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1 April 2011

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

God is good - ALL THE TIME! Don't ever forget that. You see, knowing that God is good is the basis for so many things. We know that He loves us and we know that He wants to bless us because He is good and He only has good things for us as His children.

God bless you as you study His Word this month.

Gladly in His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Jason".

Dr. Jason B. Brittain





Friday April 1

**Scripture Reading: Judges 6-7
Luke 8:1-21**

Praise the Lord! We are so blessed to be able to study God's Word. In these devotions we are reading through the whole Bible each year, studying through the New Testament and covering the book of Psalms verse by verse. All of these things are needed and they are meant to be a blessing to you. Prayerfully ask God to speak to you from His Word and He will.

In Luke 8, we have the parable of the sower. Jesus was using this story to illustrate a very important truth. This parable is all about the Word. We need to know the Word and we need to hold on to everything God speaks to us. Luke 8:11 **"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God."** When God's Word comes to us we are blessed but some people lose the blessing because they allow the Word to be taken from them.

We want to be like the people described in verse 15, **"But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."** We need to hear the Word, retain it and persevere. When we do those things the Word will produce a crop in our lives and it will be a good crop. Did you notice how Jesus described people like this? He said they are people who have a noble and good heart. I sure want to be like that and I know you do too. So, when God speaks to you know that He has sown His Word into your life. Hold on to it and never give up. It will produce in your life.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for Your Word and all that You speak to me. Help me to be a person who has a noble and good heart. I want Your Word to produce much more in my life and I know that is what I really need. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Saturday April 2

**Scripture Reading: Judges 8-9
Luke 8:22-56**

Praise the Lord! In Psalms 80 the author is writing about God's people and he is comparing them to a vine. Psalms 80:10-11 **"The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches. It sent out its boughs to the Sea, its shoots as far as the River."** Here he is talking about a time when God's people were spreading out and covering the whole land. God wants to bless us and He wants us to keep growing in Him.

Look at Luke 8:22 **"One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out."** They set out on their trip and then they encountered a problem. Luke 8:23 **"As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger."** Have you ever set out to do something for the Lord and then encountered a problem? Well, the disciples did the right thing. They turned to Jesus for help. Luke 8:24 **"The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm."** Now I know He talked to them about their lack of faith in the next verse but don't miss the fact that He saved them. When you face difficulties turn to Jesus and He will help you.

Later in our reading there was a woman who needed a healing and she turned to Jesus and He healed her. Luke 8:48 **"Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."** She made the right decision when she turned to Jesus too.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I always want to turn to You when I need help. I am so thankful that You are always there and that You are always willing to help me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Sunday April 3

Scripture Reading: Judges 10-11
Luke 9:1-36

Praise the Lord! Psalms 80:12-13 **“Why have you broken down its walls so that all who pass by pick its grapes? Boars from the forest ravage it and the creatures of the field feed on it.”** In yesterday’s devotion I wrote to you about people who were facing problems and I said it was always the right thing to turn to God for help. These people were facing hard things and in the verse we will look at tomorrow we will see that they turned to God for help. Turning to God for help is always the right thing to do.

Luke 9:1-2 **“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”** These are very exciting verses. You see, we all know that Jesus had authority over all the works of the devil but now He shared His authority with the disciples. I hope you know that this means He also shares His authority with you. God has always wanted to use His people in His work and He gives us what we need to do the job!

Look at how this worked out. Luke 9:6 **“So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.”** They believed what Jesus said and went out and did the work that He had empowered them to do. Please notice that God and the disciples both played a part in this whole process. Jesus shared the authority with them and then the disciples had to go and do the work with the authority He had given them.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I know that You love me. Help me to run to You when I need help. I also want to accomplish more for You. Thank You that I don't ever have to do Your work on my own. I want to operate in Your authority. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Monday April 4

**Scripture Reading: Judges 12-14
Luke 9:37-62**

Praise the Lord! I told you yesterday that the people in Psalms 80 were going to turn to God for help. Psalms 80:14 **“Return to us, O God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine.”** They were now crying out to God for help and that was the right thing for them to do. They knew they could not make it without Him and that is a good thing for us to know too. When you face hard things turn to God for help and He will help you. I know some of you need this reminder. If it is you take this as God speaking to you personally and turn to Him for help.

