

FIRST STUDENT DEVOTIONAL

# THIS IS US





Over the next few weeks, we're setting aside time to look at the heart of who we are as a church and who God is calling us to be.

Inside this booklet are daily devotionals for you to do by yourself or with your Life Group throughout the week. Each devotional takes only a few minutes and will help you understand your own calling, purpose and God's plan for your life!

## **SOAP Method**

This book includes daily devotions that utilize the SOAP method. This is just one approach for how to study the Bible, but we believe it is a powerful tool to helping you better understand the Bible.

### **S = Scripture**

From the verses you read, take a moment to write out a scripture or two that stood out to you.

### **O = Observation**

The goal is to dig, think and mediate. Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or what is taking place in the passage.

### **A = Application**

Think of a real life way you can live this out. Ask how this passage applies to your life today? How can you live in light of this truth?

### **P = Prayer**

Respond to the passage in prayer. Ask God to help you apply this Scripture to your life, and spend time listening to what He may be telling you.



**WEEK ONE**

# **WE EXIST TO GLORIFY GOD AND TO DO HIS WILL**

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*Written by Doug Munton, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL  
Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*



Date: February 8, 2021

# Read Luke 2:8–21

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord.*

**LUKE 2:10–11 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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## DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

This passage comes from the story of the shepherds visiting the manger on the night Jesus was born. What was their response to this great miracle? They glorified God and praised Him. Our response to God and His goodness should always be to glorify Him.

We are to live our lives for the glory of God. We don't live for our glory but for God's. Over and over, we see people in the New Testament responding to the miracles of Jesus by glorifying God. That should be our response to the miracle of salvation God gives to us. We live to bring glory to Him!

## PRAYER

*Today, thank God for what he has done for you. If you have trusted Him for salvation, thank Him for that great and miraculous gift. Ask Him to help you live a life that brings glory to Him rather than to yourself.*

# Read 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

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*Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body.*

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:19–20 (CSB)**



## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### **DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Believers have new ownership. We were bought by the blood of Jesus and made new, forgiven of sins and adopted into His family. How do we respond? We glorify God with our bodies.

God wants you to bring glory to Himself by what you do, how you act, where you go and how you think. You are to use your body as a means of bringing glory to His name. You are to use your time, energy and effort for more than yourself. You are to use those things as a means of praising your great Savior. Use your body for its greatest purpose, and glorify God through your life.

### **PRAYER**

*Ask the Lord to use your body to bring glory to Himself. Ask Him to use your hands, your feet, your tongue, and your mind to do the right things and to help others see Christ in you today.*

Date: February 10, 2021

# Read Psalm 119:10–12

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

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*I have sought you with all my heart;  
don't let me wander from your commands.*

**PSALM 119:10 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

One of the reasons we read the Bible is because it teaches us how to obey the Lord and do His will. Through it we learn what God wants us to do, what He wants us to avoid and how He wants us to live.

God's Word is a great gift, and we should treasure it so much that we read it, learn it, and meditate on it. Doing this also helps us to avoid the pitfalls of sin. As you read God's Word, you learn more of what God wants you to do and how he wants you to live. As you read the Bible, ask God to help you put into practice what He is teaching you to do. Be sure to treasure the truths that are given for your benefit!

**PRAYER**

*Ask the Lord to teach you to obey His Word as you read His Word. Ask Him to help you today to both learn and obey what He wants you to do.*

Date: February 11, 2021

# Read James 1:22–25

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

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*But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works — this person will be blessed in what he does.*

**JAMES 1:25 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

It is great to hear the Word of God on Sunday night, in Life Groups and in your daily Bible reading. But hearing it is not enough. We must learn to put the truth into practice. We need to be doers of the Word as well as hearers.

We hear the Bible for a purpose, and that purpose is to live out the Bible. We apply the Word of God to our lives so that we begin to live as He wants us to live. Don't just receive information like you are going to school, but choose to be a DOER! Live out your faith today!

**PRAYER**

*Ask God to show you what specific things He wants you to do today – be kind, learn patience, change a habit, apologize for a wrong, etc. Today, ask Him to help you to do what He teaches you to do.*

Date: February 12, 2021

# Read Ephesians 2:8–10

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift— not from works, so that no one can boast.*

**EPHESIANS 2:8–9 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

God saved you to do good works. You are not saved by good works, but you are saved for good works. We bring glory to our Lord when we do the things he saved us to do. God wants you to serve, minister and have an impact for him.

He will help you to see what he wants you to do as you say "yes" to Him this week. Our devotional verse reminds us that God has already prepared good works for us to do – we just need to be willing to do His will and follow His lead.

