



11/2016

DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

EPHESIANS 6:12 (ESV)



11/2016

DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

EPHESIANS 6:12 (ESV)

Also available online at www.cefc.org.sg



MEMORY FOCUS

FROM EPHESIANS (ESV)

2016

JANUARY

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every
spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...

EPHESIANS 1:3

FEBRUARY

...even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that
we should be holy and blameless before Him.

EPHESIANS 1:4

MARCH

In love He predestined us for adoption as sons
through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will.

EPHESIANS 1:5

APRIL

For by grace you have been saved through faith.
And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

MAY

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than
all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,
to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all
generations, forever and ever. Amen.

EPHESIANS 3:20-21

JUNE

I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner
worthy of the calling to which you have been called...

EPHESIANS 4:1

JULY

...with all humility and gentleness, with patience,
bearing with one another in love...

EPHESIANS 4:2

AUGUST

...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

EPHESIANS 4:3

SEPTEMBER

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

EPHESIANS 6:10

OCTOBER

Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able
to stand against the schemes of the devil.

EPHESIANS 6:11

NOVEMBER

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, against the authorities,
against the cosmic powers over this present darkness,
against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

EPHESIANS 6:12

DECEMBER

...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer
and supplication. To that end keep alert with
all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...

EPHESIANS 6:18

FORE BY SENIOR PASTORS 2016 WORD

BACK TO THE ESSENTIALS IN 2016!



The more you grow as a Christian, the more you realise you have to return to the bare essentials of Christian living. Perhaps it is the discipline of **starting again**, the devotion to **persevere** or the decision to **stop doing something** so that we can start doing something.

Spiritual Growth is a choice!

This year, the Lord gave us Acts 20:28 as a spiritual anchor towards Covenant EFC's Golden Jubilee in 2028.

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

These are the bare essentials God wants us to return to in the midst of increasing messiness in the world and the glaring weaknesses within the Church:

- **Pay Attention to Yourself.** We seem to have grown up thinking in this order: Jesus first, others second and yourself last! While there is some validity in this order of living, there is also a flaw. If we do not take care of ourselves, we cannot take care of others. Our mission as a Church is clear: To raise authentic disciples and intentional disciplemakers of *A Certain Kind*. This is why we led the *Covenant Groups* to do a spiritual audit on their *Authentic Discipleship and Intentional Disciplemaking (A.D.I.D.)* growth journey and action plan – to find out where we are spiritually so that we can chart our growth intentionally. It is not only to grow as an individual but to grow as a community. There is rampant nominalism and powerlessness within the Church! It's time to let the Spirit break those chains over our lives and let the Word of God bring forth newness. Pay attention to yourself – not selfish narcissism but spiritual realism!
- **Pay Attention to Your Family.** The family institution is under attack. No one can take better care of your family than you. You are the 24/7-best-children-and-youth disciplemaker. The Church will complement and support you. The truths of God must be taught, caught and made real in times of distraught. So use this journal in family devotions and take proactive steps and establish a household of faith!
- **Pay Attention to Others.** Your spiritual growth will be capped until you give of yourself to care for others. In the process, you will discover what God is saying through the Word. And the ultimate test is: **What are you going to do about it?** Without obedience, there is no growth. Without growth, you cannot impart. Without impartation, there is no legacy. Would you want to be remembered as someone who lived for himself or lived for others?

For 2016, the book of Ephesians is the overarching frame for the daily devotional. This Epistle was written a few years after the account in Acts 20. It points us to the essential Doctrines (Eph 1-3) and Discipleship (Eph 4-6) of our lives. As we plough through this fascinating Epistle, we will be challenged to anchor our lives in Jesus as the only Lord and Saviour and to pay allegiance to the only Master and King of our lives. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! (Eph 1:2)

Rev Tony Yeo and Rev Tan Kay Kiong

GUIDE TO USING THIS DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

1 Prepare your heart in God's presence

- Select a fixed time (preferably in the morning before you begin your day) and a quiet place where you can be alone and undisturbed.
- Observe a moment of silence as you acknowledge God's presence. Centre down.
- Begin with a song of worship. Meditate on the lyrics even if you are unfamiliar with the tune. (Refer to the list of worship songs provided.)
- Ask God to open your heart to hear Him.

The English Standard Version (ESV) is the default Bible version translation unless otherwise specified.

2 Allow God to S.O.A.P. you with His Word and Spirit

- Scripture – Take your time to meditate on the Scripture passage for the day. Pause and mull over words and phrases that stand out to you.

- Observation – Jot down significant insights and reflections from the passage you have read. You could use the guiding questions provided. *The “Deeper Reflection” section is to aid your contemplation of the Scripture. It is not to replace your own observation, for the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scripture to you as you seek Him earnestly.*
- Application – Note down a specific and practical commitment to God's Word for you. Is there a command to obey, a sin to avoid, an example to follow, or a principle to live out? Where appropriate, share your devotional entry with someone.
- Prayer – Bring your heartfelt response to God in prayer.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2016?

Suggested prayers are included twice weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays, to serve as an aid to those who may find them helpful in their prayer response. On each Friday, there is a prayer pointer for the leaders (Covenant Group leaders, ministry leaders, Board and staff) whom God brings to your mind to pray for.

Examining your life is essential in your faith journey. Your redeemed life as a disciple of Christ deserves careful examining. May you take root and bear fruit in Him!



WORSHIP SONGS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

BEFORE YOU I KNEEL

Verse 1

Before You I kneel, my Master and Maker
 To offer the work of my hands
 For this is the day You've given Your servant
 I will rejoice and be glad
 For the strength I have to live and breathe
 For each skill Your grace has given me
 For the needs and opportunities
 That will glorify Your great name

Verse 2

Before You I kneel and ask for Your goodness
 To cover the work of my hands
 For patience and peace to shape all my labour
 Your grace for thorns in my path
 Flow within me like a living stream
 Wear away the stones of pride and greed
 'Til Your ways are dwelling deep in me
 And a harvest of life is grown

Verse 3

Before You we kneel our Master and Maker
 Establish the work of our hands
 And order our steps to seek first Your kingdom
 In every small and great task
 May we live the gospel of Your grace
 Serve Your purpose in our fleeting days
 Then our lives will bring eternal praise
 And all glory to Your great name
 And all glory to Your great name

Jeffrey J. Taylor | Keith Getty | Kristyn Getty | Stuart Townend
 © 2012 Seek 1st (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
 Townend Songs (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
 Getty Music Publishing (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI Song # 6399236
 CCLI License # 324618

O PRAISE THE NAME (ANÁSTASIS)

Verse 1

I cast my mind to Calvary
 Where Jesus bled and died for me
 I see His wounds, His hands, His feet
 My Saviour on that cursed tree

Verse 2

His body bound and drenched in tears
 They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb
 The entrance sealed by heavy stone
 Messiah still and all alone

Chorus

O praise the Name of the Lord our God
 O praise His Name forevermore
 For endless days we will sing Your praise
 Oh Lord, oh Lord our God

Verse 3

Then on the third at break of dawn
 The Son of heaven rose again
 O trampled death where is your sting
 The angels roar for Christ the King

Verse 4

He shall return in robes of white
 The blazing sun shall pierce the night
 And I will rise among the saints
 My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face

Words & Music: Benjamin Hastings | Dean Ussher | Marty Sampson
 Year & Publisher: © 2015 Hillsong Music Publishing
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI Song # 7037787
 CCLI License # 324618

AT THE CROSS (LOVE RAN RED)

Verse 1

There's a place
Where mercy reigns and never dies
There's a place
Where streams of grace flow deep and wide
Where all the love I've ever found
Comes like a flood comes flowing down

Chorus

At the cross, at the cross
I surrender my life
I'm in awe of You, I'm in awe of You
Where Your love ran red and my sin washed white
I owe all to You, I owe all to You