Look at Luke 9:37 **“The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.”** Why do you think large crowds met Jesus everywhere He went? Well, here are some reasons. They knew He loved them. He was healing people. He was forgiving people. He spoke words of life to them.

Now, having said all those wonderful things it is also true that Jesus spoke strong things to the people. Look at Luke 9:62 **“Jesus replied, “No-one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”** Jesus wanted people to follow Him but He wanted them to count the costs too. When we give our lives to Jesus we need to mean it. We need to be committed to living for Him no matter what we face and no matter what it costs. Now don't think I am getting all negative here. I did point out all the wonderful things about following Jesus too.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I can draw near to You and know that You will always draw near to me. I know that giving my life to You was the best decision I ever made and I am never going to turn back from following You. Help me to be a good example to others so they can be consistent followers of You as well. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Tuesday April 5

Scripture Reading: Judges 15-17
Luke 10:1-24

Praise the Lord! Psalms 80:14-15 **“Return to us, O God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine, the root your right hand has planted, the son you have raised up for yourself.”** He was reminding God that the people really belonged to Him. This is a good thing. I am sure God didn't need the reminder but it was good for the people to acknowledge that they were God's people and so He would look out for them.

Luke 10:1-2 **“After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”** Now Jesus is using even more of His people in the work of the ministry. Remember that He had also empowered them for what He was calling them to do. Thank God that He always helps us. I also want to you to notice that Jesus told them to pray for what needed to be done. We always do better when we pray!

Well, the disciples went out and had success. Look at Luke 10:17 **“The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”** Here's a quick point. When we do what God wants us to do in the power He supplies we will have success and that will produce joy in our lives.

Prayer: Lord, I am glad that I have given my life to You and I am glad You are the One who is working in my life. I have great confidence in Your ability to get Your job done in me. I also thank You for empowering me for all that You ask me to do. Please help me to remember to rely on Your and Your strength rather than my own. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Wednesday April 6

Scripture Reading: Judges 18-19
Luke 10:25-42

Praise the Lord! Psalms 80:16-17 **“Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire; at your rebuke your people perish. Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself.”** The people were still looking to God for help and that is always the right thing to do. They might have been confused about other things but they knew that God was good and that He would bless them as they trusted in Him.

Luke 10:38-40 **“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”** I am sure all the things Martha was distracted by were legitimate but being with Jesus was more important. Many times we have to make choices based on our priorities and being with Jesus needs to be our top priority.

Luke 10:41-42 **“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”** We need to be like Mary and make being with Jesus more important than anything else.

Prayer: Lord, I know that looking to You for help is always the right thing to do. I want to seek You and Your Kingdom first and then I know that You will help me with all the rest of the things I have to take care of. Please help me to avoid being distracted by things that seem important at the moment but don't really have any eternal significance. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Thursday April 7

Scripture Reading: Judges 20-21
Luke 11:1-28

Praise the Lord! Psalms 80:18 **“Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name.”** I told you that these people would get their thinking straightened out by the end of Psalms 80. Now they are seeking God and asking Him for help. It would be smart for us to seek Him all the time. Don’t get off track and then come back. Stay on track. That is a far better way to live.

Look at Luke 11:1 **“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”** Isn’t it interesting that the disciples didn’t ask Jesus to teach them about prayer? They also didn’t ask Him to teach them how to pray. They asked Him to teach them to pray! You see, most of us have had many teachings about prayer. We know how to pray and yet we are just like the disciples and we just need to pray more!

Luke 11:9-10 **“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”** Jesus wanted to motivate the disciples (and us) to pray more so He told us that God answers prayer! Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be open to you. Don’t those things motivate you to pray more? Jesus was the greatest Teacher of all time and He was the greatest Motivator of all time. So learn and be motivated to pray more!

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I know to call on Your Name when I need help. I know that my only real help comes from You! I also ask You to teach me to pray more. I know how and I know that I should pray and yet I am like the disciples and I just need to pray more! I am so glad that You reminded me that I will have more answers when I pray more. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Friday April 8

Scripture Reading: Ruth
Luke 11:29-54

Praise the Lord! The last verse of Psalms 80 says, **“Restore us, O LORD God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.”** This Psalm is like many others in that the writer pours out all his complaints and yet he ends up praying for God to help him. I guess they were kind of like us. There are times when we complain and tell God about all the hard things we are going through and then we end up asking Him to help us. Let’s quit the complaining part and continually ask Him to help us. I think this is a far better way to live.

