name was to be honored."

3. Reason Written

To show the exiles in Babylon that they are in exile for their continued covenant disobedience, generation after generation.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

The original audience of Kings was the exiles in Babylon. Since the book finishes with the release of King Jehoiachin from prison, most believe the book would have been written after this took place and before the first Israelites returned to the land from Babylon, so between 560 and 538 BC. The author of Kings is disputed, although Jewish tradition states it was Jeremiah with his scribe.

5. Type of Literature

Old Testament Narrative: Selected events over a period of Israel's history showing what God was doing among and through his people at the time. They don't include an exact list of everything that happened, but selected events that build the author's purpose of writing. This also means some events are told in detail and others are told quite briefly. It's important to note that Old Testament narratives don't tell us of people who interacted perfectly with God and what should have happened, but exactly what happened. They are retelling history, not ideals.

6. Main Themes

- Continual covenant disobedience will lead to exile
- God's continued faithfulness by sending prophets to a faithless nation

7. Key Events

- a. David's Death (1Kings 2)
- b. Solomon Builds the Temple (1Kings 8)
- c. Solomon's downfall & the Lord divides the kingdom into Judah and Israel (1Kings 11)
- d. Golden calves and idol worship in Israel (1Kings 12)
- e. The Lord vs. Baal with Elijah the Prophet (1Kings 18)
- f. Elijah taken to Heaven (2Kings 2)
- g. Israel taken into exile and foreigners settle in the land of Israel (2Kings 17)
- h. Assyria threatens Jerusalem and Hezekiah seeks the Lord (2Kings 18+19)
- i. Babylon shown Judah's treasure & the prediction of Babylonian Exile (2Kings 20)
- j. Manasseh's idols in the Temple & God promises to wipe Jerusalem away (2Kings 21)
- k. Josiah finds the Law and makes religious reforms (2Kings 23)
- l. Jerusalem besieged by Babylon and the exile begins (2Kings 24)
- m. Jerusalem falls and God wipes the rest of Jerusalem away (2Kings 25)

8. Additional Background

The events of Kings span from David's death in 970 BC to the final wave of the Babylonian exile in 586 BC and the release of King Jehoiachin in 560 BC.

In the book the author defines kings as good or evil. The criteria for a good king were one that worshipped the Lord their God alone, got rid of idolatry in the land and was faithful to the covenant. Evil kings did not act like this and let the people into idolatry, immorality, and injustice, they did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. This was also all measured by their obedience to God's law and the conditional covenant Israel entered at Mt Sinai (Exodus).

Kings also introduces the prophets, mainly Elijah and Elisha. See the role of the prophet in the Isaiah overview.

Week Five Assignment

Using the template provided, create a timeline of the line of the kings in Judah and Israel. Start from Saul and go to the exile of both nations. Use information from Monday's class as well as 1st and 2nd Kings to find the order of the kings **and** if they were good or evil in the Lord's sight.

Also, note down **at least** 3 significant events that occurred during that time, linking them to the king reigning at the time. For example, the Temple being built under Solomon's reign.

Saul
David
Solomon

Rehoboam

Jeroboam 1

Nadab

Judah

Israel

Assessment: Week Five

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK SIX

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.” God, the Lord, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, “I, the Lord, have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free</p>			

the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons. Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!" Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you." For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean."



After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them. “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!” Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know

who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. "I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! "If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will



<p>produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.</p>		
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*Isaiah 42:1-7; John 13:1-17; 14:1-17a; 15:1-12.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

GOD’S SERVANT

1. A strong theme in Isaiah is the “servant of God.” There is a climax in the servant theme, pointing to God’s perfect servant, embodying all Israel was meant to be for the nations around them. How does this relate to who Jesus is? What practical steps can we take to apply these characteristics of God’s perfect servant in our lives today?

2. This passage is attributed to Jesus: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free and that the time of the Lord’s favor has come (Lk. 4:18-19).” How does this shape our understanding of who Jesus is?

3. Notice that Isaiah prophesies “justice to the nations,” not “justice to Israel.” He also prophesies justice throughout the earth, distant lands waiting for his instruction, a light to guide the nations. How does this shape our understanding of the nature of Christ?

4. What characteristics of God do you see in this passage? In meditating on this passage, how can we be more like Christ to the world around us? What parallels do you see here with other stories learned?

“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.” God, the Lord, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, “I, the Lord, have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons.



JESUS WASHES DISCIPLE'S FEET

1. This story marks a significant pivot in the gospel of John. Until now, John has focused on Jesus' public ministry and the seven signs displaying Jesus as the Son of God. Here, Jesus' focus switches to ministering to the disciples intimately. In what ways are we called to both "public ministry" and ministry to a small core group of people? Are there any steps we need to take to set this in place?

2. The Passover lamb was to be eaten at night. Sundown in Jerusalem in April would come by 6 pm, signaling the start of the meal. Table fellowship was intimate at the feast, with one or two families sharing the meal. Jesus and his closest disciples make up the family unit. This last supper (Passover Meal) occurs on the evening of Jesus' arrest. He will be crucified at 9:00 am (Mk 15:25) the following day. Knowing that 'his hour has come,' how would this affect the atmosphere of the meal?

3. Jewish culture held a very high value on hospitality. Once you had eaten a meal with someone, you were that person's brother. Eating at the same table formed a permanent covenant of peace (extending through their descendants). Friendship meant loyalty (sometimes to the death), equality, a mutual share of possessions, and an intimacy in which a friend could share everything in confidence. Jesus emphasizes the last point where he distinguishes a friend from a slave—a slave might be loyal but would not share intimate secrets. Betrayal by a friend was counted as the most wretched form of betrayal. To betray one's host at a meal was all the more treacherous. Judas was among the disciples throughout this event. How did Jesus feel towards Judas? Considering God's character, did Judas have a choice as to if he would betray Jesus? How did Jesus feel, knowing that Judas would betray him?

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

JESUS WASHES DISCIPLE’S FEET (CONTINUED)

4. Low beds or cushions would be arranged around tables where men would recline for a feast— each person close together. They would be propped up by their left arm, their head near the table, leaving the right hand free to reach food, and their legs tucked behind. If one were to lean back, they would lean into the chest of the person behind them. Jesus would have gone outside this circle to wash each person’s feet. As a sign of hospitality, a host was to provide water for travelers to wash the dust from their feet. It was unheard of, however, for a host to loosen sandals and personally wash someone’s feet—the lowliest job of the lowest servant. Although Judaism valued humility, they still upheld standard social roles. Disciples typically served their teachers, following the model of Elisha serving Elijah and Joshua serving Moses. However, dealing with the teacher’s feet was one expression of service that was never required. In 220 A.D., Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi was said to be so humble he would do anything for anyone except relinquish his superior position at the table. Seating according to rank was crucial. If you were one of the disciples, seeing Jesus get up from the head of the table and wash feet while wrapped in a towel (as a slave), what would you think? Peter writes later in 1 Pet. 5:5, “dress yourselves in humility.” Thoughts?

Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you.” For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.” After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

DON'T LET YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED

1. Knowing that his death was approaching, Jesus encouraged his disciples to trust him. In Jewish culture, Jesus is using the language of marriage. When a couple got engaged, the bridegroom would go to his father's house and prepare a room for his bride, and when everything was ready, he would return and pick her up. Considering the atmosphere, how would you react if you were one of Jesus' disciples? How would this illustration speak to them?

2. Thomas mistakes the destination of Jesus as a physical, accessible place here on earth. Jesus does not correct the mistake—he states that he is the only way to access God the Father. Likewise, Phillip fails to recognize Jesus' true identity. God had shown himself in extraordinary visible manifestations to Moses and many others in Scripture. Despite misunderstandings, what is Jesus' heart for his disciples? What is his heart for us today amidst our failures?

3. The image of the way is multifaceted. Jesus uses imagery familiar to Jewish religious instruction, which often spoke of the way of righteousness and the way of falsehood. Jesus knows he is on his way to his Father and that it will require his life to get there. Why is it crucial for Jesus to challenge his disciples in their faith?

“Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don't know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”

DON'T LET YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED (CONTINUED)

4. In Jewish thinking, a “name” connects to reputation or fame. To do something “in the name of God” was understood as acting on God’s behalf, as his authorized representative, and according to his command—those who seek his honor and speak accurately for him. Jewish tradition allowed the idea that some very devout teachers could receive almost anything they asked because of their intimate relationship with God. Still, this idea never applied to the majority. Discuss the significance of Jesus’ words and how it should affect us today.

5. In Jewish depictions of God’s heavenly court, angels could serve as accusers or advocates. Satan is the primary prosecutor, and God (or God’s mercy) defends Israel. Judaism was familiar with the idea of a successor who carries on a predecessor’s work. However, Judaism typically viewed the Spirit as an aspect of God rather than a person. Here, Jesus portrays the Spirit as “another” advocate, just as Jesus advocated for many during his earthly ministry. What might the disciples be hearing/understanding?

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! “If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth.

I AM THE TRUE GRAPEVINE

1. “The grapevine and the vineyard traditionally represented God’s people, planted and tended by him in Israel (Ps 80:8-18; Isa 5:1-7; Jer 2:21; 12:10-11; Ezek 15:1-5; Hos 10:1-2).” -NLT Study Bible

2. Vineyards were pervasive in the Mediterranean world, including in Judea and Asia Minor. Small farmers, including most Galileans, had vines, figs, and olive trees. The tending of vines was well known. They would cut away useless branches that would drain the plant’s energy so that the vine would be really fruit. The weaker the vine, the more harshly one pruned it, reducing short-term fruit but ensuring more fruit the following year. Farmers pruned in two different ways: they pruned fruitful branches to make them more productive and removed unfruitful branches entirely. In what ways are we to “remain in Christ?”

“I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. “I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

Talking and Listening

“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.” God, the Lord, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, “I, the Lord, have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons. Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus replied, “You don’t understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.” “No,” Peter protested, “you will never ever wash my feet!” Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t belong to me.” Simon Peter exclaimed, “Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!” Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of

you.” For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them. “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!” Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! “If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another

Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. “I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

Coaching

God's Servant

Jesus Washes Disciple's Feet

Don't Let Your Hearts Be Troubled

I AM the True Grapevine

Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences between your experience and how Jesus demonstrated love in this passage?

2. How does Jesus' example of self-sacrificial love, justice, grace, and mercy in the passage speak to your own life experience?