Interlude

Jesus

Verse 2

There's a place
Where sin and shame are powerless
Where my heart
Has peace with God and forgiveness
Where all the love I've ever found
Comes like a flood, comes flowing down

Bridge

Here my hope is found
Here on holy ground
Here I bow down, here I bow down
Here arms open wide
Here You saved my life
Here I bow down, here I bow (down)

Ending

Jesus

Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | Jonas Myrin | Matt Armstrong | Matt Redman
© Atlas Mountain Songs (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
Countless Wonder Publishing (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI Song # 7017786
CCLI License # 324618

JOY TO THE WORLD (UNSPEAKABLE JOY)

Verse 1

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing

Verse 2

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns
Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

Chorus

Joy, unspeakable joy
An overflowing well
No tongue can tell
Joy, unspeakable joy
It rises in my soul
Never lets me go

Verse 3

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders of His love

Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | George Frideric Handel | Isaac Watts | Matt Gilder
© Ryan House Music (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
sixsteps Music (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI Song # 5607039
CCLI License # 324618

NOEL

Verse 1

Love incarnate, love divine
 Star and angels gave the sign
 Bow to babe on bended knee
 The Saviour of humanity
 Unto us a Child is born
 He shall reign forevermore

Chorus

Noel, Noel
 Come and see what God has done
 Noel, Noel
 The story of amazing love
 The light of the world given for us
 Noel

Verse 2

Son of God and Son of man
 There before the world began
 Born to suffer, born to save
 Born to raise us from the grave
 Christ the everlasting Lord
 He shall reign forevermore

Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | Matt Redman
 © 2015 Alletrop Music (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
 S. D. G. Publishing (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI Song # 7050419
 CCLI License # 324618

MY SOUL FINDS REST

My soul finds rest in God alone
 My trust is always in Him
 Pour out your heart to Him
 Pour out your heart to Him

My soul finds rest in God alone
 My trust is always in Him
 Within Your temple
 I will remember
 Your faithful love to me
 Your faithful love to me

Words & Music: AGGM

HOW GREAT THOU ART

Verse 1

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made
I see the stars I hear the mighty thunder
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed

Chorus

Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Verse 2

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze

Verse 3

And when I think that God His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die I scarce can take it in
That on the Cross my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin

Verse 4

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home what joy shall fill my heart
Then shall I bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim my God how great Thou art

Stuart Wesley Keene Hine

© 1949 and 1953 Stuart K. Hine Trust (Admin. by Crossroad Distributors Pty. Ltd.)

For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

CCLI Song # 14181

CCLI License # 324618

BE THOU MY VISION

Verse 1

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light

Verse 2

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one

Verse 3

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only, put first in my heart
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art

Chorus

Oh, God, be my everything, be my delight
Be, Jesus, my glory My soul's satisfied
Oh, God, be my everything, be my delight
Be, Jesus, my glory My soul's satisfied

Verse 4

High King of Heaven, my victory won
May I reach Heaven's joys, bright Heaven's Sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all

Eleanor Henrietta Hull | Mary Elizabeth Byrne

Public Domain

Arranged by Ascend the Hill

Come and Live | comeandlive.com

For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

CCLI Song # 30639.

CCLI License # 324618

OH THE GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE

Chorus

Oh the glory of Your presence
 We Your temple give You rev'rence
 Come and rise from Your rest
 And be blessed by our praise
 As we glory in Your embrace
 As Your presence now fills this place

Verse

Jesus, all-glorious
 Create in us a temple
 Called as living stones
 Where You're enthroned
 As You rose from death in pow'r
 So rise within our worship
 Rise upon our praise
 And let the hand that saw You raised
 Clothe us in Your glory
 Draw us by Your grace

Ending

Come and rise from Your rest
 And be blessed by our praise
 As we glory in Your embrace
 As Your presence now fills this place
 This holy place

Steve Fry
 © 1983 Birdwing Music (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd (Singapore Branch))
 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by CopyCare Asia Ltd
 (Singapore Branch))
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI Song # 16529
 CCLI License # 324618

COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING (NETTLETON)

Verse 1

Come Thou fount of ev'ry blessing
 Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
 Streams of mercy never ceasing
 Call for songs of loudest praise
 Teach me some melodious sonnet
 Sung by flaming tongues above
 Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it
 Mount of Thy redeeming love

Verse 2

Here I raise mine Ebenezer
 Hither by Thy help I'm come
 And I hope by Thy good pleasure
 Safely to arrive at home
 Jesus sought me when a stranger
 Wand'ring from the fold of God
 He to rescue me from danger
 Interposed His precious blood

Verse 3

O to grace how great a debtor
 Daily I'm constrained to be
 Let Thy grace Lord like a fetter
 Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee
 Prone to wander, Lord I feel it
 Prone to leave the God I love
 Here's my heart Lord take and seal it
 Seal it for Thy courts above

John Wyeth | Robert Robinson
 © Words: Public Domain
 Music: Public Domain
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI Song # 108389
 CCLI License # 324618



THE CHURCH BEYOND

MENTORING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

BY LKY, COVENANT MISSIONS

“And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”
– 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV)

In 2009, I answered the invitation to visit Indonesia and explore missions as a ministry. Everywhere we turned, we encountered people in need, all wanting our help and money.

Initially I followed my fellow brother, who was a more seasoned mentor than I. But later, I took over the role of guiding his mentees — eight of them — all at Cell Group Zone Mentor level. When we first started, we conducted the mentoring sessions with the help of an interpreter, who was one of the local church members.

We talked about ministry concerns, family problems and personal issues. But these were issues you did not want your interpreter to be listening to, especially if you were a leader and he was a church member. After a while, we brought in our own interpreters from Singapore and that helped the situation greatly.

Eventually, by God’s grace, our sessions grew from one church to a few churches. We did this for three years before our mentoring partnership

“I realised that all they needed was a friend who understood their pains and was willing to pray with and for them.”

paused and we moved on to Intentional Disciple Making Churches (IDMC) and Breakthrough Weekend (BTW) ministry work.

Looking back, it was a great time. We had talked so much about mentoring, but at that point we were actually doing it — listening, praying, eating, watching the movie *Money No Enough 2*, laughing, crying, having fun and deepening lives in their walk with God.

I used to think I needed to have the status of a pastor or the knowledge of a seminary teacher to be able to mentor these guys. But in interacting with them, I realised that all they needed was a friend in the ministry who understood their pain and was willing to pray with and for them. Language was not even an issue. Love is a universal language!

Recently, we have been planning to return to mentoring again. This time, we want to reach out to the second generation of leaders — men in their 30s and 40s; those who have heard about mentoring, but have not been mentored yet. We want to walk that journey with them and impart the message about the importance of mentoring men.

We are looking for leaders who understand English, who have the heart for mentoring and the desire to pass on what we share with them to their own flock. We hope to fly into Indonesia every two months to spend a weekend with them and devote time together in the Word and in ministry, playing together, getting to know one other and, in the process, building leaders for the next generation.