Look at Luke 11:29-30 **“As the crowds increased, Jesus said, “This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation.”** The crowds were increasing and yet Jesus was willing to speak the truth to them. This is a sign of a person who is sold out to God and willing to do His will rather than trying to impress people. Jesus referred to the sign of Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and Jesus was going to be dead and buried for three days. Jonah came back and did all that God wanted him to do and Jesus was going to be raised from the dead after three days too.

Luke 11:36-39 says, **“Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you.”** When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised. Then the Lord said to him, **“Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.”** Be sure to take in things of light. What you take in will affect you.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I really do want to live for You. Help me to know Your will and help me to do it. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Saturday April 9

**Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 1-3
Luke 12:1-34**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81 is a Psalm of praise to God. Psalms 81:1 **“Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob!”** When we really love God it will produce joy in our lives because He is our strength and we will often have to shout aloud to Him. When you feel like this don't fight it. Give in and sing and shout. It is God's will for you and it will be good for you. Try it; you will like it.

Luke 12:23-25 say, **“Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”** It is so easy to get distracted by the things of this world. We need to remember that God is God and He will always take care of us just like He takes care of everything else. Keeping your trust in God will give you peace so you can handle those other things.

Luke 12:29-31 say, **“And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”** Trust God and seek Him and His Kingdom. Then He will help you with all those other things that seem so important. Now, I am not saying they are not important. I am just telling you that you can handle them better with the help you will have when you have consistently sought Him!

Prayer: Lord, I really do love You and I want to praise You more. I know You deserve it. I also ask You to help me to keep my priorities right. I know that I really need Your help and I know that it is available to me when I keep You first in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Sunday April 10

**Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 4-6
Luke 12:35-59**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:1-2 say, **“Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob! Begin the music, strike the tambourine, play the melodious harp and lyre.”** We should praise God more. Go ahead and strike up the band and praise Him! Thank God for music and talented people who lead us into the presence of God through praise and worship. We can and should praise Him when we are alone and when we are with others.

Many people have tried to predict when Jesus will return and so far no one has been right. Luke 12:40 says, **“You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”** There are two comments I want to make from this verse. First, the way to be ready is to stay ready all the time. If we are always ready then we will be ready when Jesus comes. Secondly, Jesus said that He was coming back at a time when we don't expect. I tend to believe this and so I don't think anyone will know when He is coming.

Look at Luke 12:47-48 **“That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”** We have been blessed and so we have a lot to be faithful with. Again, be faithful all the time and you will be all right.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I want to be more diligent to praise You like You deserve. I also want to live for You all the time and then I know that I will be ready whenever You come back. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Monday April 11

**Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 7-9
Luke 13:1-21**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:3 **“Sound the ram’s horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast;”** The sounding of the ram’s horn was a call to worship God. We may not observe this today but we still need to praise Him. Hebrews 13:15 says, **“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name.”** Let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise!

Look at Luke 13:16 **“Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”** Jesus had just healed this woman and some people were upset that He healed her on the Sabbath. Jesus was showing that God was always working and so He was working too. You see, Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and He was always ready to do what was needed to help people.

Luke 13:20-21 **“Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”** When yeast is mixed in flour the yeast grows and spreads throughout the whole dough. When we give our lives to Jesus we come into the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of God comes into us. The King and the Kingdom grow and take over every part of our lives and that is exactly how God wants it to happen. So, yield to His work in your life.

Prayer: Lord, help me to offer up a sacrifice to You continually. I know that is part of how You want me to live and I know it would be good for me. So, please help me. I also want to let You and Your Kingdom take over every area of my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Tuesday April 12

**Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 10-12
Luke 13:22-35**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:3-4 **“Sound the ram’s horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast; this is a decree for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.”** There were all kinds of rules and regulations about praising God under the Old Covenant. As New Covenant believers we are supposed to praise Him all the time!

Luke 13:22-24 say, **“Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.”** Listen to what Jesus said in John 14:6 **“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”** There is only one way of salvation and His name is Jesus! Many will try to enter other ways but they will not make it.