### PRAYER

*Say "yes" to God's will for you as you pray. Tell Him that you are willing to do what He wants you to do today. Ask Him to guide you to live the life He saved you to live.*



**WEEK TWO**

# **WE ARE GOD-CENTERED**

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*Written by Tom Dawson, Minister of Adult Education, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL  
Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*





Date: February 15, 2021

# Read Romans 12:1–2

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.*

**ROMANS 12:1 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

This passage contains the elements of true worship. God has given us what we don't deserve: eternal love, eternal grace, the Holy Spirit, everlasting peace, eternal joy, saving faith and the list goes on and on!

Presenting our bodies means giving to God all of ourselves – our hearts, minds, hands, thoughts, and attitudes. But how?

We renew our minds daily by cleansing them of the world's "wisdom" and replacing it with true wisdom that comes from God through His Word, the Bible. Worship saves us from being self-centered and makes us God-centered. You were created to live in a relationship with God!

**PRAYER**

*Ask God to help you worship Him, not just on Sundays, but every day this week.*

Date: February 16, 2021

# Read Romans 8:14–16

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

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*For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!"*

**ROMANS 8:15 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

*"The starting point for approaching God as Christ-followers is summed up in this single word: Father. Because that word is loaded with preconceived notions for all of us, depending on our relationships with our earthly fathers, praying in this way can be either extraordinarily comforting or extraordinarily problematic. Part of our growth in Christ, as well as our growth in prayer, involves recovering the meaning of this word as it's applied to God." – Steve Gains*

*Our sin separates us from God. The Bible declares that apart, from Christ, we are God's enemies (Romans 5:10) and in opposition to Him. But when we place our faith in Jesus Christ (the One we once opposed) becomes our Heavenly Father!*

**PRAYER**

*Pray and speak to God as a loving Father. He desperately wants to hear your heart, pain, struggles and praises like any father who is close to his child would.*

Date: February 17, 2021

# Read Matthew 6:9, Isaiah 6:1-4

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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Therefore, you should pray like this:  
Our Father in heaven,  
your name be honored as holy.

**Matthew 6:9 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Holy means set apart. God's holiness is a description of His "otherness," unlike any created being and completely absent of even a trace of sin (James 1:13; Hebrews 6:18).

When we pray for God's name to be honored as holy, we're joining a call to worship God that even now is ringing throughout the heavens! That's what the prophet Isaiah encountered as he was taken up in a vision and saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on His throne.

"The more we know God, the more we will adore Him."  
 – Greg Matte

## PRAYER

*Ask God to help your prayers focus more on God's will for your life. Pray that God would show you how He wants you to apply the truths contained in today's devotional to your life this week.*

Date: February 18, 2021

# Read Matthew 6:10; Luke 9:23–24

## SCRIPTURE

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.*

**Matthew 6:10 (CSB)**





Date: February 19, 2021

# Read Matthew 6:11; Phil. 4:19

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*And my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

**Philippians 4:19 (CSB)**





**WEEK THREE**

# **WE ARE BIBLE-BASED**

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*Written by Obie Dalrymple, Pastor to Men & Single Adults, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL  
Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*



Date: February 22, 2021

# Read Matthew 5:43-44

## SCRIPTURE

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..."*

**Matthew 5:43-44 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

These two verses have nothing to do with the topic of reading the Bible, and yet they demonstrate wonderfully why the Bible is worth reading. The Bible is different from any other book that has ever been written.

Love my enemies? I don't even like people at my school.

The Bible is different because through Christ, it calls us to be different. When the world would hate, God's Word commands us to love. Where the world would seek revenge, God's Word tells us to pray for those who persecute us. Realize how wonderfully unique Scripture is. Give it your time this week.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God shows you how to include Scripture reading into your daily life*

Date: February 23, 2021

# Read James 1:19

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"My dear brothers and sisters, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger..."*

**JAMES 1:19 (CSB)**



## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

We live in a world where the loudest people often get the most attention. Our world justifies anger, payback and giving people a "piece of our mind." Think about how popular social media posts have become if they include insults about someone or complaints about something.

God calls us to be different. God calls us to be patient listeners who hear other people and speak with understanding and grace. The Bible is different, and it calls us to be different. This week, practice being slow to speak, slow to anger, and quick to listen to others.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God motivates you to start reading or continue to read God's Word. Try to spend just 15 minutes a day in the Word. Pray that God would also help you to be a better listener.*

Date: February 24, 2021

# Read James 1:27

## SCRIPTURE

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

**JAMES 1:27 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Have you ever considered how quickly and easily the world will cast aside the defenseless? If you do not have a heart for the vulnerable both in and out of the womb, then listen to what the Word of God has to say.