3. What has been your experience of God's presence, love, and care in your life?

4. What does Jesus' commandment to love each other as He has loved us mean in light of your experience?

5. Do you believe that Jesus can transform even the most difficult, painful, or unjust experiences of our lives?

6. How can you involve your life experience to more fully appreciate how Jesus loves us?

7. How do you think Jesus responded to your difficulties and struggles?

8. How can you find hope and peace in Jesus' response to your circumstances?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Isaiah

1. Structure

A common layout for prophets is “Judgement” transitioning to “Restoration” and this is the case for Isaiah. This doesn’t mean chapters 1-39 contain only judgement messages, only that most of them are contained in this portion of the book. Same with the messages of hope and restoration, they are throughout the book but mainly found within chapters 40 - 66.

1-39	40-66
Judgement	Restoration
Confronting	Comforting
National (Judah + Neighbours)	International (Judah + Nations)
Judgement on all Nations	Redemption of all (Jews and Gentiles)
Failed Human Kings and Servants	The Messianic King and Servant

2. Key Verse

Isaiah 30:15

“This is what the Sovereign Lord,
the Holy One of Israel, says:

“Only in returning to me
and resting in me will you be saved.

In quietness and confidence is your strength.

But you would have none of it.

3. Reason Spoken and Written

These prophecies were spoken to the people of Judah to urge them to trust in the Lord for everything, in particular for their salvation. They were written so that generations would know not to look to anyone or anything else for protection and salvation but God alone.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

Isaiah received visions and heard from the Lord during the years Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah reigned, these kings of Judah reigned from 792 to 686 BC. It was in the year king Uzziah died that Isaiah had his vision of the throne room and was sent to the people of Judah.

5. Who was Isaiah?

Isaiah’s name means “God has saved”. Isaiah lived and ministered in Jerusalem, his ministry lasted up to 60 years, he also had disciples (8:16). His wife was a prophetess and he had at least 2 sons. His sons were named prophetically; “Shear-jashub” meaning a remnant shall return and “Maher-shalal-hash-baz” meaning Jerusalem will be looted. He is the grandson of King Joash and therefore cousin of King Uzziah. This means he was part of royal family, brought up with wealth, education and access to the kings of Judah. This makes sense as many of his prophecies are dealing with political issues such as kings and



governments making alliances with surrounding nations instead of relying on and trusting in God. Isaiah spoke on behalf of the Lord not just to Judah but many surrounding nations too.

6. **The Role of the Prophet**

To understand the role of a Prophet, we first must understand the conditional covenant that Israel entered into with God at Mount Sinai (Exodus). This covenant stated that as Israel obeyed God's law, they would be blessed with peace and prosperity in the land. However, if they turned their hearts from God and disobeyed, there would be consequences, curses. Disease, drought, famine, danger, attacks from other nations, destruction of their towns and cities, extreme poverty, disgrace, death and eventually deportation from their land. So especially when Israel was in a time of disobedience God sent prophets as covenant enforcers, often explaining what was happening and predicting what would happen in the future, all with the purpose of bringing Judah and Israel back into covenant obedience. They brought both pronouncements of judgement and messages of hope.

7. **Additional Information**

Hosea/Amos were contemporary prophets in Israel, the north. Micah prophesied as a contemporary in Judah. During Isaiah's ministry, there was 2 different world powers, different social, political, and economic wealth. Under Uzziah, Judah was mostly peaceful and prosperous, but when he died a lot of the prosperity went with him and the following kings in Isaiah's ministry struggled with military, political, social and economic unrest. Manasseh reigned after Hezekiah, although not listed in Isaiah 1:1 many believe that Isaiah's ministry also occurred under Manasseh as well. Isaiah would have faced harsh persecution. Many scholars date chapters 1-39 to before Manasseh and 40-66 during his reign but it was only written, not spoken due to the persecution. Jewish tradition says that he was martyred under Manasseh who sawed him in two (Heb 11:37).

8. **Main Themes**

- Salvation, both physical and spiritual
- Trust in God
- Holiness, in Isaiah God is repeatedly called "the Holy One of Israel". Many think it's because of his experience with the holiness of God in the throne room. This title for God only appears 7 times elsewhere in the OT.

9. **Type of Literature**

Kings as an Old Testament Narrative tells us what God was doing at the time in Israel's history. The Prophets in the Bible tells us more of what God was thinking and feeling at the time. The prophets can use Hebrew poetry to communicate God's messages and are often communicating visions and images they have seen which are hard to describe, so figures of speech are common.

Assessment: Week Six

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK SEVEN

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees. Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with his disciples. The leading priests and Pharisees had given Judas a contingent of Roman soldiers and Temple guards to accompany him. Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, they arrived at the olive grove. Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. “Who are you looking for?” he asked. “Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied. “I AM he,” Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.) As Jesus said “I AM he,” they all drew back and fell to the ground! Once more he asked them, “Who are you looking for?” And again they replied, “Jesus the Nazarene.” “I told you that I AM he,” Jesus said. “And since I am the one you want, let these others</p>			

go.” He did this to fulfill his own statement: “I did not lose a single one of those you have given me.” Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest’s slave. But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?” So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up. Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas [the high priest] ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn’t go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn’t be allowed to celebrate the Passover. Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. “Hail! King of the Jews!” they mocked, as they slapped him across the face. Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. And Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and



the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate replied, "No, what I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing." So that is what they did. Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on, this disciple took her into his home. Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty." A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Who has believed our message? He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our

sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him." She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who



are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him." "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). "Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message. That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! Again, he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my

<p>fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!” “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.” “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 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.”</p>			
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*John 18:1-12, 28; 19:1-3, 16-30; Isaiah 53:1a, 5-9; John 20:1, 11-29; Matthew 28:18-20.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

ARREST

1. The Kidron Valley separates Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. The Kidron brook flowed only in the rainy season—crossing in April would not involve getting wet. Kidron means: “to mourn” or “to be dark, murky.” It was in this valley that many idols had been burned (1 Ki. 15:13; 2 Ki. 23:4, 6, 12). The Mt. of Olives was one of Jesus’ frequent locations for prayer. Discuss the significance of this location, knowing he is on his way to the cross the next morning.

2. Romans (and others) typically depended on local informers, a role Judas fills here. A contingent (cohort) of Roman soldiers consisted of approximately 600 soldiers. The Temple guards were Levites designated to guard the temple. Why was Judas given a contingent of soldiers? What were they expecting?

3. Jesus answers, “I am,” claiming God’s name for himself (Ex. 3:14). A Jewish tradition from the writer Artapanus said that when Moses pronounced the name of God, Pharaoh fell backward. (Later, people were known to try and cast spells in the same name.) Today, people can experience a sense of being saturated by the Spirit and fall to the ground. Discuss.

4. Where no massive or violent threat existed, Romans and their allies often preferred to detain a ringleader rather than all the followers, as the movement could not survive without its leader. Discuss Jesus’ father’s heart and how he protects his closest friends amidst the chaos.

5. As a slave of the high priest, Malchus would be an influential person with much authority; maybe Malchus was helping to lead the expedition. According to temple law, a person with a deformity would not be allowed into the temple. How might Jesus’ choice to restore Malchus’ ear (Lk. 22:51) affect his life? If you were Peter, how would you feel seeing Jesus restore Malchus?

6. The high priesthood had been the most powerful office in Jewish Palestine until the Roman period. Caiaphas was the high priest at this time (Jn. 11:49). His father-in-law, Annas, served as high priest from A.D. 6-15 before being deposed by the Romans. According to Jewish law, the high priest was entitled to rule for life. Jewish leaders saw the Roman deposition of Annas as invalid, and Annas continued to command great respect. He retained enormous influence until he died in A.D. 35 and was wealthy and powerful. Jewish literature, however, does not speak well of him. Jesus was taken to Annas before he appeared before Caiaphas (Jn. 18:13, 24). According to Jewish tradition, capital cases were to be heard by a minimum of 23 judges. No individual could legally act as a judge in a capital case. Still, this law did not stop Annas from exercising his political power, privately interrogating Jesus. How much power did Caiaphas have?

ARREST (CONTINUED)

7. The headquarters was Herod the Great's old palace, used by the Roman governor (Pilate) when he came to Jerusalem from Caesarea during the feasts. His priority was to maintain order when Jerusalem was overcrowded, and riots were most apt to break out. Roman officials began meeting the public at daybreak, from around 6:00 a.m. until noon. Despite the mobs of people making their cases, the priestly aristocracy—who controlled Judea for the Romans—could secure an audience with him on short notice. Observant Jews would not enter the headquarters, as Gentile residences were considered ritually impure—primarily because of the association with idolatry. Rome did not permit Jewish courts to exercise the death penalty, except for a Gentile intruding into an inner court of the temple or someone defiling the temple. Capital offenses required Roman verdicts. Why were the leaders concerned about becoming “ritually unclean” yet not phased by breaking their own laws to condemn an innocent man?

After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees. Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with his disciples. The leading priests and Pharisees had given Judas a contingent of Roman soldiers and Temple guards to accompany him. Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, they arrived at the olive grove. Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. “Who are you looking for?” he asked. “Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied. “I AM he,” Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.) As Jesus said “I AM he,” they all drew back and fell to the ground! Once more he asked them, “Who are you looking for?” And again they replied, “Jesus the Nazarene.” “I told you that I AM he,” Jesus said. “And since I am the one you want, let these others go.” He did this to fulfill his own statement: “I did not lose a single one of those you have given me.” Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest's slave. But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?” So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up. Jesus' trial before Caiaphas [the high priest] ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn't go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn't be allowed to celebrate the Passover.