Luke 13:34-35 **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”** Jesus cares about all people and that was why He came to give His life and He is the only way to the Father.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for all that You are speaking to me from the Word. I want to hear it all and I want to put it all into practice in my life. Help me to know that Jesus is the only Way of salvation and help me to let others know so they can be saved. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Wednesday April 13

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 13-14
Luke 14:1-24

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:5 **“He established it as a statute for Joseph when he went out against Egypt, where we heard a language we did not understand.”** We have been talking about how important it is to praise God all the time. This verse is talking about when God’s people went into Egypt and it says they still needed to praise God while they were there. You see wherever we are we need to praise God and we need to praise Him all the time

Luke 14:1 **“One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched.”** Jesus was being watched carefully. This was not a good thing. The Pharisees were opposing Jesus and trying to catch Him doing something wrong.

Look at the next couple of verses, Luke 14:2-4 **“There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.”** They were trying to catch Jesus doing something wrong but He didn’t change His behavior at all because He wasn’t doing anything wrong. Now, when I say He wasn’t doing anything wrong that doesn’t mean everyone liked what He was doing. The Pharisees and other religious people were still upset with Him but Jesus just kept doing good things.

Prayer: Lord, I know that You always deserve my praise and I want to give it to You more consistently. Help me to be a doer of Your Word and not a hearer only. I also want to be determined to do Your will no matter how others view what I am doing. I know that Your ways are right and I know that pleasing You is the more important thing. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Thursday April 14

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 15-16
Luke 14:25-35

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:6 is talking about when God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt. **He says, "I removed the burden from their shoulders; their hands were set free from the basket."** The people of God had been in slavery for 430 years when God set them free. They had to carry heavy burdens on their shoulders and in baskets but when God set them free they were free indeed. Aren't you glad that God has set you free? Don't allow any bondage back into your life.

Look at Luke 14:25-27 **"Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."** Now, I don't think Jesus was literally telling us to hate our relatives because other parts of the Word tell us to respect them and to take care of them. Jesus was probably talking about who was most important in our lives. You see, we should respect others but they can't ever become more important than Jesus and His Word.

Luke 14:34, 35 **"Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure heap; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."** We need to have ears to hear what God is speaking to us. This doesn't refer to ears and hearing in the natural. We need to be open to hearing what God is saying to us spiritually.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You have set me free. Help me to know if I am allowing any bondages in my life and help me to stay free in You. I also thank You for all that You are teaching me. I want to know You and Your ways better. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Friday April 15

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 17-18
Luke 15:1-10

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:7 **“In your distress you called and I rescued you, I answered you out of a thundercloud; I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah”** In their distress they called on God and He rescued them. This is so simple to see and yet you would be amazed at how often people don’t call on God for help in their time of distress. Please don’t make this mistake. God wants you to call on Him all the time and that certainly includes times when you are in distress.

In Luke 15, Jesus taught three parables all making the same points. God wants people to be saved and He is pleased when they are. In our reading for today, we have the parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin. The lost sheep was helpless as long as he was lost. The shepherd went and found the sheep and restored him to the fold. The lost coin was worthless as long as it was lost. The woman looked and looked until she found it and then it had worth again.

At the end of both of these parables Jesus said there is rejoicing in heaven when a sinner repents and comes to God. So, if you ever feel helpless or worthless go to the One who can help you and restore your worth. Go to Jesus! It is also important for us to have the same attitude as God when someone gets saved. We should rejoice and do whatever we can to help people when they get saved. If God helps them and God shows they have worth then we should treat them like God does.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for always answering me when I call out to You. I know that Your love and Your patience never change and I love You. Help me to know that all my help comes from You and all my worth is wrapped up in my relationship with You. Please continue to teach me Your ways as I continue to study Your Word. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Saturday April 16

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 19-21
Luke 15:11-32

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:8 says, **“Hear, O my people, and I will warn you--if you would but listen to me, O Israel!”** There are a lot of things I could say about this verse but for today I just want to make the point that God is speaking. Some people choose to ignore Him but He is still speaking. This is really good news for us who really want to hear from Him.

Yesterday, we covered the first two parables in Luke 15 and we have the third one for today. The lost son was different in that he was lost on purpose. Let me explain. He was with the father and then he chose to leave. The father still loved him and was willing to accept him back when he repented.