The word "religion" often conjures up negative thoughts about death, faith and the church. However, the Greek word for religion (*thréskeia*) means to worship.

Pure worship before God includes looking after orphans and widows. God calls us to love others who cannot offer anything in return. The Bible is different, and the Bible calls us to be different. Fall in love with this marvelous book, the Bible.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God will help you stick to a Bible reading plan. Pray that God will help you focus during your Bible reading and keep you from reading just to "check off a box."*

Date: February 25, 2021

# Read James 3:9–10

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“With the tongue we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in God’s likeness. Blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth. My brothers and sisters, these things should not be this way.”*

**JAMES 3:9–10 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Do you struggle with gossip or cutting others down? Do you often talk about people behind their backs?

Hear what God's Word calls you to in this passage. The people you like the least and want to talk poorly about the most are God's creation. They are made in His image.

Use your speech to build others up, remembering that God created them and sent His Son to die to save them. The person who you get along with the least in the world is a person God loves. Love them with His love and look at them from His perspective. Choose to bless others.

**PRAYER**

*Pray that God would give you excitement to continue learning His truths. Pray that God would help you to care for others instead of tearing them down or gossiping about them.*

Date: February 26, 2021

# Read James 1:21

## SCRIPTURE

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"Therefore, ridding yourselves of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, humbly receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."*

**JAMES 1:21 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

The Bible is different because it contains the Word of life that "is able to save your soul." Cherish God's Word. It is an amazing gift.

Don't let the length of the Bible discourage you. It is not meant to be consumed in one sitting. Scripture is a lifetime endeavor, but it is an endeavor that we all must start at some point. If you were not already a faithful reader, use this study as your starting point.

The Bible is the most important book ever written. It is a love letter from a holy, loving, just, and all-powerful God to a sinful, limited, starving people – us. God's Word is for YOU. It can change your life and save your soul. There is nothing like it.

### PRAYER

*Pray that God's Word catches fire in your heart. Pray that you will study with increasing expectations, humility, submission and thanksgiving.*



**WEEK FOUR**

# **WE ARE PURPOSE-GUIDED**

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*Written by Frances Lewis, Member, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*

*Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*





Date: March 1, 2021

# Read Philippians 3:12

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

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*"Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus."*

**Philippians 3:12 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Each year, 22 of the world's best surfers compete at various international beaches. They surf when it is hot and when it is chilly. They surf on their off time when there are no competitions and with no one watching. Their love of surfing consumes them. In the predawn darkness of each surfing contest, they can be found surfing among the locals. Surfing has "taken hold" of them.

Like champion surfers who surf for the love of it, serve God because you love Him. Most days, we enter the "water" we call life and He gets the glory, but some days we linger on life's shore as spectators. Strive to serve Him each day, regardless of the circumstances, because you love Him and because He has "taken hold" of you!

**PRAYER**

*Ask God to help you serve Him because you love Him and not merely out of obligation.*

Date: March 2, 2021

# Read James 1:5

## SCRIPTURE

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## OBSERVATION

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*"Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God—who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly—and it will be given to him."*

**James 1:5 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Sometimes, as believers, our lives are filled with confusion.

We focus on a dilemma we cannot solve. We try various solutions with no success. We ask friends, and they have no better answers than our own. Nothing works until we focus on Jesus and pray.

Prayer brings clarity during confusion and uncertainty. When we pray, God helps encourage and strengthen us. God also helps give us wisdom in hard times.

### PRAYER

*Ask God to remind you to look to Him for answers and solutions to life's problems.*

*What problem or difficulty are you facing today in your life? Stop, pray, and ask God for His help in bringing clarity and a solution.*

Date: March 3, 2021

# Read Philippians 3:17

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"Join in imitating me, brothers and sisters, and pay careful attention to those who live according to the example you have in us."*

**Philippians 3:17 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

The Christian life is similar to spring training for Major League baseball players where they train, prepare and get ready as a team for the upcoming season.

The coaches (pastors and leaders) encourage us to grow in our trust, faith, and obedience towards God. Others see how it is practiced as they "observe those who live according to the example" (Philippians 3:17).

Our time at church and in a Life Group prepare us for the "real game" of life when we leave the church. With the same dedication baseball players have to play ball, let us remain devoted to our spiritual "spring training" at church!

**PRAYER**

*Pray that others will see Jesus in you, not only on Sunday but every day.*

Date: March 4, 2021

# Read Philippians 3:20

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"Our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."*

**Philippians 3:20 (CSB)**



## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Travel anywhere in the United States and you're going to notice some major differences in the climate, the way people talk, what people wear, their values, what they eat, etc.