CRUCIFIXION

1. Pilate wasn't known to cooperate when dealing with Jewish religious matters unless the situation got out of hand and there was a threat to the peace. Romans were generally known for their emphasis on justice. Pilate knew Jesus was not a threat to law and order. However, the Romans were also heavily concerned with the politics of ruling provinces and keeping peace. These political considerations often took sway over individual justice. Thoughts?
2. A Roman flogging or scourging (beating with a whip) was severe. Jewish law limited the number of lashes one could receive to 39. Still, Roman law allowed the flogging to continue until the soldier administering the flogging grew tired. In addition, the whips that Romans used on non-Romans and slaves were made of leather with sharp pieces of metal or bone woven into them. A flogging alone could kill the victim.
3. Coarse street mimes often included mock kings arrayed in faux splendor. Adorning a prisoner as a king and beating him was another form of coarse entertainment. Jewish ruler Agrippa I was ridiculed in this manner in Alexandria. Non-Jewish soldiers, many drawn from Syria, were often anti-Jewish and happy to ridicule a Jewish "king." The purple robe the soldiers put on Jesus may have been a faded scarlet robe (from a Roman civil servant) or an old rug. The crown of thorns was likely made from a date palm, drawing blood from Jesus' scalp. The greeting "Hail" is sarcasm derived from the customary salutation of the Roman emperor, "Ave (Hail), Caesar!" A person would generally kneel when offering such an acclamation in the Eastern Mediterranean world. Discuss the atmosphere of this event.
4. The Place of the Skull (Golgotha) was a Roman execution ground, hence the name. Golgotha is the highest point of Mt. Moriah, where God's command tested Abraham's faith to sacrifice his son, Isaac, in Gen. 22, and God provided a ram instead. Abraham named this place "The Lord will provide"! It's this mountain where Solomon later built the temple (2 Chron. 3). Thoughts?
5. Crucifixion came initially from Persia and then was exported around the Roman world. The Romans learned crucifixion from Carthage and used it widely before Jesus was born. It was used not only as capital punishment but also as a warning to other people, as this was done in a location that would be visible to all. The standard crucifixion procedure began as the prisoner carried the crossbar of the cross, weighing about 100 lbs (45 kg), from the place of flogging to the crucifixion site, where the upright part was permanently mounted. The crossbar would have been tied to his arms. In this position, if a prisoner tripped or fell, he could not use his hands to break their fall and would fall face-first into the ground. The victim would be offered a drink of wine and myrrh (a mild painkiller that burns open wounds). The victim would be stripped naked and then nailed to the crossbar, and the nails would be driven through the wrists to support the body weight. The crossbar would be raised, and the victim's heels would be nailed to the post. Once fixed to a cross, the victim would live for a few hours to a few days (depending on how severe the pre-crucifixion flogging was). As a person died and definitely after death, the victim would be subject to vultures and other birds that would start eating his flesh. Roman law was that the body must rot on the cross, but Jews were allowed to be taken down and buried after death, according to Jewish law.

CRUCIFIXION (CONTINUED)

6. This was how a person died from crucifixion: when the victim was put up on a cross, all his body weight would be suspended by his arms. In this position, it was difficult to exhale, and the victim could only take shallow gasps of air. The victim must push himself up by the feet to take a full breath. When he did this, three things happened. 1.) The weight is fully supported by the feet. The nail that ran through the feet would hit two major nerves running through that part of the body. The result was extreme pain. 2.) As the victim pushes up to get a breath of air, it would cause the wrist to rotate against the nail and cause intense pain in the arms. 3.) The wounds in the back would rub up against the rough centerpiece of the cross, aggravating the wounds on the back. All this pain would quickly force the victim to lower themselves again. Eventually, the victim would no longer be able to push themselves up to catch a breath of air, and he would suffocate. Sometimes, the legs would be broken to quicken the suffocation, and the victim would die in several minutes.

Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. “Hail! King of the Jews!” they mocked, as they slapped him across the face. Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. And Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, “Change it from ‘The King of the Jews’ to ‘He said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate replied, “No, what I have written, I have written.”

7. Several more facts on execution. 1.) The soldiers were granted the victims clothes. 2.) It was customary for a person hanging on a cross to be subjected to mocking, scorn, and ridicule. 3.) A member of the execution squad would have carried the charge against the man crucified.

8. Jesus would not have been elevated far above the ground so Jesus' mother and disciples could hear him speaking. A dying person could make an oral testament from the cross if witnesses were available. Mary is probably in her mid-40s, a widow, and would depend on her children to support her. Amidst his suffering, Jesus bypasses the cultural norms (where the responsibility to care for her would have fallen to the next oldest brother), putting her in the formal care of his disciple. Why would Jesus do this?

9. Sour wine probably refers to a cheap wine vinegar mixed with water, often used by soldiers and laborers to quench their thirst. However, it would also sting as it dripped on the victim's wounds.

10. How was Jesus feeling through all of this, and who in this section was there to support him? If you were in the crowd, how would you feel? What if you were a Pharisee? A soldier? An on-looker? A disciple? Mary?

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing." So that is what they did. Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home. Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty." A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

ISAIAH 53

1. This prophecy was spoken by Isaiah hundreds of years before Christ’s birth. It so clearly depicts Jesus as the coming Messiah that modern-day Jews are forbidden to read this chapter (Is. 53). Thoughts?
2. The descriptions: pierced, crushed, beaten, and whipped are all forms of punishment, and sin is a crime against God. The word for “whole” here is “shalom,” meaning “perfect peace” in mind, body, and spirit. What does it mean to live in perfect shalom?
3. Crucifixion victims were usually thrown into a public grave for criminals. They were not allowed to be mourned after their death. The Romans preferred not to have the corpses buried at all. Still, it would have been a needless aggravation to Jewish sensitivities. The Jewish tradition was to take down the body before sunset. Local Jewish leaders would have been responsible for handing the victim’s remains back to their family a year after their death when the body had decomposed. There were exceptions made to this rule. Roman authorities did hand over bodies to friends or relatives who desired to bury them. However, by doing this, you did identify yourself with the person who had been executed for treason. It would have drawn particular scrutiny if the person was wealthy or influential.
4. Jesus’ burial is described in Jn. 19:39, mentioning Joseph and Nicodemus using 75 pounds (33 kg) of myrrh and aloes in the wrapping of Jesus! This lavish expression of love was equivalent to 100 years’ wages (\$5 million USD), a gift for nobility. How can we express our love for Christ today?

Who has believed our message? . . . He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man’s grave.



RESURRECTION

1. A tomb in this day would be closed with a disk-shaped stone rolled in front of the entrance. These stones would be guided by a track in the ground, moving slightly uphill to open the tomb and then propped open by a wedge. The stones were heavy, requiring several men to roll them away. Tomb robbery was a real issue at the time. People would desecrate bodies to steal items buried with them. Tombs of the rich would be targeted. This problem was so prolific that Emperor Claudius issued a decree (of which a copy was found in Nazareth) ordering tomb robbers to be sentenced to death. Jewish culture openly expressed grief. Jewish people took mourning seriously—for the first seven days, mourners were not to wash, work, or even study the law. A missing body prevents people from bestowing final acts of love, which would be tragic. Even Gentile tomb robbers were known to leave the body behind. Imagine a loved one passing away and going to the grave site the next day to weep only to discover that the coffin had been dug up, the clothes your loved one was buried in scattered around the top of the clay, and the body is gone. How would you feel standing there?

2. How dark and how large was it inside the tomb? What sort of impact would the dazzling powerful beings (Lk. 24:4-5) have had on onlookers? Does Mary seem surprised to see these men? Why did Mary assume Jesus was the gardener?

3. “Don’t cling to me,” does not carry the same meaning as “don’t touch/hug me.” To cling means to hold and not let go. Why does Jesus tell Mary not to cling to him? When will we ‘cling’ to Jesus, eternally?

4. At this time, a woman’s testimony was far less valued than a man’s. Jewish men did not accept the witness of a woman as reliable for most legal purposes (nor did the Roman courts) because they believed women were too moved by emotion. Why did Jesus send Mary with this message to his disciples?

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her. “Because they have taken away my Lord,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who are you looking for?” She thought he was the gardener. “Sir,” she said, “if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.” “Mary!” Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, “Rabboni!” (which is Hebrew for “Teacher”). “Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message.

COMMISSION

1. The disciples feared the Jewish leaders. Bolted doors (a heavy bolt slid through rings attached to the door and its frame) would prevent anyone from entering. How would you feel if you were the disciples and Jesus suddenly appeared?

2. Jewish tradition believed that the dead would be resurrected in the same form they had died (before God healed them) so everyone would recognize the person standing before them as the same who had died. Hands include one’s wrists, presumably where the spikes would have been driven. A nail through the palm would not have secured the person in place on the cross since the victim’s weight would have ripped the hand open.

3. Judaism saw prophets as God’s agents. In Jewish tradition, prophets often appointed their successors. The sender authorized their agent to be an accurate representation of himself. What is Jesus “sending” his disciples to do? How has he “sent” us?

4. How does the action of Jesus breathing on his disciples parallel with other stories in Scripture?

That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! Again he said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

5. At the time, there were stories of people seeing ghosts—a spiritual vision or an image produced by a magician. Something as dramatic as a person rising from the dead needed objective verification by Thomas. Though he is often called “doubting Thomas,” would you have been any different (no matter the level of faith you think you have) had you witnessed Jesus’ crucifixion just three days earlier?

6. Thomas’ response is the climactic confession of Jesus’ identity in this Gospel. It is a confession of Jesus’ Deity. In the Old Testament, the Lord and God appear together as titles of the Deity. Later on, Emperor Domitian wanted to be called Lord God. Pliny, a governor, writing near the probable location of John’s readers two or three decades later, reports that Christians sing hymns to Christ “as to a god.” What does this tell us about Thomas?

7. We, as believers, are called to proclaim the gospel to all peoples! How can we share this message in a way that challenges our audience to respond today?

One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!” “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”

“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 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.”

Talking and Listening

After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees.

Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with his disciples. The leading priests and Pharisees had given Judas a contingent of Roman soldiers and Temple guards to accompany him. Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, they arrived at the olive grove. Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. “Who are you looking for?” he asked. “Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied. “I AM he,” Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.)

As Jesus said “I AM he,” they all drew back and fell to the ground! Once more he asked them, “Who are you looking for?” And again they replied, “Jesus the Nazarene.” “I told you that I AM he,” Jesus said. “And since I am the one you want, let these others go.” He did this to fulfill his own statement: “I did not lose a single one of those you have given me.” Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest’s slave. But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?” So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up. Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas [the high priest] ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn’t go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn’t be allowed to celebrate the Passover. Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. “Hail! King of the Jews!” they mocked, as they slapped him across the face. Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. And Pilate posted a sign on the cross

that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate replied, "No, what I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing." So that is what they did. Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on, this disciple took her into his home. Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty." A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Who has believed our message? He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to

the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her. “Because they have taken away my Lord,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who are you looking for?” She thought he was the gardener. “Sir,” she said, “if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.” “Mary!” Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, “Rabboni!” (which is Hebrew for “Teacher”). “Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message. That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! Again, he said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and

look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 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."