The lost sheep was helpless, the lost coin was worthless and the lost son was friendless. Jesus met all of their needs. He gave the sheep help, He gave the coin worth and He was a friend to the lost son. Don't miss the fact that there was rejoicing when each of these came home to God. We need to be reaching out to people who are lost because God is their only hope. We also need to welcome people in when they do give their lives to Jesus. If God accepts them then how could we do anything less than accept them as well. God accepted us when we came to Him and we need to extend acceptance to others when they make the decision to give their lives to Him.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You are always speaking to me. Help me to be quick to hear what You are saying and help me to be quick to obey You in all things. I want to hear even if You need to correct me. I don't ever want to get off track. I also thank You for saving me and I want to see more people getting saved. I know that we all need You and I hope to help others to come to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Sunday April 17

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 22-24
Luke 16:1-18

Praise the Lord! God is speaking to His people about how they should live. Look at Psalms 81:9 **“You shall have no foreign god among you; you shall not bow down to an alien god.”** God wants to be number one in your life. We should have no other gods! This might seem like a strange point for me to make but believe me many people have other gods. You see, whatever you worship becomes a god to you. Here are some of the things some people worship: money, power, youth, family, jobs, security and the list could go on and on. God is the only real God and He is the only One we should serve.

Look at Luke 16:10 **“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.”** I often write to you about being faithful with what you have right now. I tell you that the way to be used more is to be faithful where you are and this verse tells us more about why this is so important. You see, the way you handle what you have shows how you will handle more!

Luke 16:17 is a very important verse, **“It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law.”** Now, look at Hebrews 6:19 **“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain.”** In this verse we are told that the Word can be an anchor for our souls. You see, we need to base our lives on something and basing them on the Word will give us a consistency and stability because the Word never passes away

Prayer: Lord, I want You to be number one in my life. Please help me to keep this commitment and to never be led astray. I also thank You so much for the Word. I want to know and do everything You teach me from the Word and I want my life to be strong and stable. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Monday April 18

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 25-26
Luke 16:19-31

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:10 **“I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt. Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.”** In the context we see that God is talking about them filling their mouths with the things He had been speaking to them. Or we could say that He was telling them to fill up on the Word. Joshua 1:8 **“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”** Want prosperity and success? Do what God tells you to do!

In our reading from Luke 19 we have a story of a rich man and a beggar. They both died and the rich man went to hell and the poor man went to be with God. Now, please know that the rich man did not go to hell because he was rich. He went to hell because he was trusting in his riches rather than God. Also the poor man went to be with God because he was trusting God.

Now, look at Luke 16:30 **“No, father Abraham, he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’”** The rich man wanted God to send the poor man back from the dead so he could tell his brothers how to stay out of hell. God told him that they had the Word and they could avoid hell if they would believe and obey the Word. So, keep your trust in God and believe His Word. Accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior and you will spend all eternity with Him.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for the Word. I want to know it, renew my mind to it and live according to it. I know that Your Word is always right and I don't ever want to argue with it. Help me! I am so thankful that Jesus is the basis for my salvation and I know that because the Word has shown it to me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Tuesday April 19

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 27-29
Luke 17:1-19

Praise the Lord! In Psalms 81 we are going to see that God's people didn't always follow Him and obey Him. Look at Psalms 81:11 **"But my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me."** They needed to listen to Him and then they could have submitted to Him. You see, you can't submit to what You don't know. So, listening to God and His Word is the starting place. I am so thankful that You are studying the Word every day. Let God speak to you, listen and submit to Him.

Luke 17:3 **"So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."** We will get to the last part of this verse in a little bit but look at what Jesus said first. **"So watch yourselves."** Doesn't this sound like great advice? You are the one who should be watching out for your life.

Now, look at Luke 17:3-5 **"So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him." The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"** We need to forgive others. This is surely one of the things Jesus was talking about when He said, **"Watch yourself."** It takes faith to live like God wants and it takes faith to forgive like Jesus wants but I have some good news for you. God wants you to live by faith. So, thank God for this opportunity to put what we know into action. When someone does you wrong, step out in faith and forgive them. That is what God wants and it shows that you are watching yourself and how you live.