Despite the differences in our nation, we are all citizens of the same country. We have the same "home" so to speak.

If we've confessed Christ as Lord and Savior of our lives (Romans 10:9), then one day, we will enter into our eternal home. People with every background, nationality, language will be there! Despite our differences, if we are in Christ, we are citizens of Heaven. Remember – this earth is not your forever home! Live for the Kingdom of Heaven that will never fade.

## PRAYER

*Ask God to help you keep your eyes fixed upward and live your life knowing that your "citizenship is in heaven."*

Date: March 5, 2021

# Read Philippians 3:21

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself."*

**Philippians 3:21 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Have you ever seen a caterpillar on the sidewalk? This little creature moves very slowly but know it's mission: eat, find a limb, make a cocoon and wait patiently. Eventually, this little bug will emerge transformed into a beautiful butterfly!

Christians, just like the caterpillar, we have to wait while here on this earth, but one day God will call us home. We will be tranformed and given new bodies more amazing than we can imagine!

One day we will see and experiance Heaven. When we do, we'll realize that our time on earth was worth the wait!

**PRAYER**

*Thank God for His promise that one day He will "transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject everything to Himself"*



**WEEK FIVE**

# **WE ARE OUTWARD-FOCUSED**

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*Written by Barbara Lee, Adult Ministries Specialist, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL  
Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*



Date: March 8, 2021

# Read Nehemiah 2:1–12

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"I got up at night and took a few men with me. I didn't tell anyone what my God had laid on my heart to do for Jerusalem. The only animal I took[a] was the one I was riding."*

**Nehemiah 2:12 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Jerusalem was in danger. The walls desperately needed to be rebuilt and Nehemiah was distraught. Like the broken city walls, the news broke Nehemiah's heart. In response, he wept, mourned, and cried out to God. Then he acted, taking his request to King Artaxerxes, sent him to Jerusalem with the means to rebuild.

What stirs your heart? Like Nehemiah, maybe God has laid it on your heart to meet the needs of a people group, a broken-down relationship at home, the oppressed, victims of abuse, the neglected, orphans, or widows. Like Nehemiah, when God lays a need on our heart, we pray and then spring into action as the Lord leads.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God would show you people who are hurting that you can help. Ask God to help you be the hands and feet of Jesus to the hurt, broken, oppressed and suffering.*

Date: March 9, 2021

# Read Mark 2:1–5

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic,  
"Son, your sins are forgiven."*

**Mark 2:1–5 (CSB)**



## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

People filled this home in order to hear Jesus speak –but these four were on a mission to bring their friend, who was paralyzed, to Jesus. They found a way around the crowd and brought their friend before Him.

That day their friend was physically healed, but more importantly, he met the Savior and received spiritual healing.

Just like the four friends, we have people around us who have needs. Who has God placed in your path that He has enabled you to help? Meeting others' physical needs often opens doors for us to point them to the One who can meet their greater spiritual need, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God would open your eyes to the needs of those around you and for opportunity to meet those needs and point them to Jesus.*

Date: March 10, 2021

# Read 2 Kings 4:8-10

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*Then she said to her husband, "I know that the one who often passes by here is a holy man of God..."*

**2 Kings 4:9 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

The Shunamite woman noticed Elisha's situation. First, he needed food and she was ready with a meal whenever Elisha passed through town. She also noticed that he needed a place to stay. Not only did she give him a place to stay, but she opened her home and built a room for Elisha.

We are sometimes so consumed with our own lives that we don't recognize the basic needs of others around us. God has given us material possessions, not just for ourselves, but so we can bless those He places in our lives.

Be generous with what God has given you –your time, your talents and your possessions.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God reveal ways you can show hospitality to others. Ask Him how he wants you to use what you've been given to bless other people.*

Date: March 11, 2021

# Read Matthew 25:35–40

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”*

**Matthew 25:40 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Jesus made it clear to his disciples. They were to meet the needs of those hungry, hurting, sick, and imprisoned.

The Apostle James, brother of Jesus and church leader in Jerusalem, sums it up another way: "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress . . ." (James 1:27).

Our love for God fuels our love for others. As we love Him, we are propelled into action to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

**PRAYER**

*Pray for God to allow you to see with His eyes, so you would not rush past those who need His help, but that you would act as the Spirit leads.*

Date: March 12, 2021

# Read Acts 1:8

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

**Acts 1:8 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

Jesus told his disciples they would receive power to be his witnesses to their local communities, cities, country, and world.

He would use their abilities and lives to reveal the truth of who He is. As we think about being outward focused this week, remember to look outward continually.