Coaching

Arrest

Crucifixion



Isaiah 53

Resurrection

Commission

Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. How have my experiences impacted my thoughts and feelings about Jesus' mission?

2. Are any elements of this passage that feel especially familiar or comforting?

3. Are there elements of this passage that may challenge or contradict my beliefs or assumptions?

4. How do my values interact with this passage, especially Jesus' teachings about compassion and forgiveness?

5. What messages from this passage speak most strongly to me and why?

6. How might this passage shape my life experience?

7. What emotions does this passage evoke in me and why?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Week Seven Assignment

1. Find as many predictions of what would happen to Jesus as you can. Link them to verses in the Gospels.

See, my servant will prosper; he will be highly exalted.
But many were amazed when they saw him.
His face was so disfigured he seemed hardly human,
and from his appearance, one would scarcely know he was a man.
And he will startle many nations.
Kings will stand speechless in his presence.
For they will see what they had not been told.
they will understand what they had not heard about.
Who has believed our message?
To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm?
My servant grew up in the Lord's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground.
There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him.
He was despised and rejected—
a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.
We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.
He was despised, and we did not care.
Yet it was our weaknesses he carried;
it was our sorrows that weighed him down.

And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!
But he was pierced for our rebellion,
crushed for our sins.

He was beaten so we could be whole.
He was whipped so we could be healed.
All of us, like sheep, have strayed away.
We have left God's paths to follow our own.
Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.
He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word.
He was led like a lamb to the slaughter.
And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.
Unjustly condemned, he was led away.

No one cared that he died without descendants,
that his life was cut short in midstream.
But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people.
He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone.
But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave.

But it was the Lord’s good plan to crush him, and cause him grief.

Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants.
He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord’s good plan will prosper in his hands.
When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied.

And because of his experience,
my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous,
for he will bear all their sins.

I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier,
because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels.
He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.

2. Why did God predict these specific things beforehand?

(Helpful hint: Who did God have in mind when wanting this written? Who would be reading this at the time and for generations to come?)

3. How does this change how you experience the crucifixion in the Gospels?

4. What is one (or more) way that the Lord is leading you to apply this week into your life practically?

Assessment: Week Seven

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK EIGHT

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>During the forty days after [Jesus] suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the</p>			



earth.” After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!” On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages about the wonderful things God has done!” They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked

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or unclean. I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. And he ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead. He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name.” Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God. Then Peter asked, “Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?” So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

*Acts 1:3-11; 2:1-8, 11b-21, 41; 10:1-28, 34b-36, 42-48.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

ASCENSION

1. In Scripture, the number 40 often represents divinely ordained periods. Where else have we seen the number 40? What are some ways Jesus has proven himself to his disciples? Did the disciples ever get used to Jesus appearing to them? What was Jesus trying to achieve?

2. Water baptism originated from ritual purification in Lev. 15. In Jesus’ day, Gentiles were required to undergo water baptism before participating in Jewish practices. John the Baptist, however, called all people (including Jews) to be baptized to show they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven (Lk. 3:3). Paul illustrates water baptism as being buried with Christ and resurrected into his family (Rom. 6:1-14). What did the disciples understand when Jesus mentioned this new kind of baptism? What did the disciples know about the Holy Spirit? In what ways are we to be equipped before being sent?

3. Even still, the disciples saw Jesus as a political messiah in this physical world. Rather than taking over Rome, Jesus commissions his disciples to the nations through the power of the Holy Spirit. Thoughts?

During the forty days after [Jesus] suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

PENTECOST

- 1. Pentecost (also known as ‘Festival of Harvest/Weeks’ in Ex. 23:16) occurred 50 days after Passover in remembrance of the Sinai Covenant. All Jewish men were to appear in Jerusalem for this festival (Deut. 16:16). Consider Jer. 31:31-34 (covenant written on hearts rather than stone); Gen. 11 (Tower of Babel); Gen. 12:2-3 (Abraham called to be a blessing to all people); and Joel 2:28-29 (I will pour out my Spirit upon all people). Discuss the significance of this event.
- 2. Eph. 1:13 tells us that we receive the Holy Spirit when we accept Christ as our Savior. Eph. 5:18-19, however, makes the distinction that we are to be ‘filled with the Holy Spirit.’ Discuss the purpose/outcome of being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- 3. Deeper context, this bit has been cut from our text: “Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs.”
- 4. What does this look like? What does it sound like? How did the people know the disciples were from Galilee? How would you feel/react if you were at the festival when this event happened?

On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages . . . about the wonderful things God has done!” They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked each other. But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, “They’re just drunk, that’s all!”

PETER’S SERMON

1. Observe contrasts between the Peter from just 50 days previous to the Peter we see here. Why the change? In what ways have we been transformed? In what areas do you believe for personal transformation?
2. In what ways do we see the Spirit at work within us and flowing from us (Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Cor. 12:27-13:13)? In what ways do we need more of the Spirit, and why?
3. Signs and wonders, common expressions used to prove divine activity, were not unfamiliar to Peter’s listeners (Deut. 4:34; 6:22; 26:8; Isa. 8:18; Jer. 32:20; Ps. 78:43; Dan. 4:1-3). What is the ultimate purpose of signs and wonders?
4. Jews from all over the Roman Empire would gather in Jerusalem for this festival (Pentecost), which God strategically used to reveal himself to his people. From this event onwards, the church quickly grew in numbers: Acts 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1; 21:20. What are we doing today to multiply the church? What more can/should I personally be doing?

Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, “Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o’clock in the morning is much too early for that. No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy. And I will cause wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below—blood and fire and clouds of smoke. The sun will become dark, and the moon will turn blood red before that great and glorious day of the Lord arrives. But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

VISION OF CORNELIUS

1. Cornelius was a Centurion, overseeing 100 soldiers within the Italian Regiment. A Regiment was 600 soldiers (6 Centurions each with 100 soldiers). There were 10 Regiments per Roman Legion. (The word for 'Regiment' here is the same Greek word used in Jn. 18:3 for 'Contingent.')
2. Joppa was about 30 miles (48 km) from Caesarea. How long does it take to walk this distance? How quickly does Cornelius obey the instructions given to him? How quickly do we obey?

In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment. He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said. Cornelius stared at him in terror. "What is it, sir?" he asked the angel. And the angel replied, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore." As soon as the angel was gone, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier, one of his personal attendants. He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa.

VISION OF PETER

1. In setting the Israelites apart from the world, God gave them specific food laws (Lev. 11). The sheet in Peter's vision was full of "unclean" animals, reptiles, and birds, which Jewish people were forbidden to eat. It is understood that the dialogue bit in the vision is what was repeated, rather than the sheet descending and ascending 3x. In Jewish culture, significant ideas are often repeated to confirm truthfulness. If you were Peter, how would you have responded?

2. How easy/difficult would it have been for the messengers to find Peter? How many houses had they visited before this one?

3. How do Cornelius' servants describe Cornelius? How would people describe me?

The next day as Cornelius's messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon, and he was hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners. In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds. Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat them." "No, Lord," Peter declared. "I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean." But the voice spoke again: "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." The same vision was repeated three times. Then the sheet was suddenly pulled up to heaven. Peter was very perplexed. What could the vision mean? Just then the men sent by Cornelius found Simon's house. Standing outside the gate, they asked if a man named Simon Peter was staying there. Meanwhile, as Peter was puzzling over the vision, the Holy Spirit said to him, "Three men have come looking for you. Get up, go downstairs, and go with them without hesitation. Don't worry, for I have sent them." So Peter went down and said, "I'm the man you are looking for. Why have you come?" They said, "We were sent by Cornelius, a Roman officer. He is a devout and God-fearing man, well respected by all the Jews. A holy angel instructed him to summon you to his house so that he can hear your message." So Peter invited the men to stay for the night.

GENTILES RECEIVE HOLY SPIRIT

1. What was Cornelius' expectation? How are we to live with a heart-posture of expectation today?
2. To fall at a person's feet (an act of worship) is against Jewish law. To enter a Gentile home/ associate with Gentiles, however, was an additional rule enforced by religious leaders of the day. Jesus made a great effort to display God's heart for the Gentiles. Why did Peter make this distinction, and what needed to change?
3. What did Jesus command his disciples in Matt. 28:19? Why were the Jewish believers amazed to see Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit?

The next day he went with them, accompanied by some of the brothers from Joppa. They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter entered his home, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter pulled him up and said, "Stand up! I'm a human being just like you!" So they talked together and went inside, where many others were assembled. Peter told them, "You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean. . . . "I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. And he ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead. He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name." Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God. Then Peter asked, "Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?" So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

Talking and Listening

During the forty days after [Jesus] suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!” On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages

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Coaching

Ascension

Pentecost



Peter’s Sermon

Lined writing area for Peter’s Sermon with 15 horizontal lines.

Vision of Cornelius

Lined writing area for Vision of Cornelius with 15 horizontal lines.

Vision of Peter

Gentiles Receive Holy Spirit



Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. What experiences or teachings have shaped how I view this passage?

2. What aspects in this passage speak most powerfully to me?

3. What lessons or takeaways can I draw from the stories presented here?

4. How does my faith journey inform how I understand or interpret this story?

5. What messages in this passage shed light on my own life journey?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Acts

1. Structure

This book progresses geographically.

1-7	8-9	10-12	13-25
Jerusalem	Judea and Samaria	Cornelius in Caesarea (The beginning of the 'End of the Earth').	Paul's 3 missionary journeys ending with a Roman imprisonment. (The 'End of the Earth' the end of the known world at that time).