Prayer: Lord, I want to listen to You and I want to submit to You. I know You are speaking to me. Help me to really listen and then help me to do what You say. I also want to watch my life and I want to live by faith. I know it takes faith to forgive like You want and I know it is right. Help me to really put my faith into action today and every day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Wednesday April 20

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 30-31
Luke 17:20-37

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:11-12 **“But my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices.”** God didn’t want to turn them over to their stubborn hearts and it surely wasn’t God’s best for them but they brought it on themselves. They wouldn’t listen and submit to God so they missed out on the life and life in abundance that He had for them. Let’s not make this same mistake.

Luke 17:20-21 **“Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”** This is such an important revelation. You see, many expected Jesus to come and set up an earthly kingdom but that has not happened yet. He came to set up His Kingdom in our lives. A kingdom is where a king rules and reigns. When we let Jesus rule and reign in our lives then His Kingdom has come and it is within us.

Now, look at Romans 14:17 **“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”** The Kingdom of God is within us and the Kingdom of God is a matter of righteousness, peace and joy. So, we should have righteousness, peace and joy in our lives!

Prayer: Lord, I never want to harden myself to You. I want to listen to You and I want to obey You in all things. I also thank You for establishing Your Kingdom in my life. I want You to rule and reign in every area of my life and I want to have all the righteousness, peace and joy that You have for me. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Thursday April 21

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 1-3
Luke 18:1-17

Praise the Lord! Look at Psalms 81:13 **“If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways.”** I will write more about this tomorrow but for today I have two things for us to see from this verse. First, God was speaking or it wouldn't have made sense for Him to expect His people to listen. God is always speaking. We just need to tune in and listen. Secondly, did you sense God's love for the people? He was almost pleading with them because He knew they were missing out on His blessings. Thank God for the fact that He loves us so much.

Luke 18:1 says, **“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”** How much do you think a person would pray if they always prayed and never gave up? I am not sure I really know the answer to that but I sure know they would pray more than what most people pray. Jesus was encouraging us to pray all the time and so we know that praying must be really good for us.

Look at Luke 18:8 **“I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”** Jesus is still encouraging us to pray. If we have faith we will pray. You see, there is a day coming when all the things we are dealing with will be over and done. Our lives (and our prayers) will show whether we had faith or not. So pray! Pray always and never give up. Put your faith into action and pray.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You are always speaking to me. Help me to tune in to what You are saying and help me to live like You want. I know You are speaking to me about prayer today and I want to be a doer of Your Word, and not a hearer only. Help me to pray and never give up. Help me to put my faith into action as I pray. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Friday April 22

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 4-6
Luke 18:18-43

Praise the Lord! Look at Psalms 81:13-14 **“If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways, how quickly would I subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes!”** If God’s people would have tuned in to Him and listened to Him then they would have called out to Him and He would have helped them to have victory over their enemies. This sure makes me want to tune in to Him, listen to Him and continually ask Him to help me. How about you?

In the first part of Luke 18, Jesus was making the point that He should be number one in our lives and we should be willing to give up anything else to live for Him. Luke 18:29-30 says, **“I tell you the truth,” Jesus said to them, “no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”** If we are ever called upon to give up things for the Gospel, God will reward us with much more than we have given up. We really can trust God this much.

Later in Luke 18 there was a man who was blind and he desperately wanted to be healed. Some of the people tried to discourage him but he would not be denied. Look at Luke 18:39 **“Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”** We need to be like this. Go for everything God has for you and never quit.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You hear me when I call to You and I am thankful that You answer my cries. Help me to really put this into action in my life. I want You to be number one in my life and I am never going to quit following You. I want to live for You and I want to represent You well so others can come to know know You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Saturday April 23

**Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 7-9
Luke 19:1-28**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 81:15 says, **“Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him, and their punishment would last for ever.”** I am sure glad I am not in that group. I don't hate God. I love God and I want to live for Him. We will be with the Lord forever just like those who hate God will be separated from Him forever. Thank God we have accepted Jesus into our lives. We have His blessings that will last for all eternity because Jesus has provided them for us and we have accepted them.

Look at Luke 19:10 **“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”** We should all say, “Thank You Jesus for coming to seek and to save me!” We were totally and completely lost without Him and we had no hope without His help.