» PRAY

- For more men to rise up from Covenant EFC or Singapore, who are willing to go forth to mentor
- That the women in Indonesia will also have a heart for mentoring
- For the church in Indonesia to grow in unity and strength in the Word of God
- For our own equipping and walk with God, that our mentoring times together will be authentic, God-pleasing, God-honouring, and will contribute to everyone’s development



TUESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2016

Armour of the Divine Warrior

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:13-17; Isaiah 11:1-5; 59:14-18

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about the armour of God in verses 13 to 17, in comparison with Isaiah 11:1-5 and 59:14-18?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

The background to Paul's depiction of the armour of God in Ephesians 6 is the Divine Warrior and the Messianic Warrior in the Old Testament. "Most of the weapons" listed here "have their counterpart in Yahweh's armour in Isaiah 59:17 and that of His Messiah in [Isaiah] 11:4-5"¹. The world, dominated by God's enemies, is found lacking in justice, righteousness, truth and uprightness (Isa 59:14-15). The Divine Warrior will judge His enemies in His wrath, putting on "righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head" as His "garments of vengeance" (Isa 59:16-18). In like manner, the Messianic Warrior will judge the wicked and bring justice to the earth, wearing "righteousness" and "faithfulness" as "the belt about His waist" (Isa 11:4-5). The armour of God "is God Himself"² – His virtues and character, which He provides for His people redeemed in Christ (cf. Eph 4:24). Thus, to put on the armour of God is to "put on God Himself"³ – that is, to "be imitators of God" (Eph 5:1) and grow in Christ-likeness (Eph 4:13). Being "in Christ" and "with Christ" (Eph 2:4-6), "many of the traits and virtues that characterised the Messiah will now also characterise" us as we "carry on His mission and battle against the enemies"⁴.

■ APPLICATION

How does understanding that the armour of God is God Himself, help me in spiritual warfare?

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹ Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentaries (Apollos, 1999), 478

² Peter T. O'Brien, 463

³ Peter T. O'Brien, 463

⁴ Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Zondervan, 2010), 451



WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2016

Having Prepared Everything, Stand Firm

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:10-14

■ OBSERVATION

What is the significance of “stand firm” which is repeated thrice in the passage on spiritual warfare (vv.11, 13, 14)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

The goal in the spiritual warfare struggle (v.12) is to “stand firm” (vv.11, 13, 14 – repeated thrice, along with “resist” in v.13). It is both “a defensive posture” and “an offensive movement into the kingdom of the evil one”⁵. After being strengthened in the Lord (v.10) and having made all the necessary preparations for battle by being fully armed with God’s armour (vv.11-12), a Christian is able to “stand firm” against the evil powers. Besides the Old Testament background of the Divine Warrior and the Messianic Warrior, Paul also has an imagery of a Roman soldier who is “standing firm”. The Roman soldier is “the kind of person who could be relied upon, when under pressure, to stand fast and not give way”⁶. For Paul, standing firm is vital in biblical discipleship, as he exhorts the churches to “stand firm” in various ways: “in the Lord” (Php 4:1), in “the Gospel”, “in the word” (1 Co 15:1-2), “in the faith” (1 Co 16:13) and “in one Spirit” (Php 1:27-28). As we stand firm, we must also take heed: “If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall” (1 Co 10:12, NLT). The master of deceptive schemes has a close comrade in arms, which is most dangerous to us — the heart, which is the “most deceitful of all things” (Jer 17:9, NLT).

■ APPLICATION

What areas of my life do I need to pay attention to with regard to standing firm in spiritual warfare?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

*God of all grace,
strengthen and sustain
me with Your all-
sufficient grace and
Christ’s power dwelling
in me, which is made
perfect in my weakness,
that I may stand strong in
the Lord and stand firm
against the attacks of the
evil one without being
intimidated, as I stand in
Your Word, “Fear not, for
I am with you.” Amen.*

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

⁵ Clinton E. Arnold, 451

⁶ Peter T. O’Brien, 472



THURSDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2016

Be Ready in the Truth

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:14 with 1:13; 4:15, 20-21, 24-25; 5:9

■ OBSERVATION

What does it mean to “fasten the belt of truth around the waist” in spiritual warfare within the larger context of Ephesians (v.14 with 1:13; 4:15, 20-21, 24-25; 5:9)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

We are to stand firm by “having fastened the belt of truth around your waist”⁷ (v.14). To fasten clothing securely around the waist makes rapid movement easier and is vital preparation for any vigorous activity.⁸ It is “a sign of readiness”⁹. Be ready in the truth. “Truth” “has the basic idea of reality that is reliable and trustworthy as opposed to that which is false”¹⁰. God is “the only true God” (Jn 17:3) “who cannot lie” (Tit 1:2); and accordingly, the Word of God “is truth” (Jn 17:17). **Truth in our belief:** We all have our belief system. The question is: Is our belief system founded on and formed by the Word of God? Otherwise, our belief system will consist of many untruths and half-truths. There is no other way around it. And we won’t be ready to stand firm against the devil’s schemes. **Truth in our being:** In Christ we have “the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24, NIV). As such, we can be beings of authenticity who think, feel, speak and act in truth (Eph 4:15, 25). And the Lord, who alone sees our hearts as they truly are, can say to us as to Nathanael, an honest critic: “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit” (Jn 1:45-47).

■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my life with regard to having truth in my belief and in my being?

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

⁷ Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Word Books, 1990), 447

⁸ Andrew T. Lincoln, 447

⁹ Andrew T. Lincoln, 447

¹⁰ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Baker, 2002), 839



FRIDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2016

Trustworthy Word for Transforming Lives

■ SCRIPTURE

Psalm 19:7-14

■ OBSERVATION

What does the psalmist say about the nature of God's Word and its effects on our lives in verses 7 to 14?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Verses 7 to 14 may be summarised as: the trustworthy Word for transforming lives. **God's Word is trustworthy:** the psalmist declares the trustworthiness of the Word of God with a sevenfold emphasis. God's Word is "perfect", "sure" (v.7), "right", "pure" (v.8), "clean", "true" and "righteous" (v.9). When circumstances tell us that God's Word has failed, we can stand firm on this sevenfold assurance about God's Word (cf. Eph 6:14). **God's Word is transformative.** We frequently stray away from God, especially in our hearts. But God "restores" us through His Word (v.7a). God's Word "makes wise the simple" (v.7b) for those who are "open-minded"¹¹. When we come before God with an open Bible and open heart, God will open His Word to us with enlightenment and understanding (Ps 119:130). We must have this great concern: "How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart?" (v.12a, NLT). Only God's Word can reveal our "hidden faults" (v.12b), that we may seek God's forgiveness and ask God to keep us from "wilful sins" lest they "rule" over us (v.13). Transformation is a redemptive process. God's Word transforms our thoughts and words (v.14). Meditation on God's Word in our hearts shapes the communication of our mouths.

■ APPLICATION

What does it mean for me to live by the trustworthiness of God's Word and to let God's Word transform my life?

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

To stand firm in God's Word
in the face of adversity

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹¹ Donald Williams, *Psalms 1-72, Mastering the Old Testament* (Word, 1986), 153



SATURDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2016

When the Devil Accuses Us

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:14b; Zechariah 3:1-7

■ OBSERVATION

What is revealed about God's character in Zechariah 3:1-7?

DEEPER REFLECTION

Joshua the high priest, representing God's people, "was clothed with filthy garments" standing in God's holy presence (Zec 3:3). "Satan" was standing there "to accuse" Joshua (Zec 3:1) before God, that God must condemn His people who are guilty of sin. How did God respond? Did God agree with Satan's accusation, which was right, even before God Himself? No. Instead, God "rebuked" Satan (Zec 3:2) – not His people who had sinned against Him. And on the contrary, God "removed the filthy garments" from Joshua, and pronounced, "I have taken your iniquity away from you" (Zec 3:4). More than that, God also "clothed him with festal robes" (Zec 3:4-5). God could not do this arbitrarily, simply because He is God. Joshua also foreshadowed the sinless High Priest, Jesus Christ, who "offered up Himself" as the perfect sacrifice for sin "once for all" (Heb 7:26-27). And Christ "who knew no sin became sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Co 5:21). When Satan accuses us of our sins, **in Christ** we have God's forgiveness (Eph 1:7) and God's righteousness as our "breastplate", by which we can "stand firm" (Eph 6:14b). But, we must also live out God's righteousness that we are "clothed with" in Christ (v.7; cf. Eph 5:7-10).

■ APPLICATION

What are the accusations the enemy makes against me that I have to stand firm against with "the breastplate of righteousness"?