2. Key Verse

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

3. Reason Written

Acts provides a record of selected events over a 30-year period that show how the Gospel message spread through the power of the Holy Spirit from Jerusalem to the 'Ends of the Earth'. The book finishes with Paul in Rome, the capital of the Empire and therefore head of the known world at that time. Although Paul's missionary journey makes up a lot of the book, he's not the main character, the main character of Acts is the Holy Spirit.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

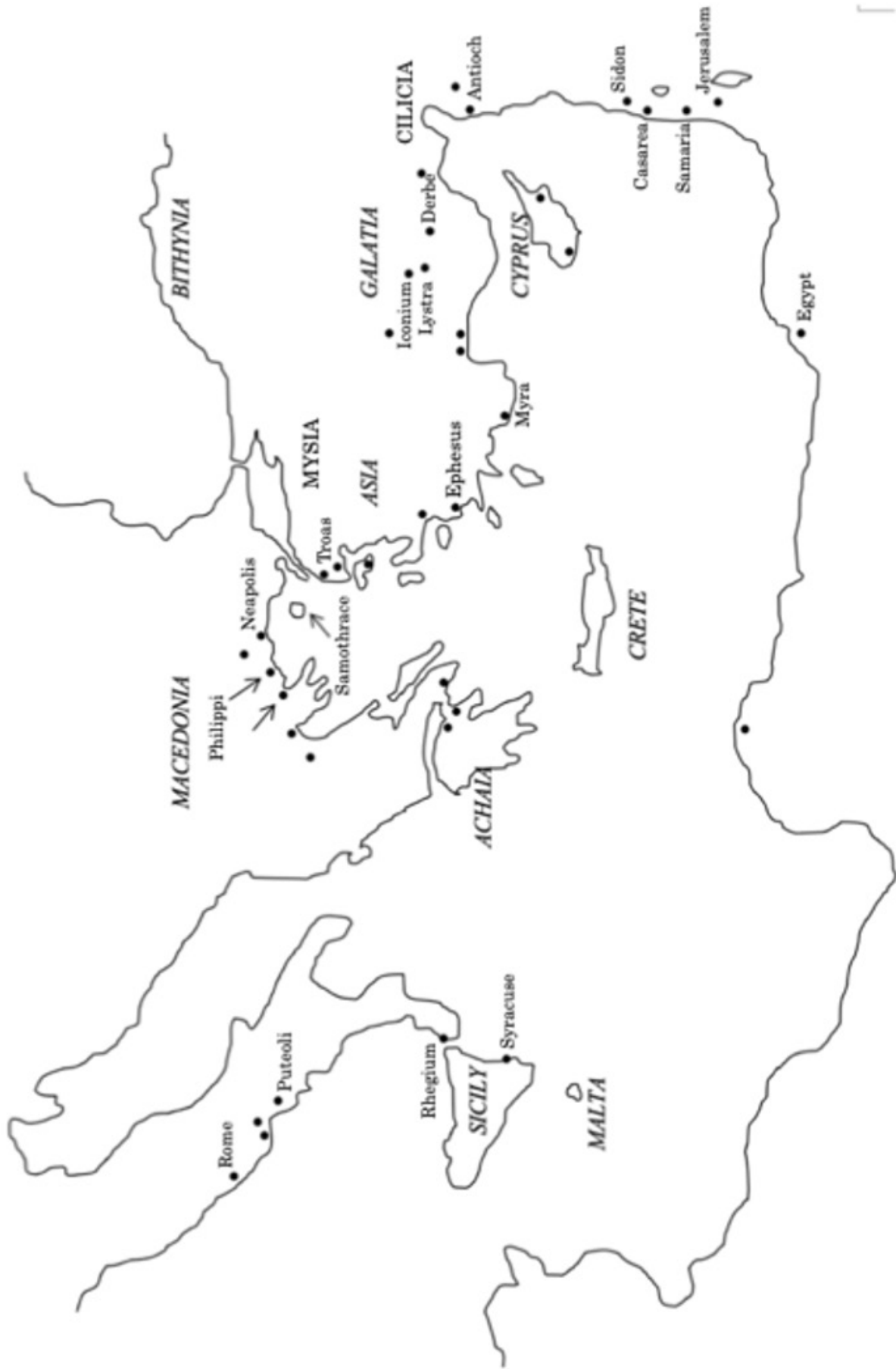
Luke wrote both Luke and Acts as a two-part series, Acts picks up where Luke leaves off. It was written to Theophilus, he is thought to be a Roman who many believe was part of defending Paul and therefore the Gospel message from persecution. It was most likely written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome from 60-62 AD, this imprisonment is how the book ends. Part way through the book Luke changes from 'they' to 'we' showing that he was present during many of the events and interactions that took place.

5. Main Themes

- The Power of the Holy Spirit
- The birth and growth of the church as witness of Jesus Christ
- Gentile Inclusion (specifically including many Romans)

6. Type of Literature

Historical Narrative: Selected events showing what God was doing among and through his people at the time. Not an exact list of everything that happened, but selected events that build the author's purpose of writing. As with Old Testament Narratives, God is always the main character of the story, in particular the main character of Acts is the Holy Spirit.



Assessment: Week Eight

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		



WEEK NINE

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there. From there we reached Philippi, a major city of that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. And we stayed there several days. On the Sabbath we went a little way outside the city to a riverbank, where we thought people would be meeting for prayer, and we sat down to speak with some women who had gathered there. One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant</p>			

of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. "If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my home." And she urged us until we agreed. One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her. Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. "The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!" they shouted to the city officials. "They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice." A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to



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in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.			
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*Acts 13:9a, 16:6, 9-10, 12-40; Philippians 1:1-6, 2:1-11; Colossians 1:15-18.

Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

PAUL TO MACEDONIA

1. Name changes in Scripture carry much meaning. “Saul” is a Hebrew name, and “Paul” is a Greco-Roman name. Not only has there been a radical personal transformation, but also a shift in ministry focus—now to the Gentiles (Eph. 3:2). Thoughts? In what ways has God changed our lives/ministry paths?
2. The mention of “we” indicates that Luke is now traveling with Paul. Macedonia marks the first missionary work in (present-day) Europe. (In Paul’s day, it was just another province of Rome.) Significance?
3. There was a minimum requirement of 10 adult Jewish males for a town to have a Synagogue. In places that did not meet the minimum, God-fearing Jews and Gentiles would meet outside the city gates, near rivers (for Jewish purification ceremonies). Notice there is no mention of men in this passage. (Normally, only men are mentioned in this culture, and not women.) Thoughts?
4. Purple cloth was for royalty. Lydia would have been an upper-class merchant. Though she ‘worshipped God’ already, there is a shift in her heart after hearing Paul’s message. What would she have believed/understood before, and what message was Paul bringing that brought new revelation?

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PAUL AND SILAS IN JAIL

1. In keeping the peace, Romans allowed Jews to worship according to their customs rather than force them to worship the Roman emperor. A non-Jewish believer in Rome, however, had little protection. Jewish people who were hostile toward Gentile Christians could easily report them to the Roman authorities, leaving them with no legal exemption from worshipping the emperor... and refusal to do so as a non-Jew resulted in death.

2. The slave girl, used by her master for fortune telling, represented the Greek lower class. Though she was speaking the truth, what would others think/understand, hearing this message from a slave girl known for occult practices? How would she have been shouting? For how many days/ hours? What does her voice sound like? If you were Paul, how would you rebuke this demon? How would this exorcism have affected this girl?

3. There were no policies against Jews teaching non-Roman customs. However, Jews were not to ‘convert’ Roman citizens. The marketplace was the heart of the city’s public life. Were Paul and Silas the ones bringing the city into an uproar? Who was upset, and why? Notice the accusers never mention money but instead draw attention to “these Jews” vs. “us Romans.” Thoughts?

One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved.” This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And instantly it left her. Her masters’ hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. “The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!” they shouted to the city officials. “They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice.”



EARTHQUAKE

- 1. What was it like to be put in stocks?
- 2. Having just received a severe beating, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns. How do we react in times of trials? What leads Paul and Silas to react this way? How can we be more like them?
- 3. The prison was shaken off its' foundations? What was it like to be in that earthquake? Also, would it be typical for everyone's chains to fall off?
- 4. The Roman jailer represented the Roman middle class. When Peter was miraculously released earlier, Herod Agrippa had the guards put to death (Acts 12:19). Death by the Romans was torture-driven. What made the jailer so quick to ask about the way to salvation?

A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.

PAUL AND SILAS RELEASED

5. The city officials had likely assumed the beating and a night in prison had taught “these Jews” a lesson. They hadn’t realized, however, that they were Roman citizens. It was against Roman law to beat (or bind) a Roman citizen without a fair trial, and anyone, including a city official, would be required to pay a heavy penalty. A Roman citizen was immune to punishment simply by saying: *civis Romanus sum*. What was Paul doing for the gospel message in drawing attention to this? What can we learn from this?

6. Despite their wounds, not sleeping all night, and strict orders to leave the city, Paul and Silas went first to encourage the believers. In what ways can we apply this heart posture in our own lives?

The next morning the city officials sent the police to tell the jailer, “Let those men go!” So the jailer told Paul, “The city officials have said you and Silas are free to leave. Go in peace.” But Paul replied, “They have publicly beaten us without a trial and put us in prison—and we are Roman citizens. So now they want us to leave secretly? Certainly not! Let them come themselves to release us!” When the police reported this, the city officials were alarmed to learn that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. So they came to the jail and apologized to them. Then they brought them out and begged them to leave the city. When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left town.



LETTER TO PHILIPPI

1. The people in Philippi were highly patriotic and prideful regarding their Roman citizenship. Paul (also a Roman citizen) introduces himself as a 'slave.' What are the attributes of a slave, and in what ways are Paul and Timothy 'slaves of Christ Jesus?' Is there anything in our lives we are called to surrender yet still hold onto, and why? Outcome?

2. Paul writes to the believers 'including' the leaders, not to the 'leaders' and also the believers. Thoughts?

3. In reading this passage, what can we see of Paul's heart for the believers in Philippi? What is our heart for the church today? How can we present this material as a direct encouragement/ exhortation today?

This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders and deacons. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

SAME ATTITUDE AS CHRIST

1. Rhetorical questions do not expect answers but stimulate deeper understanding. What truths or characteristics in this passage challenge me personally?
2. Adam and Eve desired equality with God, yet Jesus humbled himself to the position of a slave. Thoughts?
3. What did it look like for Jesus to give up his divine privileges? What are those divine privileges?
4. What is significant about the name of Jesus? What gives the name power?

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

CHRIST IMAGE OF INVISIBLE GOD

- 1. How does the presentation of Christ in this passage add to the understanding of Jesus that we have already developed from the Gospel of John?
- 2. What is the nature of the “thrones, kingdoms, rulers and authorities in the unseen world?”
- 3. How does Jesus “hold all creation together?”
- 4. What does it mean that Jesus is the “head of the church which is his body?”
- 5. In reflecting on the passages we’ve learned in this school, what in this passage jumps out at you? Why?

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.