Right after this Jesus taught a parable about God giving all of us things to be faithful with. Look at Luke 19:17 **“Well done, my good servant!” his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’** Because the man had been faithful in a small matter he was promoted. Listen to Psalms 75:6-7 from the King James Version, **“For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.”** Promotion comes from the Lord and He promotes people who are being faithful! So, if we want to be used by the Lord in greater things then we need to be faithful with what we have right now.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I love You. I know that I can only love You because You loved me first and revealed Yourself to me. Please help me to live for You and help me to represent You well to others. I know that being faithful is how I will represent You well and I also know that my faithfulness will put me in a place where I can be used more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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Sunday April 24

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 10-12
Luke 19:29-48

Praise the Lord! Look at Psalms 81:15-16 **“The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.”** People who hate God are going to miss out and those of us who love Him and live for Him are going to be blessed. Thank God we have given our lives to Him!

Look at Luke 19:41 **“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.”** Jesus loved these people so much that He cried over their rejection of Him. In yesterday’s devotion we saw that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. So, we know He was weeping over lost people here. This is important for us to remember because some people forget that Jesus loves lost people and we should too. We need to let them know that Jesus has already died on the cross for their sins and they can be saved if they will accept Him into their lives.

Look at Luke 19:45 **“Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling.”** Even when Jesus came correcting them He still loved them. You see, they were not living like God wanted them to live and Jesus was showing them a much better way. He had to deal with the problem but then He told them how they should be living. He did these things because He loved them.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for all the blessings You have brought into my life. I know that I would be totally and completely lost without You. I am also thankful for all that You speak to me. Even when You correct me I know that You love me and want me to live better so I can be blessed. Also, help me to pray more! In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Monday April 25

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 13-14
Luke 20:1-26

Praise the Lord! Psalms 82 is a short Psalm and it makes a comparison between God and other false gods. Psalms 82:1 **“God presides in the great assembly; he gives judgment among the “gods”** There are other gods but our God is the only true God! Our God is the One who passes judgement among the other gods. Thank God we are serving the real God!

Luke 20:2 **“Tell us by what authority you are doing these things,” they said. “Who gave you this authority?”** Jesus’ opponents were always around trying to trap Him but they never got Jesus off track. He just kept doing what God had called Him to do. He also always spoke the truth to His opponents and I am sure that baffled them.

Look at Luke 20:26 **“They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.”** You see, they were way out of their league. They were trying to trap Jesus in a lie but He was the Truth of God and so He never lied. They were trying to trap Jesus making some mistake but He was sinless and He lived a perfect life never making a mistake. They were also operating out of hate and Jesus was a man of love. Love is always stronger than hate so Jesus always won. Thank God we have given our lives to Jesus and He is the One who is working in our lives. We will end up being more like Him and less like people who are serving their master, the devil.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I have given my life to You. I know that You are the only real and living God. Help me to keep You in first place in my life. I also thank You so much for all that I am learning about Jesus. Thank You Jesus for coming and laying down Your perfect life for me so I can be forgiven and adopted into Your family. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Tuesday April 26

**Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 15-16
Luke 20:27-47**

Praise the Lord! Psalms 82:2 says, **“How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Selah”** This is talking about the false gods in verse one. You see the false gods are nothing like the real God. False gods are always on the wrong side of God and His will. We serve the real God and He is the One who defends the just and He is the One who takes care of the righteous. Now, be sure to remember that we are just and righteous because Jesus has made us just and righteous.

Look at Luke 20:27 **“Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.”** Now, I could write to you about who the Sadducees were or how they were still questioning Jesus in an effort to trap Him but I have a different point for today. As I read this verse it stood out to me that these Sadducees were those who SAY there is no resurrection. They SAID there was no resurrection but that didn't make it true! There is a resurrection and people can SAY all they want but the truth is still the truth.

Luke 20:46 says, **“Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the market-places and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.”** These people pretended to be very important but that didn't make them really important. They weren't speaking the truth and they weren't really helping people so they were to be avoided. You see, the truth was still the truth in this case too.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that You are my Lord and Savior. I know that You always speak the truth and anyone who contradicts You is wrong no matter how loudly they say what they say. I choose to follow the truth that will always be the truth. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Wednesday April 27

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 17-18
Luke 21:1-19

Praise the Lord! Psalms 82:3 talks about God and it says, **“Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.”** God helps those who cannot help themselves. You see, when a person thinks they have all the power and all the answers they need they won’t turn to God for help and so they miss out. When people come to the end of themselves they can turn to God who will help them and defend them.