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SUNDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2016

■ SCRIPTURE

.....
.....

■ OBSERVATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ APPLICATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ PRAYER

.....
.....
.....
.....

THE PAST WEEK

REVIEW

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What gave me life and what drained me?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How was the Spirit of God at work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

REFLECT

What is one key thing that God said to me this week
in light of what has happened?

RESPOND

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?

COMMIT IN PRAYER

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

November 2016 – Week 1

**ARMOUR OF GOD**

God gives us tools to fight against our enemy.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:11

ACTIVITY BITE

Take turns as a family to name a superhero and describe the powers each of them use against their enemies. For example, Spiderman uses his web to travel and capture his enemies.

CHAT TIME

Q1: Why do superheroes need powers or tools to defeat their enemies?

Q2: Who is the enemy of God and His people?

Q3: How does this enemy attack us and how can we fight against him?

LEARNING POINT

The enemy of God and Christians is Satan. He will attack us in many ways, including bringing bodily harm against us. But that is not Satan's favourite mode of attack. He is best at telling lies that cause us to lose our faith, doubt God, hate others and feel guilty, discouraged and fearful. He is also very good at tempting us to do wrong things and disobey God. We must be aware of how Satan attacks us. Then we use a powerful tool that God gives us to fight him — the armour of God as found in Ephesians 6. There are six pieces of armour that God has given us. We will look at each one of them in the coming weeks.

ACTION POINT

Read Ephesians 6:10-17 and write down the six pieces of the armour of God on small cards. You can also draw pictures to accompany them. Paste the cards on your wall and memorise them.

PRAYER POWER

(Ask your children to pray after you.)

Dear God, thank You for the armour You have given us to fight against our enemy. Help me believe that You will protect us against Satan. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



TUESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2016

Peace with God Through Jesus Christ

■ SCRIPTURE

Romans 5:1, 9-10

■ OBSERVATION

How does Paul characterise “peace with God” in verses 1, 9 and 10?

DEEPER REFLECTION

While in Ephesians, Paul puts particular emphasis on “peace” in the redeemed relationship at the human-to-human level (Eph 2:11-22), within Paul’s theology, what is foundational and paramount is “peace with God” (v.1). “Peace with God” is “while we were enemies we were reconciled to God” (v.10). We were God’s enemies because as sinners we rebelled against Him, and therefore came under His wrath (Ro 1:18). In this enmity, we were weaker and the loser, while God was stronger and the winner. In earthly wars, it is the weaker party and the loser who seeks peace, and never the other way round. But here, it was God Himself who sought for us to have peace with Him “while we were enemies”. And He did so “through the death of His Son” (v.10), by which we were “justified” (vv.1, 9) — that is, being made righteous before God. But it is more than just being reconciled to God. The phrase “**with God**” that is found in verse 1 (“peace with God”) is “the same expression” as that in John 1:1 (“the Word was **with God**”) which was used “to indicate the unity and perfect harmony between the Father and the Son”¹². Thus, the fundamental key to our “peace with God” is “through our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.1).

■ APPLICATION

In what areas of my life do I need to appropriate the “peace with God” through our Lord Jesus Christ?”

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹² Everett F. Harrison, *Romans*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Vol. 10 (Zondervan, 1976), 56



WEDNESDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2016

In Season and Out of Season

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:15; 2 Timothy 4:1-2

■ OBSERVATION

How is “readiness” with “the gospel of peace” (v.15) portrayed in 2 Timothy 4:1-2?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

“Readiness” with the “gospel of peace” (v.15) can refer to “a certain firmness or steadfastness which the gospel of peace gives to those who believe it, like the firmness which strong boots give to those who wear them”¹³, and the “readiness to announce the Good News of peace” (v.15, GNB¹⁴). Readiness to proclaim the Gospel requires firmness in it, in understanding, belief, conviction and living it out. To “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season” (2 Ti 4:2) which means to do so with a sense of urgency; to stand by at all times, convenient or inconvenient, seizing every right opportunity. It is to speak God’s Word “without fear or favour, and boldly make it known”¹⁵. The Word of God is the Gospel, the Gospel is the Word of God and its intended hearers are both believers and unbelievers. While having the sense of urgency to reach out to unbelievers, we ought to be sensitive to their readiness. A pre-believing relative of mine once shared with me how when she was attached to a Christian organisation for a project, she was bombarded with the Gospel every day and found it distasteful. In this way, we have built barriers instead of bridges. Being urgent doesn’t mean being insistent, but going about it with “great patience” (2 Ti 4:2b).

■ APPLICATION

How should I get myself ready with regard to the gospel of peace?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Almighty God, You called us to labour in Your vineyard. Keep us faithful in Your service, whether the harvest is plentiful or the soil seems barren and our labour unprofitable; knowing that the harvest is Yours and You will reap in Your own appointed time; to the glory of Your holy Name.¹⁶ Amen.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹³ John Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, The Bible Speaks Today (IVP, 1979), 280

¹⁴ Good News Bible

¹⁵ John Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy*, The Bible Speaks Today (IVP, 1973), 106

¹⁶ Angela Ashwin, *The Book of a Thousand Prayers* (Zondervan, 1996, 2002), 228



THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2016

Prepared to Defend Your Christian Hope

■ SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 3:1-4, 13-16

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about proclaiming the Gospel in verses 1 to 4 and 13 to 16?

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Peter exhorts his readers who are suffering for righteousness to be “always prepared to make a defence” of “the hope that is in you” (v.15). **Talk with Walk:** Making a defence for the Christian hope is talk, but it must be in our walk that we talk. It is most fundamental that we enthrone and exalt Christ “as Lord” in our “hearts” (v.15a). The result is living a righteous life with “a good conscience” that is not fearful, troubled or ashamed when our “good behaviour in Christ” is being slandered and reviled by intimidating unbelievers (vv.14b, 16). This in fact becomes a testimony of “the hope that is in you”, which could stir up inquiries and open up opportunities to share it. But we must grasp the essentials of the Christian faith and be able to explain to others why we think the Christian faith is true, and to do so “in a gentle and respectful way” (v.16, NLT). **Walk without Talk:** Among Peter’s readers are women who have become Christians, but not their husbands. They are exhorted to be “submissive” to their husbands, that they “may be won without a word” as they “observe” their “chaste and respectful behaviour” (vv.1-2) and “gentle and quiet spirit” (vv.3-4). This is “precious in God’s sight” (v.4) and powerful in God’s hand.

■ APPLICATION

What challenges do I face in making a defence of the Christian hope and how will I deal with them?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



FRIDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2016

Live at Peace with All People

■ SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:17-21

■ OBSERVATION

How should we “live at peace with all people” (v.18) according to verses 17 to 21?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Romans is Paul’s extensive theological and practical exposition of the Gospel, which is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Ro 1:16). This salvation is about “how God makes us right in His sight” (Ro 1:17, NLT). The result is God transforming our lives (Ro 12:1-2). One expression of a transformed life is to “live at peace with **all** people” (v.18). This is in the context of relating with our enemies who do evil to us (vv.17, 19-21). We are “to take the initiative in positive peacemaking”¹⁷ with our enemies, for God’s children are “peacemakers” (Mt 5:9). Is it possible? It is possible, as the qualification statement “if possible” (v.18) indicates. Possible, but no guarantee. But we do all we can. When it is not possible, we must do what is right, without reciprocating evil with evil (v.17). When our enemies persist in doing evil to us and we cannot escape, we are to refrain from taking personal revenge, but to release the matter to God’s wrath and rest in the divine vengeance (v.19). Do so by walking the path of reversal: subdue evil with good (v.21) by serving our enemies and shocking them by “heaping burning coals on their heads” (v.20).

■ APPLICATION

What does it mean for me to live out “the gospel of peace” with the difficult people and relationships in my life?