Talking and Listening

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Coaching

Paul to Macedonia

Paul and Silas in Jail

Earthquake

Paul and Silas Released

Letter to Philippi

Same Attitude as Christ

Christ, Image of the Invisible God

Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. How does this story illustrate God's faithfulness to His followers despite opposition and suffering?

2. How can Paul and Silas's example give us the courage to face difficult circumstances with faithfulness and grace?

3. What does this passage reveal about the importance of humility, selflessness, and mutual understanding in our witness and our relationships with each other?



4. How is God's grace revealed in this passage, and what does it mean for your story today?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Philippians

1. Structure

The book of Philippians doesn't necessarily have a linear progression, each piece of the letter centers around the poem about Christ's humble sacrifice and resulting exaltation by God found in 2:5-11.

2. Key Verse

Philippians 2:5-8

"You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross."

3. Reason Written

Epaphroditus had been sent by the church in Philippi with support for Paul during his imprisonment. Paul then sent Epaphroditus back to Philippi with this letter to thank them and to encourage them to join him in living in Christ's humble example.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Philippi. This was a church he had started on his second missionary journey after the Holy Spirit had led him to Macedonia (Acts 16). Paul was only there a short time, after he was imprisoned in Philippi for one night, he left town very shortly after. Paul was in prison at the time of writing, most believe he wrote the during his Rome imprisonment at the end of Acts, so ~60-62 AD, the same imprisonment where he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon.

5. Additional Background

Philippi was a Roman colony, filled with retired Roman soldiers and had many proud Roman citizens. There wasn't a synagogue in Philippi (10 Jewish men were needed to start a synagogue) which means most of the church would have been Gentile. When Paul was in Philippi during his second missionary journey he faced persecution, he was imprisoned for the first time and eventually had to leave the city.

6. Main Themes

- Humility leads to Unity
- Joy
- Live by Christ's Example

7. Type of Literature

Epistle: Letters written to different churches and people throughout the early church. Frequently, believers in the early church had to overcome disunity (normally between Jews and Gentiles), immorality and false teachings. The letters in the New Testament were often written to help the church overcome these issues, encourage them, and correct false teaching. God used these letters to give further understand to his redemptive plan and how believers should live as they wait for Christ's return.

Assessment: Week Nine

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		

WEEK TEN

Textual Analysis

TEXT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS OF CHARACTER	INNER MONOLOGUE
<p>This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near. Then as I looked, I [John] saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.” And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like</p>			

a rainbow. Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God. In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal. In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come." Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit of God that is sent out into every part of the earth. He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests



for our God. And they will reign on the earth.” After this, I heard what sounded like a vast crowd in heaven shouting, “Praise the Lord! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God. His judgments are true and just. He has punished the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality. He has avenged the murder of his servants.” And again their voices rang out: “Praise the Lord! The smoke from that city ascends forever and ever!” Then the twenty-four elders and the four living beings fell down and worshiped God, who was sitting on the throne. They cried out, “Amen! Praise the Lord!” And from the throne came a voice that said, “Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear him, from the least to the greatest.” Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: “Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself. She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear.” For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God’s holy people. And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he added, “These are true words that come from God.” Then I fell

down at his feet to worship him, but he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus.”

Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords. And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death



and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues

came and said to me, “Come with me! I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” So he took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal. Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life. He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon!” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s holy people.

*Revelation 1:1-3; 4:1-6, 8b; 5:6-7, 9-10; 19:1-16; 20:11-15; 21:1-7, 9-11; 22:1-5, 17, 20-21.



Character Study

THE SIX STEPS

WHO AM I?

What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

Scene Study: Culture Cues and Questions

REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. “A Revelation from Jesus Christ” is the title of this work, which defines a genre of Jewish writing (apocalyptic literature) that was popular in the intertestamental period (400 years between Malachi and the coming of Jesus) through to the end of the first century AD. This genre was heavy on symbolism, the significance of numbers, and revealing mysteries. It was also a typical genre of protest from people who were suffering.
2. “A Revelation from Jesus Christ” is also a letter written to the seven churches of Asia Minor and contains prophecy. How does this book’s genre influence how we understand the book overall?
3. The context of the early church of Asia Minor at the end of the first century AD was persecution under the reign of Domitian, who claimed to be “Lord and God.” Additionally, the church was entering a period where Gnosticism was strongly influencing the church. Who is the main character of this book? What does this say about its message?
4. There is a blessing pronounced on both the one who reads this message aloud AND those who listen and obey. What is your expectation as you begin internalizing this message?

This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near. Then as I looked, I [John] saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.”

HEAVEN CELEBRATES

- 1. Who does the character of the great prostitute represent (Revelation 17)? Why are the saints so happy that she has been destroyed (or why do they rejoice at the judgments of God)? Shouldn't the saints be sad that God has finally judged the prostitute? What would be a comparative figure in our world today? What should our response be to the Lord today?
- 2. Which characters/people are rejoicing in this passage?
- 3. Who is the bride, the wife of the Lamb? What meaning does this give to the book of Revelation? How does this frame our understanding of the whole book?
- 4. Why does John want to worship the angel?

After this, I heard what sounded like a vast crowd in heaven shouting, "Praise the Lord! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God. His judgments are true and just. He has punished the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality. He has avenged the murder of his servants." And again their voices rang out: "Praise the Lord! The smoke from that city ascends forever and ever!" Then the twenty-four elders and the four living beings fell down and worshiped God, who was sitting on the throne. They cried out, "Amen! Praise the Lord!" And from the throne came a voice that said, "Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear him, from the least to the greatest." Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: "Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself. She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear." For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he added, "These are true words that come from God." Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, "No, don't worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus."

RIDER ON WHITE HORSE

1. The white horse is a symbol of victory and conquest. Jesus is no longer riding a donkey into Jerusalem. What is the significance of Jesus’ entry here? (Compare with Heb. 4:12-13.)
2. What titles are used for Jesus in this passage? How does this affect our understanding of Jesus’ character?
3. Who is with Jesus, and what do you see? Where else do we find them in the Book of Revelation?
4. The image of Jesus here relates to what John saw of Jesus in Revelation 1. List the common attributes of Jesus in both passages to paint a picture of who Jesus is. Seeing this, how do we relate to Jesus?

Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

GREAT WHITE THRONE

- 1. In Daniel 7, the Ancient of Days is also mentioned sitting on a throne. What compares and contrasts with the image here? Who is sitting on the throne?
- 2. What is the significance of the earth and sky fleeing? Is this literal, or is this a descriptive image? If so, what does it signify?
- 3. It says that the dead were standing before the throne of God. What were they doing before standing before the throne?
- 4. What is the Book of Life?
- 5. Death and the grave (literally Hades) were thrown into the lake of fire. Hades, in Greek mythology, was the brother of Zeus. What is the significance of death and the grave being presented as spiritual personalities?
- 6. How does someone get their name in the Book of Life? Why are people thrown into the lake of fire if their name is not in the book?

And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

- 1. What is the new heaven and the new earth? Has God completely wiped out the universe? Or has God so redeemed our world that it is seen as entirely new?
- 2. Once again, we see the image of a bride, which we saw in Revelation 19. However, we know the bride is now coming down directly from God. What does this mean?
- 3. List the things mentioned in this passage that God will do for his people. How do they contrast with Genesis 3? List the contrasts. How does this shape our hope for the future?
- 4. Two titles of God are evident here: ‘Alpha and Omega,’ and ‘Beginning and the End.’ What do these titles mean?

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” And then he said to me, “Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.” And he also said, “It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come with me! I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” So he took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal.

RIVER OF LIFE

1. Rivers are significant in the Bible. There is a river both in the Garden of Eden and in Ezekiel. What does the river of the water of life signify here? Does it relate to Jesus’ statement in John 7, when he says that rivers of living water will flow from his heart? What does it mean in that context?
2. What is the Tree of Life? A tree of life also appears in Genesis chapter 3. It would have conveyed eternal life to Adam and Eve. However, in this passage, the Tree of Life is to heal the nations. What does John mean by healing (physical, spiritual, emotional), and how does this look? In obedience to Jesus’ command in Matt. 28:19, what is our part in bringing healing to the nations?
3. Slaves had their masters’ names branded on them. What does it mean for Jesus’ name to be branded on their foreheads? In chapter 13, we see the number 666 is branded on the foreheads of those who worship the beast. What does this contrast show us about our identity in God?
4. God takes the place of the sun and moon for light. What does this say about the relationship of God to his people? Jesus says, “I am the light of the world.” How can we experience this reality now?

Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life. He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon!” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s holy people.

Talking and Listening

This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near. Then as I looked, I [John] saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.” And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow. Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God. In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal. In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.” Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit of God that is sent out into every part of the earth. He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And they sang a new song with these words: “You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language

and people and nation. And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth.” After this, I heard what sounded like a vast crowd in heaven shouting, “Praise the Lord! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God. His judgments are true and just. He has punished the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality. He has avenged the murder of his servants.” And again their voices rang out: “Praise the Lord! The smoke from that city ascends forever and ever!” Then the twenty-four elders and the four living beings fell down and worshiped God, who was sitting on the throne. They cried out, “Amen! Praise the Lord!” And from the throne came a voice that said, “Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear him, from the least to the greatest.” Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: “Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself. She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear.” For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God’s holy people. And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he added, “These are true words that come from God.” Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus.” Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will

release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords. And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come with me! I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." So he took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal. Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life,

clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life. He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon!” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s holy people.

Heaven Celebrates

Rider on White Horse

Great White Throne

Journal

Spend some time writing about these questions:

1. How has my life impacted the way I read this passage?

2. What good things has God done for me that I can be sure of?

3. Where in my story did I experience redemption and the healing work of God?



4. Is there more that he wants to do in my story?

5. Do I struggle to fully accept the hope contained in this passage?

6. What experiences in my life lead to this?

What action step will I take during Friday class?