Look at Luke 21:1-4 **“As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “I tell you the truth,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”** Let me make some comments on these important verses. First of all notice that Jesus saw what people put in the offering. Do you think He still knows what people put in the offering? For some people that would be good news and for others it might seem like bad news but either way it is the truth.

Next, notice that Jesus not only knew how much the people put in the offering, He also knew how much they had left. We show our trust in how we give. This doesn’t mean we have to give all that we have but we should certainly be consistent in our giving. Luke 6:38 says, **“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”**

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You look out for those who trust You. I want to put my total trust in You and keep it there. Help me to live and to give like You want. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Thursday April 28

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 19-20
Luke 21:20-38

Praise the Lord! Thank God for verses like Psalms 82:4 **“Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”** If you have ever felt weak or like you were being overcome by wicked people then you will know why I said this was a verse we should be thankful for. God is always waiting for us to draw near to Him. So, if you are in trouble draw near to Him. If you are not in trouble draw near to Him. He really is ready for you to come all the time.

Luke 21:33 says, **“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”** We are so blessed to be able to study God’s Word. 2 Timothy 2:15 says, **“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”** Do your best and God will add His blessing to your best.

Now, look at Luke 21:37-38 **“Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.”** They knew that Jesus was speaking the Word to them and so they were willing to do whatever they needed to do in order to hear His Words. I guess I could say they were DOING THEIR BEST. Again I say that we are so blessed to be able to study God’s Word. Don’t ever take this blessing for granted.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful that You look out for the needy. I know that I could never make it in life without You. Thank You for all that You are teaching me from the Word. Help me to do my best and know that You are always willing to add Your blessings to my efforts. I love You so much and I want to live completely for You and You alone. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



Friday April 29

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 21-22
Luke 22:1-30

Praise the Lord! I am sure Psalms 82:5 is talking about lost people and it says, **“They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.”** There are times when God’s people may not have all the answers but at least we know to draw near to the One who knows all things. You see, we are not in darkness as long as we know to draw near to the light.

Luke 22:8-12 **“Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.” “Where do you want us to prepare for it?” they asked. He replied, “As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there.”** I have a point to make from this but you need to see the next verse to see it.

Luke 22:13 **“They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.”** Jesus gave them instructions and when they did what He told them to do they found everything just as Jesus had told them. Listen, when Jesus speaks to you He always tells the truth. When we get in line with His Word and His plan everything will work out just like He says. Hebrews 6:18 says it is impossible for God to lie and so you can always trust Him.

Prayer: Lord, I am glad that I know to draw near to You when I feel like things are spiraling out of control. I know that You know what is going on and I know that You always help me. Please help me to hear the things You are speaking to me and help me to do just what You want and know that You will work everything out. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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Saturday April 30

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 23-24
Luke 22:31-53

Praise the Lord! Psalms 82:6 is talking about some of the boasts evil men make. **“I said, ‘You are “gods”’; you are all sons of the Most High.”** Some evil people even boast of being gods but there is only one real God. The people boasting might be their own god but they are not able to save like God saves us. Thank God that we have been delivered from such deception.

Look at Luke 22:31-32 **“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”** Jesus knew that Peter was going to go through some hard times and that he was even going to betray that he knew Him but that wasn't the end of the story. Jesus had prayed for Peter and Peter was going to make it. Jesus was the One who had started a good work in Peter and Jesus was going to finish His work.

How much confidence would you have if you knew that Jesus was praying for you? Well, I have good news for you. Jesus is praying for you! Romans 8:34 says, **“Who is He that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”** Jesus is at the right hand of God and He is interceding for us! This should give us great confidence that we are going to make it. We might go through some hard things and we might even blow it, like Peter did, but we are going to make it because Jesus is praying for us!

Prayer: Lord, thank You for all that You have spoken to me from the Word this month. I am so glad that I have given my life to You and I really do want to live completely for You. Help me to have the confidence that I should have because I know You are praying for me. I trust You with every detail of my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.