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

To have grace and wisdom to relate with difficult people

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹⁷ John Stott, *The Message of Romans*, The Bible Speaks Today (IVP, 1994), 335



SATURDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2016

“I Didn’t Come to Bring Peace”

■ SCRIPTURE

Matthew 10:34-39

■ OBSERVATION

How do you understand what Jesus said in verses 34 to 35 in light of “the gospel of peace” in Ephesians 6:15?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Jesus certainly preached “the gospel of peace” (Eph 2:17). However, right in the same context of sending His disciples out to give the blessing of “peace” (Mt 10:12-13), Jesus said, “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” (v.34) and that He “came to set” His disciples “against” their family members (v.35). The peace that “the Prince of peace” (Isa 9:6) brings is a restored relationship with God, in which the Lordship of God is central. But not everyone will accept this; and thus, inevitably there will be tension and division even in the closest of human relationships (vv.37-39). Ephesians 5:22 to 6:4 shows that devotion to family is a cardinal Christian duty, but it must never become absolute to the extent that devotion to God is compromised. Paul, who strongly calls husbands to love their wives just as Christ loved the church with a self-giving love (Eph 5:25), also calls for “undistracted devotion to the Lord” in marriage (1 Co 7:35). And even in Ephesians 5:22 to 6:4, the Lordship of Christ is central in marriage and family. It is noteworthy that Jesus Himself faced such tension and division in His own family. For not even his brothers believed in Him (Jn 7:3-5). He was so radical that His loved ones said, “He has lost His senses” (Mk 3:20-21).

■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my life in following “the Prince of peace” who also comes “not to bring peace”?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SUNDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2016

■ SCRIPTURE

.....

■ OBSERVATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ APPLICATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ PRAYER

.....
.....
.....
.....

THE PAST WEEK

REVIEW

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What gave me life and what drained me?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How was the Spirit of God at work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

REFLECT

What is one key thing that God said to me this week
in light of what has happened?

RESPOND

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?

COMMIT IN PRAYER

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

November 2016 – Week 2

**BELT OF TRUTH**

God's truth will help us expose Satan's lies.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:14; John 8:32; John 8:44

ACTIVITY BITE

Go to the websites below and play these true-or-false quizzes to test your knowledge. Compare your scores with your family's to see whose is the highest.

- www.quipoquiz.com
- www.buzzfeed.com/tomphillips/true-or-false-or-what
- www.biblelessonsforkids.com/temptationquiz.html

CHAT TIME

- Q1: Did you win or lose? If you lost, how do you feel about not knowing the topics well?
- Q2: If we believe in Satan's lies, what kind of harm can it do us or others?
- Q3: How can we obtain more truths to guard ourselves against Satan's lies?

LEARNING POINT

Jesus declares in John 8:44 that Satan is the father of all lies. His main aim is for you to believe in everything except God's truth. He wants to trick you to do wrong things by lying to you and hence shame you before God and man. Just like a belt that holds up your pants and prevents it from falling down (you would feel ashamed if that ever happened, wouldn't you?), God's truth will keep you from falling for Satan's lies so that you will not be shamed by him. God's truth is found in His Word.

ACTION POINT

Ask your parents or Sunday School teachers if you have ever believed anything that is not in accordance with God's Word. Be willing to change and believe only in God's truth.

PRAYER POWER

(Ask your children to pray after you.)

Lord, please help me know if I have believed in Satan's lies. I want to believe in Your truth only so that I will always walk in Your ways. Amen.

APPROACHING NEW LIFE DAY 2016



NEW LIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES is the face and hands of Covenant EFC to the communities around our worship centres in Bukit Panjang and Woodlands. Future opportunities await us with the starting of our new worship centre in the East earlier this month! Over the past 16 years, the Lord our God has blessed us with much favour and resources to do the work of serving the community. From one childcare centre in 2000, we now have three childcare centres and three youth hubs!

We have enjoyed the growth of good relationships and partnerships with the Members of Parliament (MPs) of the constituencies and their grassroots leaders. Covenanters continue to give generously both in terms of finances and time. As a result, our church through New Life has been able to render important and needed services to the children and youth in the communities. We show God's love by serving the residents regardless of race, language or religion, with no strings attached. With a focus on the next generation, Covenant EFC is looking to God to work mightily through us, His servants, and bring about the transformation of the next generation to live whole, meaningful, purposeful and fruitful lives!

In this week leading up to New Life Day (20 November), we pray that these devotions, written by some of our New Life staff, will help us to reflect and act on the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we be both hearers and doers of the Word of God, that many people from various backgrounds will be blessed by the ministry of God's people who are sent into the communities around them. May many families and communities, and even our society and nation, be impacted by our faithful stewardship of our God-given lives and resources.

Elder Johnny Tan, Interim Executive Director



MONDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2016

Behold the Servant King

■ SCRIPTURE

Mark 10:32-45; Isaiah 53:4-6

■ OBSERVATION

We are called to follow Jesus in meeting the needs of people who are unable to help themselves. What does it mean for you to be a servant to others?

DEEPER REFLECTION

Position, titles and credentials are important and sought after in society, whether in ancient times or in our modern world. Performance is the key by which we gain titles and credentials. The need to perform drives us to be the first among equals. Are our performance indicators the plumb line by which God will measure us? Jesus the Messiah — the Suffering Servant foretold in the Old Testament — came as the Servant King to die for the sins of fallen humanity and to save the lost. Jesus set the example for us, His disciples, to follow. We are to imitate Him by serving people who are in need, who are weak and helpless. We remember that Jesus was rejected and despised on many occasions by those He came to save. Here is a challenging thought: Like Jesus, we are to serve people “with no strings attached”, that is with our service not being conditional upon their gratitude, appreciation or positive response in any way. Apart from giving money, have you been serving those in need lately, with no strings attached?

■ APPLICATION

Before this year ends, what is something you can do to serve a neighbour, a family member, a colleague or a resident in the community (e.g. a single mother, an elderly lady, a migrant worker)?

■ PRAYER

Heavenly Father, please develop in me a servant heart and enable me to serve the people around me. Help me to take the initiative to serve willingly whether in small or big ways, and to trust that You are mightily at work in people's lives. Help me not to serve out of convenience, but out of obedience as Your Spirit leads and guides me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2016

Behold the God of New Beginnings

■ SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 43:10-21

■ OBSERVATION

What did the Lord do for the sake of His chosen people, Israel, that they might declare His praise?

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Sometimes Christians find it difficult to serve others because they themselves are in bondage to their past sins or wounds. They need to be delivered by God from their painful past before they can help others find a hopeful future in God. God alone is the Saviour who redeems our lives and brings about new beginnings in His time, according to His will. Nothing is too difficult for Him. God “makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters” (v.16). When our lives are terribly messed up with secret sins or deeply broken with deep disappointments, it is hard for us to see and know that God is at work to give us a new beginning. He is doing a new thing! “Now it springs forth” (v.19), tell us that God has been working behind the scenes. God wants us to trust Him and start over again. He wants to press the reset button in our lives. Starting over might seem impossible to us right now. But we are to put our trust in the God of New Beginnings. “I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (v.19). According to His steadfast love and covenant faithfulness, God will do a new thing in your life — be it in your ministry, career, relationships, marriage or family. If you trust God and let Him do a new thing in your life, you will be set free from the past to be God’s witness to others, who also need to experience the transforming power of the God of New Beginnings in their lives.

■ APPLICATION

What is one area of your life that you know God wants you to leave behind and start over again? Entrust this area to the God of New Beginnings in prayer and ask Him to do a new thing in your life.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016

Do You Shine Your Light?

■ SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:14-16

■ OBSERVATION

What is the relationship between being the “light of the world” (v.14) and doing good works?