Core Content: Revelation of Jesus Christ

1. Structure

	Churches	Seals	Trumpets (1/3)	Signs	Bowls (Final Judgment)
Setting (Visions in Heaven)	Jesus	Throne Room	Alter of Incense	The Ark in the Temple	The Temple
One	Ephesus	White Horse	Earth	Woman	Land
Two	Smyrna	Red Horse	Water in the Sea	Dragon	Sea
Three	Pergamum	Black Horse	Springs of Water	Beast of the Sea	Rivers & Springs of Water
Four	Thyatira	Pale Green Horse	Sun, Moon and Stars	Beast of the Earth	Sun
Five	Sardis	Martyrs Under the Alter	Demonic Locust	144,000 and the Lamb	Throne of the Beast
Six	Philadelphia	Earthquake	200,000,000 Army	The Three Angels	Armageddon
Interlude		Servants on Earth + Heaven	2 Prophets	The Harvests	Jesus comes like a thief
Seven	Laodicea	Silence	The World becomes the Kingdom of God	Conquering Worship, Moses' Song	Earthquake

This Final Judgment, which began with the bowls, continues into chapter 17 and from then onwards its best to follow the flow of the book by tracing the characters that are being judged and who is judging them. Then, the final section of the book is in chapters 21 and 22 which reveals the New Heaven and New Earth.

2. Key Verse

Revelation 17:14: "Together they will go to war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them because he is Lord of all lords and King of all kings. And his called and chosen and faithful ones will be with him."

3. Reason Written

God gave Jesus this revelation who revealed it to his church to assure them that God will judge their enemies and encourage them to persevere through the suffering they were enduring.

4. Author, Audience and Dating

John wrote down the revelation he received from an angel sent by Jesus and sent it to seven churches in Asia Minor; Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. Many believe this is John the beloved, who wrote the gospel of John, there are similar themes between the two books. John

received this revelation on the island of Patmos where he was exiled by the Roman Empire for testifying about Jesus. Most believe it was written in the late 80s, early 90s AD during a wave of persecution under the Roman Empire.

5. **Additional Background**

The persecution of the Christians began under Nero in 64 AD and was still prevalent at the time of writing. Persecution varying from social ostracizing to extreme violence such as being burnt alive or thrown in the colosseum with lions. Therefore, the message of this book cannot be separated from suffering.

6. **Main Themes**

- The Lamb, Jesus has and will Overcome, He is Victorious
- Jesus is Worthy
- God's People will be Vindicated from their Suffering
- God's is the Faithful and Just Judge

7. **Type of Literature**

Revelation is a mix of different types of literature. Ultimately it is an epistle, a circulatory letter written to seven different churches. But the main body of the letter apocalyptic literature, a style of writing common between 200 BC and 100 AD. Apocalyptic literature describes visions and contains emotive images revealing a heavenly perspective on the events described. Numbers and characters are often symbolic and communicate specific meanings. Revelation is also prophetic literature, with the message telling the events that must soon take place. It often builds on images and meaning from the Old Testament Prophets. When interpreting the visions, images and symbols of revelation it's important to ensure the meanings would make sense to the original readers, not just us today.

8. **Key Numbers in Revelation**

- 1/4 - A Minority
- 1/3 - A Significant Minority
- 3 - God (His finality and completeness)
- 3 1/2 - A Limited Number of Time
- 4 - Fullness of Creation (4 Corners of the Earth)
- 6 - One short of Perfection (just missed the mark)
- 7 - Perfection or Completion, God meeting Earth
- 10 - Human Completeness
- 12 - God's People
- 1000 - A Large Infinite Number (ultimate completeness) Cube - A Picture of Holiness used to indicate Perfection

9. **Key Characters in Revelation**

- Lamb - Jesus (John 1:29)
- Bride - God's people (Isaiah 62:5 // 2 Cor 11:2)
- Dragon - Satan (Rev 12:9)
- Babylon (Prostitute) - Interpreted as Rome (Rev 17:9, Ruling on 7 Hills)

Week Ten Assignment

Draw a picture detailing the events of your assigned section of Revelation. Be ready to present it together with the class to collectively give a whole book overview.

Assessment: Week Ten

	NOTES	GRADE
Participation: attendance and openness to learn		/1
Character Study, Textual Analysis, Core Assignments		/1
OMT Paraphrase + Personal Application		/1
Coaching		/1
Presentation		/1
All Content Presentation		/1
Total Grade for the Week		/6
Staff Signature		



Creation of the World

Humans Fall to Temptation

Jesus Conquers Temptation

Wedding at Cana

Nicodemus

Woman at the Well

Spirit and Truth

Burning Bush

Exodus

Manna from Heaven

Feeding the 5,000

Jesus Walks on Water

I AM the Bread of Life

Festival of Shelters

Woman Caught in Adultery

Man Born Blind

I AM the Good Shepherd

The Lord is My Shepherd

Judah Exiled

Valley of Dry Bones

Lazarus

Mary Anoints Jesus

God's Servant

Jesus Washes Disciple's Feet

Don't Let Your Hearts Be Troubled

I AM the True Grapevine

Arrest

Crucifixion

Isaiah 53

Resurrection

Commission

Ascension

Pentecost

Peter's Sermon

Vision of Cornelius

Vision of Peter

Peter Meets Cornelius

Gentiles Receive Holy Spirit

Paul to Macedonia

Paul and Silas in Jail

Earthquake

Paul and Silas Released

Letter to Philippi

Same Attitude as Christ

Christ, Image of the Invisible God

Revelation of Jesus Christ

Throne Room

Heaven Celebrates

Rider on White Horse

Great White Throne

New Heaven and Earth

River of Life

Assessment: Final Coaching

	NOTES	GRADE
Final Coaching		/5
Total Grade		/5
Staff Signature		



Final Journal

HOW DO ALL THESE STORIES (WEEK 1-10) SPEAK TO YOU?

Your life is a story! You are not merely the possessor and teller of some stories that make up and shape who you are, but you are a well-authored debut novel. You have an intentionally written and authored story. Dan Allender encourages us to believe this. He says if we can believe this, “even for brief snippets of time,” it can change the trajectory of our lives.

When you believe that God is your creator and the author of your life, you know with certainty that as part of His creation, you bear the mark of his being in you. His DNA is imprinted into you. You are unique. God is the potter, and you are the clay. But unlike an ordinary potter, God is a masterful potter calling you to join him in revealing something through your story. We are not inanimate entities that reveal glory. We are living creatures participating in the unfolding beauty and messiness of our lives.

Many people have populated your story; they, too, have molded and shaped you. Some have broken you; some have made you shine more exquisitely. These characters in your story have not been put there by mistake but for a reason. Characters enter the stage of your life, speak their lines, and then either stay or depart. Although these scenes may sometimes feel haphazard, your life is not some bizarre and random series of events over which God exerts no interest. No, He is deeply vested in participating with you in shaping you into who he wants you to be. He is the author, and you are the leading role in your own story. Your life is an unfolding narrative filled with tension, paradox, tragedy, love, and drama.

Consider the following as a way to bring together your reflections on your story:

1. As you have reflected throughout this workbook on the stories that make up your life, can you see God’s ultimate authorship of your life?
2. Can you see how God has crafted you into exactly who he wants you to be?
3. Can you see how even through the seasons of our lives that have been thrown into loss, exhaustion, confusion, betrayal, and setbacks - He has been and always will be at work in you?

Remember, Philippians 1:6 reminds us that “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Do not lose heart, but be encouraged. Explore more. Get to know yourself better. Don’t be scared to grapple with the difficult questions. Find God in each part of your story. He waits – “quietly, passionately and winsomely within your story all you have to do is ask, seek and knock (Allen 1996).

His answer is loud and clear...

God is calling you to take a more intentional level of co-authorship of your life that is “staggering in its scope and meaning .”

The unique mystery of each of our life stories shines something profound and distinct about God’s nature and character to us and others because it reveals how God has been working in our lives, even when we can’t fully comprehend it. It shows us how God works in mysterious and unexpected ways and can bring moments of grace, healing, and hope in even the darkest of times. Our stories also show how God can work in combination with our choices, providing the strength, courage, and guidance we need to persevere and make a difference in those around us. Ultimately, God’s unique mystery in our stories speaks to His great mercy, faithfulness, and love, inviting us to trust Him more deeply and walk in His ways. By telling our stories, we help to spread the knowledge of God’s grace, kindness, grace, and power at work in and through us. We reveal how His mysterious ways work in tandem with our own decisions and provide insight into how we can be beacons of hope and healing in the world. Our stories allow others to learn something about God they can’t find elsewhere— sparkling reminders of His presence at work in all our lives.

AS A FINAL REFLECTION ON YOUR STORY, WRITE DOWN HOW IT IS INTERWOVEN WITH “HIS-STORY.” JOT DOWN NOTES ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. What specific ways has God been working in your life?

2. How has God’s presence been revealed to you in unexpected and mysterious ways?

3. In what areas of your life do you need to be reminded of God's faithfulness?

4. What insights into God's grace, kindness, and power can you share from your story to encourage others? How do you think telling your story could change how others view their lives and God's role within them?

20 horizontal lines for writing.

Assessment: Final Application

	NOTES	GRADE
Final Application		/5
Total Grade		/5
Staff Signature		

WHAT'S NEXT?

Plans to Use WBH in the Future

COMPLETE CORE BIBLE SCRIPT

Week One

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn— not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s one and only Son. From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses, but God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.” Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?” “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’” “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.” The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.” “Who told you that you were naked?” the Lord God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?” The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.” Then the Lord God asked the woman, “What have you done?” “The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.” Then the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.” Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. Then the devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.” But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread

alone.” Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. “I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them,” the devil said, “because they are mine to give to anyone I please. I will give it all to you if you will worship me.” Jesus replied, “The Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect and guard you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’” Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’” When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came. Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit’s power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

Week Two

[T]here was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." "Dear woman, that's not our problem," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come." But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So the servants followed his instructions. When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. "A host always serves the best wine first," he said. "Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!"

This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him. There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you." Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit." "How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. [Jesus] left Judea and returned to Galilee. He had to go through Samaria on the way. Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?" Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life." "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water." "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a

husband—for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!" "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?" Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus told her, "I AM the Messiah!" Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, "What do you want with her?" or "Why are you talking to her?" The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?" So the people came streaming from the village to see him. Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!" When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world."