Look outward so you can tell a lost and dying world without hope that there IS hope, and His name is Jesus.

**PRAYER**

*Pray that God would give you boldness to tell others the Good News wherever you go. Ask God to give you the opportunity to reach someone who is hurting, not just their physical needs, but their ultimate spiritual need – Jesus!*



**WEEK SIX**

# **WE ARE SMALL GROUP ORIENTED**

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*Written by Skip Leininger, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL  
Adapted by Evan Morris, Student Ministry Associate, First Baptist Church O'Fallon, IL*





Date: March 15, 2021

## Read 1 Samuel 18:1–5, 19:1–7, 23:15–18

### SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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### OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as much as himself.”*

**1 Samuel 18:3 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

These passages tell of an unlikely friendship. Jonathan, King Saul's son who is potentially in line for the throne. God's ultimate choice would be for David to be king and, surprisingly, a deep and Godly friendship forms between these two men.

Rather than be disappointed with David's rise to the throne, Jonathan embraces it! He advises, equips, counsels, and delivers David from his father's jealousy and rage.

Godly friends make us better. We draw strength and encouragement when we surround ourselves with Spirit-filled believers. We can celebrate the talents of another person when we see God at work in their lives.

## PRAYER

*Today, thank God for the friends He has and will use in your life.*

Date: March 16, 2021

# Read Exodus 4:10–16, 17:10–13

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*When Moses's hands grew heavy, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat down on it. Then Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other so that his hands remained steady until the sun went down.*

**Exodus 17:12 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

When Moses told God he couldn't help deliver His people because he got tongue-tied, God suggested his brother Aaron. God brought this dynamic duo together as one of the most effective family ministries in history.

Under God's direction they unified the Jewish people and helped the Israelites, after Pharaoh's reluctant permission (with ten plagues on the land), find freedom from Egypt.

They watched God destroy the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. Together, Prophet and Priest, they witnessed countless miracles and victories on the way to the Promised Land.

## PRAYER

*Ask God to stretch you this year accomplishing something extraordinary as a part of a team. Thank Him for your family, too.*

Date: March 17, 2021

# Read Ruth 1:16–18

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*For wherever you go, I will go,  
and wherever you live, I will live;  
your people will be my people,  
and your God will be my God.*

**Ruth 1:16 (CSB)**

**APPLICATION**

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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**DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:**

After the death of her husband and sons, Naomi decides to return from Moab to her homeland. Her daughter-in-law, Ruth, stays and recites verses 16–17 to Naomi. If we fast forward: they return, find family in Bethlehem, and Ruth gets married and starts a family.

We should never underestimate the impact of a Godly home. It's vital to genuinely live out our faith and demonstrate love at home. Our family knows and sees the real us.

We should ask for the Holy Spirit's help to live out Christ's truth as we reflect His grace and love to our family and others.

**PRAYER**

*Ask God to develop a more Christ-like you, authentic to your family and friends.*

Date: March 18, 2021

# Read Luke 10:38–42

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*“While they were traveling, he entered a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who also sat at the Lord’s feet and was listening to what he said.”*

**Luke 10:38–39 (CSB)**



## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Martha's house was a place where Jesus felt at home and would often visit – they were like family. While Martha wanted to make sure everything was perfect, Mary made a decision to sit at the feet of Jesus.

There are important lessons to learn from both women. Martha was creating a space that was welcoming and Mary spent time with Jesus.

In community with others, we need both. We need to create groups and places where people feel welcomed but we must make Jesus the main focus!

### PRAYER

*Pray that God would help you to welcome others into your Life Group, Bible study, youth group and ask Him to help you find others you can welcome.*

Date: March 19, 2021

# Read Acts 16:1–3, 2 Tim. 1:2–5

## SCRIPTURE

Write out one or two verses that stood out to you.

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## OBSERVATION

Write out things that stood out to you, any commands to follow, promises to hold onto or things that are taking place in the passage.

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*"I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience as my ancestors did, when I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day."*

**2 Timothy 1:3 (CSB)**

## APPLICATION

*Write out ways you can begin living this out today. How does this passage apply to your life? How are you going to live differently because of the truth of God's Word?*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

We need three different types of people in our lives – 1) an older mentor who invests into us, 2) friends who walk with us through life, and 3) someone we can mentor and help grow in their faith.

Do you have these people in your life? Can you see these relationships in your life?

If not, begin praying that God would bring them into your life. If you do, take a moment and thank them for the relationship and place they have in your life.

## PRAYER

*Pray that God would bring someone into your life who will invest into you spiritually. Pray that God would give you good friends who will walk with you toward Christ. Pray that God will put someone in your life who you can turn and invest into spiritually.*