DEEPER REFLECTION

We are the “light of the world” (v.14), who are to shine for all to see. There are two expressions that exemplify being this light. One is **who we are**. This is our identity and inner character that reflects who our Master is. The other is **what we do**. This is the practical outworking of our faith through the good works we do in obedience to our Master. Our light is lit or switched on the moment we accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour. A light source benefits others in providing warmth and showing the way. Just as the shining of light requires energy, doing good works involves the giving of oneself to bless others. The purpose of this light is to bear witness to God’s transforming power working in and through us. The intensity of our light is determined by both the cultivation of Christ-likeness in our character and the active practice of good works. Therefore, when others see your light, they should go, “Wow! You have a great Master!” How bright is your light?

■ APPLICATION

What is one form of good works that I can do in obedience to the call to shine for God and to serve Him (e.g. volunteering in New Life’s Steady Readers Programme or Youth Mentoring)?

■ PRAYER

Dear Lord, please help me to shine my light wherever You have placed me. Please guide my thoughts, words and actions, so that they reflect Your lordship in my life. Give me a pure and sincere heart to bless others, so that they may know Your love and give glory to You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2016

Go and Do Likewise

■ SCRIPTURE

Luke 10:25-37

■ OBSERVATION

Why did Jesus ask the lawyer in the end, “Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers” (v.36)?

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the robbery victim was beaten until he was “half dead” and left dying by the roadside. When the priest saw the man, he “passed by on the other side”, ignoring the man’s desperate need for help to stay alive. The Levite also saw the man and did exactly the same thing. The priests and the Levites were Jewish religious leaders who performed important religious duties at the temple. Surely either the priest or the Levite would do the right thing and help the dying victim. In the eyes of the Jews, the person who was least likely to show compassion to the injured man was the Samaritan. The Jews despised the Samaritans, because they were a racially mixed group of part-Jewish and part-Gentile ancestry (the king of Assyria brought foreign people to settle in Samaria in 722 BC and over time they intermarried with the remaining Jews who had not been exiled to Assyria) and they rejected temple-based worship. To show compassion to someone is to have pity on that person; you are deeply moved and identify yourself with that person. This explains the loving actions of the Samaritan towards the injured man. The help rendered involved significant sacrifice on the part of the Samaritan. It wasn’t convenient nor cheap to help. The Samaritan had to go out of his way and incur personal costs to tend to the man’s wounds and take care of him. The question we should ask is not “Who is my neighbour?” but rather “Am I a neighbour?” The Samaritan was clearly a neighbour to the man in need. Jesus says, “**You go, and do likewise**” (v.37).

■ APPLICATION

Name two or three persons whom God has recently brought into your life for you to be a neighbour and help in their need.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



FRIDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2016

Give and Do Good

■ SCRIPTURE

1 Timothy 6:6-10; 17-19

■ OBSERVATION

What is the biblical view of money and how are Christians to handle it?

DEEPER REFLECTION

“Godliness with contentment” (v.6) is Christian contentment. It is great gain. Like the apostle Paul, we should learn to be content in whatever state we are, whether we have little or plenty in terms of material goods (Php 4:11-12). Here, God’s Word tells us about the evil and danger of covetousness. Those who desire, run after and pursue riches will “fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction” (v.9). The love of money is “a root of all kinds of evils” (v.10) and will lead people to leave the teachings of the Christian faith and ultimately bring much grief into their lives. Instead of putting their hope in the “uncertainty of riches”, people are to put their hope in God (v.17). Christians are to acknowledge God as the provider of all their needs. And where Christians enjoy an abundance of God’s provision, they are “**to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share**” (v.18). Surely this is to point the people who have been helped to the God who provides not just for our material needs, but who also sacrificially gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to meet our ultimate need for the forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation to God our Creator.

■ APPLICATION

Thank God for His provision in your life. Consider setting aside a percentage of your income to engage in good works for the poor and needy, as the Lord leads you.

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:
To be generous in giving their time
and money for good works

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SATURDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2016

Do You Do the Word?

■ SCRIPTURE

James 1:22-27

■ OBSERVATION

How is a mere hearer of the Word similar to a man who quickly forgets what he looks like in the mirror?

DEEPER REFLECTION

A hearer of God's Word will quickly forget what he has heard, unless he does or applies the Word. A mere hearer will also not fix what he knows is wrong in his life from the truths that he has heard. As such, a mere hearer deceives himself. Outwardly he seems religious — he prays, he tithes, he fasts, he serves and he even teaches! But inwardly there is no application of God's Word and therefore no change in his heart. Such a man, based on his outward appearance in terms of his speech and actions, even deceives himself that he is religious. But in reality there is no change on the inside. In contrast, a doer of God's Word will promptly act upon the Word after he hears it. What he hears, he applies. This constant application changes him from the inside out. God's Word constantly renews his heart. His values and perspectives are changed. As a result, his posture and conduct are changed. Such a man will mature towards Christ-likeness, bearing much evidence of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). For example, he will be patient, kind and self-controlled. God's blessings will certainly flow to him and through him to people who are in need.

■ APPLICATION

What is one thing that you have heard recently from God's Word but have yet to apply in your life? Commit to doing that thing as soon as possible, while asking God for His help.

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SUNDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2016

■ SCRIPTURE

.....

■ OBSERVATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ APPLICATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ PRAYER

.....
.....
.....
.....

THE PAST WEEK

REVIEW

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What gave me life and what drained me?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How was the Spirit of God at work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

REFLECT

What is one key thing that God said to me this week
in light of what has happened?

RESPOND

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?

COMMIT IN PRAYER

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

November 2016 – Week 3

**BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

We need to guard our hearts against sin.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:14; Psalm 119:9-11

ACTIVITY BITE

Try to name all the organs in your body, from your chest to your waist. Share what you think is the most important organ and why.

CHAT TIME

Q1: What is the function of the heart in keeping a person alive?

Q2: Our feelings and attitudes are directly related to our hearts.

What are some behaviours that result from a bad attitude?

Q3: What does Psalm 119:9-11 tell us to guard our hearts against?

What will happen to us if we do not guard our hearts?

LEARNING POINT

The Roman soldier uses a breastplate to protect his chest, especially his heart, because he will lose his life if it is injured. The Bible uses the idea of wearing a breastplate to help us understand that we must guard our hearts against sin. Instead, let our hearts desire righteousness. Righteousness simply means being right with God. When we walk in God's ways, we are living in righteousness. When we store up His Word in our hearts, it is like wearing a breastplate to guard our hearts.

ACTION POINT

Ask your parents or Sunday School teacher to do a "heart check" for you. This means letting them tell you about your good attitudes and the ones you need to improve on.

PRAYER POWER

(Ask your children to pray after you.)

Thank You, God, for showing me that I must guard my heart against sin. Help me keep Your Word in my heart so that I will not sin against You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



MONDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2016

The Shield of Faith

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:16; Proverbs 30:5

■ OBSERVATION

How does Proverbs 30:5 help us to understand “the shield of faith” (v.16)?

DEEPER REFLECTION

The devil shoots “flaming arrows” at us in many forms — from within and without. From within, they can be his mischievous accusations which trouble our conscience with what can only be false guilt or unsought thoughts of doubt, discouragement, lust, malice, fear and disobedience. From without, they can be adverse circumstances, intentional or careless hurting words and acts from people. We are to take up “the shield of faith” to “extinguish” — to nullify the effects of — “the flaming arrows”. The shield here refers to the long oblong shield used in Roman times which protects the whole person. God is “a shield to those who take refuge in Him” (Pr 30:5a). The “shield of faith” is the shield of faith **in God**. So, ultimately, **God is** the shield. And it is when we “take refuge in Him” by trusting and relying on Him that the devil’s flaming arrows will be extinguished. To have faith in God is to have faith in “every word of God” (Pr 30:5a). And “every word of God is tested” and proven to be true and trustworthy. Faith in God cannot be faith that is not based on the Word of God, otherwise, the dictum to “just trust God” can be presumptuous. True faith is based and built on “It is written” (cf. Mt 4:4, 6, 10).