Week Three

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up. "This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it." When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt." But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" God answered, "I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain." But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" God replied to Moses, "I AM Who I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." God also said to Moses, "Say this to

the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations. “So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years. One month after leaving the land of Egypt. . . . the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. “If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “I have heard the Israelites’ complaints. Now tell them, ‘In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.’” That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew. When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground. The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. “What is it?” they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, “It is the food the Lord has given you to eat. So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at . . . the land of Canaan. Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, “Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?” He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, “Even if we worked for months, we wouldn’t have enough money to feed

them!” Then Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up. “There’s a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?” “Tell everyone to sit down,” Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.” So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, “Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!” When Jesus saw that they were ready to force him to be their king, he slipped away into the hills by himself. That evening Jesus’ disciples went down to the shore to wait for him. But as darkness fell and Jesus still hadn’t come back, they got into the boat and headed across the lake toward Capernaum. Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, but he called out to them, “Don’t be afraid. I AM! Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination! The next day the crowd that had stayed on the far shore saw that the disciples had taken the only boat, and they realized Jesus had not gone with them. They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don’t be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval.” They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?” Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.” They answered, “Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After

all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, ‘Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, Moses didn’t give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “give us that bread every day.” Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. So Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day. He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. Many of his disciples said, “This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?” At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?” Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”

Week Four

After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters. On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, ‘Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.’” (When he said “living water,” he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.) Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.” Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.” As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,”

Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied. Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!" Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them. Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet." The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?" His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him." So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, "God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus

is a sinner.” “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!” “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?” “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.” “Why, that’s very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from? We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.” “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue. When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.” “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!” “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, “I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.”

Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?” “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see. “I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. “The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I

have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.” A Psalm of David: The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Week Five

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months.

Jehoiachin did what was evil in the Lord's sight, just as his father had done. In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had said beforehand, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasures from the Lord's Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple. King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including all the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans—10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land. On July 31 of my thirtieth year, while I [Ezekiel] was with the Judean exiles beside the Kebar River in Babylon, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?" "O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four

winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.” So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army. Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.’ Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!’”

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord’s feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.” But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.” But his disciples objected. “Rabbi,” they said, “only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?” Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light.” Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.” The disciples said, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!” They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.”

Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go, too—and die with Jesus.” When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” So Mary immediately went to him. Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. “Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?” Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.” Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would

see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. When all the people heard of Jesus’ arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead. Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too, for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.

Week Six

“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.” God, the Lord, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, “I, the Lord, have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons. Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus replied, “You don’t understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.” “No,” Peter protested, “you will never ever wash my feet!” Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t belong to me.” Simon Peter exclaimed, “Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!” Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of

you.” For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them. “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!” Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! “If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another

Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. “I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. “I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

Week Seven

After saying these things, Jesus crossed the Kidron Valley with his disciples and entered a grove of olive trees.

Judas, the betrayer, knew this place, because Jesus had often gone there with his disciples. The leading priests and Pharisees had given Judas a contingent of Roman soldiers and Temple guards to accompany him. Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, they arrived at the olive grove. Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. “Who are you looking for?” he asked. “Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied. “I AM he,” Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.)

As Jesus said “I AM he,” they all drew back and fell to the ground! Once more he asked them, “Who are you looking for?” And again they replied, “Jesus the Nazarene.” “I told you that I AM he,” Jesus said. “And since I am the one you want, let these others go.” He did this to fulfill his own statement: “I did not lose a single one of those you have given me.” Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest’s slave. But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?” So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up. Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas [the high priest] ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn’t go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn’t be allowed to celebrate the Passover. Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. “Hail! King of the Jews!” they mocked, as they slapped him across the face. Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. And Pilate posted a sign on the cross

that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate replied, "No, what I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing." So that is what they did. Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home. Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty." A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Who has believed our message? . . . He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to

the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her. “Because they have taken away my Lord,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who are you looking for?” She thought he was the gardener. “Sir,” she said, “if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.” “Mary!” Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, “Rabboni!” (which is Hebrew for “Teacher”). “Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message. That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! Again he said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and

look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 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."

Week Eight

During the forty days after [Jesus] suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!” On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages . . . about

the wonderful things God has done!” They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked each other. But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, “They’re just drunk, that’s all!” Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, “Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o’clock in the morning is much too early for that. No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy. And I will cause wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below—blood and fire and clouds of smoke. The sun will become dark, and the moon will turn blood red before that great and glorious day of the Lord arrives. But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day— about 3,000 in all. In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment. He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. One afternoon about three o’clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. “Cornelius!” the angel said. Cornelius stared at him in terror. “What is it, sir?” he asked the angel. And the angel replied, “Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore.” As soon as the angel was gone, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier, one of his personal attendants. He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa. The next day as Cornelius’s messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon, and he was

hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners. In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds. Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat them." "No, Lord," Peter declared. "I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean." But the voice spoke again: "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." The same vision was repeated three times. Then the sheet was suddenly pulled up to heaven. Peter was very perplexed. What could the vision mean? Just then the men sent by Cornelius found Simon's house. Standing outside the gate, they asked if a man named Simon Peter was staying there. Meanwhile, as Peter was puzzling over the vision, the Holy Spirit said to him, "Three men have come looking for you. Get up, go downstairs, and go with them without hesitation. Don't worry, for I have sent them." So Peter went down and said, "I'm the man you are looking for. Why have you come?" They said, "We were sent by Cornelius, a Roman officer. He is a devout and God-fearing man, well respected by all the Jews. A holy angel instructed him to summon you to his house so that he can hear your message." So Peter invited the men to stay for the night. The next day he went with them, accompanied by some of the brothers from Joppa. They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter entered his home, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter pulled him up and said, "Stand up! I'm a human being just like you!" So they talked together and went inside, where many others were assembled. Peter told them, "You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will

have their sins forgiven through his name.” Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God. Then Peter asked, “Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?” So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.

Week Nine

Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit. . . . Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there. From there we reached Philippi, a major city of that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. And we stayed there several days. On the Sabbath we went a little way outside the city to a riverbank, where we thought people would be meeting for prayer, and we sat down to speak with some women who had gathered there. One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. “If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my home.” And she urged us until we agreed. One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved.” This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And instantly it left her. Her masters’ hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. “The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!” they shouted to the city officials. “They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice.” A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and

beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God. The next morning the city officials sent the police to tell the jailer, "Let those men go!" So the jailer told Paul, "The city officials have said you and Silas are free to leave. Go in peace." But Paul replied, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial and put us in prison—and we are Roman citizens. So now they want us to leave secretly? Certainly not! Let them come themselves to release us!" When the police reported this, the city officials were alarmed to learn that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. So they came to the jail and apologized to them. Then they brought them out and begged them to leave the city. When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left town. This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus,

including the church leaders and deacons. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.

Week Ten

This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near. Then as I looked, I [John] saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.” And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow. Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God. In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal. In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.” Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit of God that is sent out into every part of the earth. He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And they sang a new song with these words: “You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people

and nation. And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth." After this, I heard what sounded like a vast crowd in heaven shouting, "Praise the Lord! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God. His judgments are true and just. He has punished the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality. He has avenged the murder of his servants." And again their voices rang out: "Praise the Lord! The smoke from that city ascends forever and ever!" Then the twenty-four elders and the four living beings fell down and worshiped God, who was sitting on the throne. They cried out, "Amen! Praise the Lord!" And from the throne came a voice that said, "Praise our God, all his servants, all who fear him, from the least to the greatest." Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: "Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself. She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear." For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he added, "These are true words that come from God." Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said, "No, don't worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers and sisters who testify about their faith in Jesus. Worship only God. For the essence of prophecy is to give a clear witness for Jesus." Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath

of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords. And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. Then one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come with me! I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." So he took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal. Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing

from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever. The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life. He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon!” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s holy people.

Assessment: First Public Rehearsal

	NOTES	GRADE
First Public Rehearsal 100% of content 30pts 90% of content 27pts 80% of content 24pts 70% of content 21pts 60% of content 18pts 50% of content. 0pts		/30
Total Grade		/30
Staff Signature		

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Scripture Reference for the Script

Week 1: Genesis 1:1-3 (Creation); John 1:1-5, 10-14, 16-17 (Word Became Flesh); Genesis 1:27-28; 2:25; 3:1-15 (Humans Fall to Temptation); Luke 4:1-15 (Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness).

Week 2: John 2:1-11 (Wedding at Cana); John 3:1-17 (Nicodemus); John 4:3-30, 39-42 (Samaritan Woman at the Well).

Week 3: Exodus 3:1-15 (God Appears to Moses in Burning Bush); Acts 7:35-36 (God Sent Moses); Exodus 16:1b-3, 11-15, 35 (Israelites Grumble, God Sends Manna from Heaven); John 6:1-15 (Jesus Feeds 5,000); 6:16-21 (Jesus Walks on Water); 6:22, 25-35, 53-54, 59-60, 66-69 (I AM the Bread of Life).

Week 4: John 7:1-2, 37-39 (Festival of Shelters); 8:1-12 (Woman Caught in Adultery); 9:1-41 (Man Born Blind); 10:1-2, 11-18 (I AM the Good Shepherd); Psalm 23:1-6 (The Lord Is My Shepherd).

Week 5: 2 Kings 24:8a, 9, 12b-14 (Jehoiachin); Ezekiel 1:1; 37:1-14 (Valley of Dry Bones); John 11:1-45 (Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead); 12:1-3, 9-11 (Mary Anoints Jesus).

Week 6: Isaiah 42:1-9 (Look at My Servant); John 13:1-17 (Jesus Washes Disciple's Feet); 14:1-17a (Don't Let Your Hearts Be Troubled); 15:1-5-12 (I Am the True Grapevine).

Week 7: John 18:1-12, 28 (Jesus' Arrest); 19:1-3, 16-30 (Jesus' Crucifixion); Isaiah 53:1a, 5-9 (Who Has Believed Our Message); John 20:1, 11-23 (Jesus' Resurrection); Matthew 28:18-20 (Commission).

Week 8: Acts 1:3-11 (Promise of Holy Spirit); 2:1-8 (Pentecost); 11b-21, 41 (Peter's Speech); 10:1-28, 35-36, 43-48 (Cornelius).

Week 9: Acts 13:9a, 16:6, 9-10 (Paul Sent to Macedonia); 16:12-15 (Lydia of Thyatira); 16:16-40 (Slave Girl, Paul and Silas in Prison, Earthquake); Philippians 1:1-6, 2:1-11 (Encouragement from Belonging in Christ); Colossians 1:15-18 (Christ is the Image).

Week 10: Revelation 1:1-3; 4:1-6, 8b (Throne Room); 5:6-7, 9 (Slaughtered Lamb); 19:1-10 (Wedding Feast of the Lamb); 19:11-16 (White Horse and Rider); 20:11-15 (Great White Throne); 21:1-7, 9-11 (New Heaven and New Earth); 22:1-5, 17, 20-21 (River of Life).

Map of Israel in the New Testament



Map: <http://www.bible-history.com/maps/Map-Israel-New-Testament-Times-color.pdf>