■ APPLICATION

What are the “flaming arrows” that the devil is shooting at me and how will I face them with my shield of faith?

■ PRAYER

*Lord of Heaven’s Armies,
You are my Light and my
Deliverance, I need not
fear. You, my fortress,
protect me from danger, so
I need not tremble. When
the forces of darkness
attack me, seeking to
devour me, they will
stumble. And though a
mighty army surrounds
me, my heart need not be
afraid, for I take refuge in
You and my confidence is
in You. Amen.*

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



TUESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2016

“Have You Considered My Servant?” (1)

■ SCRIPTURE

Job 1:1-19

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make from verses 6 to 19 concerning spiritual warfare?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

We can look at Job 1 to 2 from a spiritual warfare perspective, because “Satan” is involved as an antagonist. Angels and Satan were in God’s presence (v.6). “Satan’s eagerness to catch men in fault is known to God”¹⁸, and with that in mind, God asks Satan “if he has paid close attention to Job”¹⁹ for his God-fearing character (v.8). God speaks of His godly servant with great pride and confidence. But Satan questions God’s view by suggesting that Job fears God because God prospers and protects him (vv.9-10). Then Satan challenges God to “touch all that he [Job] has” to prove that God’s view of Job is wrong (v.11). God accepts Satan’s challenge and Satan goes forth to destroy all that Job has (vv.13-19). One can almost say that God takes the sovereign initiative in this: “Have you considered My servant Job?” (v.8). Note the word “hand” in verses 11 to 12. There is the **primary** “hand” – God’s hand (v.11 – “Your hand”) and the **secondary** “hand” – Satan’s “hand” (v.12). Satan’s “hand” is under the sovereign control of God’s “hand”, which gives Satan the **divine permission** – “all that he has is in your hand”, and sets the **divine perimeter** – “only do not put forth your hand on him” (v.12).

■ APPLICATION

How do you view spiritual warfare in light of the story of Job, God and Satan?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

¹⁸ H. H. Rowley, *The Book of Job*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Eerdmans, 1976), 31

¹⁹ H. H. Rowley, 31



WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2016

“Have You Considered My Servant?” (2)

■ SCRIPTURE

Job 1:20 – 2:10

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Job’s faith in Job 1:20 – 2:10?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Having all that he has destroyed, Job does “not sin nor blame God” (v.22), contrary to what Satan had hoped for (v.11). Satan comes again into God’s presence (v.1). “Have you considered My servant Job?” God asks Satan once more, but this time with greater pride, that Job “still holds fast his integrity” despite him suffering “without any reason” (v.3). Unsatisfied, Satan challenges for God’s primary “Hand” to “touch” Job’s body (vv.4-5), pushing the boundary God had set earlier (Job 1:12). Divine permission is given with the perimeter being: “only spare his life” (v.6). Satan “struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot” (v.7, NLT). But Job “did not sin with his lips” in cursing God (v.10). Biblical faith is God-centred: It is “Trust in the Lord with all your heart” (Pr 3:5). Adversities show and shape such God-centred faith. God-centred faith **fears God for nothing** — the very thing that Satan says is not true of God’s people (Job 1:9). But sadly, many of us show that Satan is right. God-centred faith **blesses God amid nothing**. We worship God when everything is taken away from us, because “the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away” (vv.20-21). God-centred faith **sees God in everything**, accepting all things, good and bad, from His sovereign hand (v.10).

■ APPLICATION

What do I need in order to grow in God-centred faith?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

God, from whom, through whom and to whom are all things, make me to be like those who trust in God as their hope and confidence — who are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots reaching deep into the water, not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought, with their leaves remaining green and never ceasing in producing fruit.²⁰ Amen.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

²⁰ Jeremiah 17:7-8



THURSDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2016

From Wrestling to Resting

■ SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 1:2-6, 12-13; 2:1-4; 3:16-19

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about the prophet Habakkuk's faith journey in verses 2 to 6, 12 to 13 and Habakkuk 2:1-4 and 3:16-19?

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Habakkuk's faith journey is one of moving from wrestling to resting in three stages. Its context is the prevailing lawlessness and injustice faced by the righteous who are suffering violence from the wicked (vv.3-4). It begins with the **perplexity stage**: "How long will I call for help, and You will not hear?" (v.2) and "Why?" (v.3). God's response to Habakkuk's perplexity only makes him more perplexed. God is going to do something "You would not believe if you were told" (v.5). God will punish Judah for its wickedness through the much more wicked Babylonians (v.6). It is like God punishing crooks through greater crooks. It is unthinkable to Habakkuk: "How can?" (vv.12-13). **Perspective stage**: In our perplexity, we need God's perspective — seeing things as God sees. Habakkuk waits on God in solitude: "I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me" (Hab 2:1). Perspective comes from the Word of God (Hab 2:2-3) and calls for faith — "the righteous will live by his faith" (Hab 2:4). With perspective, we move to the **perseverance stage**. When the Babylonians come, it will be like everything in life is falling apart and we are left with nothing (Hab 3:17). But the everlasting God remains (cf. v.12) and in Him alone we trust and find rest as "my Saviour" and "my Strength" (Hab 3:18-19).

■ APPLICATION

How will I respond to situations in my life that I am perplexed over?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



FRIDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2016

Enduring Hard Struggle with Sufferings

■ SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 10:32-39

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about endurance in verses 32 to 36?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Faith and endurance go hand in hand (vv.32, 36, 38, 39). What do we endure? “A hard struggle with sufferings” (v.32, ESV). “Sufferings” is a “struggle” and the “struggle” is “hard”. Scripture is realistic. It recognises that endurance is not easy. In endurance we may be tempted to “throw away” our “**confidence**” (v.35); we cave in and give up. “Confidence” in what? In the faithful God and His reliable Word: “It is impossible for God to lie” (Heb 6:18). We are tempted to “throw away” our “confidence” when God is “slow” in answering our prayers and fulfilling His Word. When God appears to be “slow”, it is not because God does not care, as we often feel about Him; but rather, it is because God sees a need in our lives: “you have **need** of endurance” (v.36). Oftentimes, we pray to God about our difficult times with a mentality of “meeting felt needs”: “God, take me out of it.” But endurance is a real need that God wants to “meet” through difficult times. As we endure under the divine sovereign “slowness” and silence, we are doing “the **will** of God” (v.36). And we have to endure until we have “done the will of God” — that is, when God deems His purpose as fulfilled.

■ APPLICATION

What do I need to change in my thinking regarding endurance in discipleship?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

To grow in endurance that produces character

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SATURDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2016

It Is All in Jesus

■ SCRIPTURE

Revelation 1:9

■ OBSERVATION

What is the significance of “in Jesus” in verse 9?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Spiritual warfare is a key theme in the Book of Revelation, which is the focus of chapters 12 and 13 (Rev 12:7-8, 17; 13:3-4, 7). It is a war over allegiance: worship God or worship the Beast (Rev 13:3-4, 8, 12, 15). The followers of Jesus will have to pay a price for refusing to worship the Beast (Rev 13:15). Thus, in this war over allegiance there is the discipleship call for “the perseverance and the faith of the saints” (Rev 13:9-10; cf. 14:12). It is against this background that verse 9 is to be understood. “Tribulation and kingdom and perseverance in Jesus” sums up Revelation. Jesus’ followers will suffer “**tribulation**” at the hands of Satan and the Beast for their loyalty to their Lord. But we suffer “tribulation” as a “**kingdom**” that God “has made us to be” (Rev 1:6). This kingdom is the kingdom of “the Ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5), which is sovereign over “tribulation”. This glorious fact and reality will empower us to suffer “tribulation” with “**perseverance**” — that is, to “be faithful until death” (Rev 2:10). It is of great theological significance that “tribulation **and** kingdom **and** perseverance” — all three — are “**in Jesus**” as **one package**, with “in Jesus” being the fundamental key.

■ APPLICATION

How will I live by the theological principle of “tribulation and kingdom and perseverance in Jesus” in my discipleship journey?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



SUNDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2016

■ SCRIPTURE

.....

■ OBSERVATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ APPLICATION

.....
.....
.....
.....

■ PRAYER

.....
.....
.....
.....

THE PAST WEEK

REVIEW

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What gave me life and what drained me?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How was the Spirit of God at work?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

REFLECT

What is one key thing that God said to me this week
in light of what has happened?

RESPOND

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?

COMMIT IN PRAYER

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

November 2016 – Week 4

**SHOES OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE**

Be ready to share the Gospel with everyone.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:15; Romans 10:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5

ACTIVITY BITE

Stand on a piece of paper and trace the shape of your feet with a marker. Decorate it and write the words “gospel of peace” on them. Stick them on the wall or fridge as a reminder that God wants us to be ready to walk daily with the gospel of peace.

CHAT TIME

- Q1: The word “Gospel” means “good news”. What is this “good news” about?
- Q2: What can we do to keep walking in the gospel of peace without following Satan’s ways?
- Q3: Why does the Bible tell us to be ready anytime to share the Gospel with your friends who do not know Jesus?

LEARNING POINT

Wearing the shoes of the gospel of peace is about walking in God’s ways and avoiding anything that belongs to Satan. Putting on these shoes also reminds us to bring this Gospel to our friends, so that they will get to hear about this good news and hopefully believe in Jesus too. Ephesians 6:15 says that we are to “put on the readiness that comes with the gospel of peace”. It means that we must be prepared to share the Gospel anytime, whenever opportunities arise. In the meantime, learn everything you can about this Gospel from your parents or your Sunday School teachers so that you will have all the knowledge you need to share it.

ACTION POINT

Study 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 together with your parents to find out about this Gospel. Practise sharing the good news with one another so that you can share it with your friends in the future.

PRAYER POWER

(Ask your children to pray after you.)

Jesus, thank You for giving us the gospel of peace. I want to share this good news with my friends and I pray that they will also want to believe in You. Amen.



MONDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2016

Take the Helmet of Salvation

■ SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:17 with 2:1-10

■ OBSERVATION

How do you understand “the helmet of salvation” in verse 17 in light of Ephesians 2:1-10?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

“Salvation” in verse 17 points back to “you have been saved” in Ephesians 2:5, 8. It means that from being dead in our sins, under Satan’s dominance and under God’s wrath (Eph 2:1-3), we have been made alive with Christ, and co-resurrected and co-exalted with Him (Eph 2:5-6). And having been delivered from the domain of evil powers, in our union with Christ (“in Christ”), we share with Him in His power and authority over the demonic realm (Eph 1:20-23). **Protection:** Being saved in Christ as God’s children, God “always put a wall of protection around” us (cf. Job 1:10, NLT) against the evil one. The devil can touch us only with God’s permission and within His set perimeter (Job 1:12; 2:6); and even then, God’s overarching protection remains. So, in this assurance of God’s protection, we depend on God through prayer to protect us from the evil one (Jn 17:15; 2 Th 3:3). We need not fear the enemy’s attacks, but should stand firm against his intimidations. **Restoration:** While assured of God’s protection, we must guard against giving Satan the opportunity to infiltrate our lives (cf. Eph 4:26-27). But should we fail and fall under Satan’s attack (cf. Lk 22:31-32), we have in Christ “redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses” (Eph 1:7).

■ APPLICATION

What areas in my life do I need to take the helmet of salvation and how will I do that?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

*Write Thy blessed Name,
O Lord, upon my heart,
there to remain so
indelibly engraved, that
no prosperity, no adversity
shall ever move me from
Thy love. Be Thou to me a
strong tower of defence, a
comforter in tribulation, a
deliverer in distress, a very
present help in trouble and
a guide to heaven through
the many temptations and
dangers of this life²¹.*

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

²¹ Thomas à Kempis



TUESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2016

Salvation: We Must Get Right with God

■ SCRIPTURE

Romans 1:18; Amos 7:1-8; 8:1-2; 9:8

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about God's wrath and judgement in verse 18 and Amos 7:1-8; 8:1-2 and 9:8?

.....

.....

.....

.....

DEEPER REFLECTION

Salvation is about getting right with God. And we must get right with God. We cannot say, "I don't want to get right with God." We have no choice but to get right with God. Why? Because "the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness" of sinners (v.18). God's wrath is totally different from human anger. It does not mean that God loses His temper, flies into a rage, or is spiteful or vindictive. It is God reacting in revulsion against evil with a deeply personal abhorrence of sin. It is God's refusal to condone evil and His just judgement on sin. God reveals His wrath as a **righteous God**, "whose eyes are too pure to approve evil" (Hab 1:13). There is not a single sin that God will not judge. God will judge because He must judge. However, God also reveals His wrath as a **redemptive God**. Twice God "changed His mind" concerning judging Israel for their persistent covenant unfaithfulness (Am 7:1-6). When Israel refused to repent, God would "spare them no longer" (Am 7:7-8; 8:1-2). God sought to "destroy" Israel in His wrath and yet He would "not totally destroy" them (Am 9:8). Why? In His wrath, the "gracious and compassionate" God, who is "slow to anger" (Joel 2:13), seeks for sinners to get right with Him.

■ APPLICATION

What does it mean for me to know the God who reveals His wrath as a righteous and redemptive God?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:



WEDNESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2016

Salvation: We Cannot Get Right with God

■ SCRIPTURE

Romans 1:17-18; 3:19-20; James 2:10-11

■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about “the Law” (the Ten Commandments) in Romans 3:19-20 and James 2:10-11?

DEEPER REFLECTION

Sinners have an inescapable choice to make: get right with God or face the wrath of God. However, while we must get right with God, we cannot get right with God. Why? To get right with God, we must be righteous before God and our righteousness must be nothing short of the very “righteousness of God” (v.17). So, we either have “the righteousness of God” (v.17) or face “the wrath of God” (v.18), as the intentional contrast shows. The righteousness of God is reflected in the Law — the Ten Commandments (cf. Ro 3:19-21; 10:3-4). So, to be righteous before God as He demands, we must keep the Ten Commandments completely and perfectly. But when we break just one commandment, we break the whole Law (Jas 2:10-11). Adultery is not just the act itself, but also the lusting in our hearts (Mt 5:27-28). Murder is not just the act itself, but is also manifested through anger and unkind words (Mt 5:21-22). It is impossible for us to attain the righteousness of God by keeping the Law. Thus, the Law shows that sinners are incapable of attaining the righteousness of God (Ro 3:20) and are therefore under God’s wrath (Ro 4:15). As sinners, although we must, we cannot get right with God. We are in a perilous dilemma.

■ APPLICATION

How do I look at God as I ponder the theological dilemma of “we must, but we cannot get right with God”?

■ PRAYER

Do not gloat over me, my enemies! For though I fall, I will rise again! Holy Gracious God, though I sit in darkness, You will be my light. I must endure Your chastening anger for a while, for I have sinned against You. But You will defend me and right the wrongs the enemies have done to me. You will bring me into the light and I will see Your righteousness.²²

PRAYER POINTERS

Give thanks:

Pray for leaders:

Pray for significant people:

Pray for those in need:

Pray for self:

²² Micah 7:8-9

COVENANT EFC

© 2016 COVENANT EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

Tel: (65) 6892 6811 • Email: mail@cefc.org.sg • Website: www.cefc.org.sg