

1 April 2007

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

I am glad that you have taken a set of these devotions for April. Psalms 119:105 says, **Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.** As you spend time in His Word, He will light your path. When He does that, walk in His ways and you will be blessed.

God bless you as you study God's Word this month.

Gladly in His Service,

Dr. Jason B. Brittain

Sunday April 1

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

Praise the Lord! Since most of my comments are coming from the New Testament readings, let's start each one off with a verse from Psalms 119. Verse 1 says, **Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.** I am sure we all want to be blessed, and this verse says that God's blessings come when we live like He wants. So, keep learning His ways from the Word and then live like He wants. Doing those things will bring His blessings.

In Luke 8, we have the parable of the sower. Verse 11 tells us, **This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the Word of God.** When God's Word is sown into our lives it is up to us what we do with it, and that is what this whole parable is about.

People who hold on to the Word and let It produce are called good soil, and those who lose the Word miss out. We should all want to be good soil. So, look at what Jesus said about those who are good soil 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.** It is a good thing that you are hearing the Word a lot. Now you need to retain it and persevere. DOING what the Word says is vital in this process.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am thankful that I can study Your Word so freely. Please help me to really hear what You are saying to me and help me to live like You want. I want all the blessings You have for me. Help me to be good soil. I want to produce a life of righteousness and I want to be a good witness to others about how a Christian should really live. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday April 2

Scripture Reading: Judges 8-9

Luke 8:22-56

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:2 says, **Blessed are they who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart.** God is telling us how to be blessed again today. We need to live according to His Word and seek Him. Matthew 6:33 says, **But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** When we seek Him and live like He wants, He will help us with every other area of our lives and that is being blessed.

When I give you your Scripture Readings for each day, I assume you read them on your own and then I am free to point out what stands out to me. In our reading for today, we have a man who was demon possessed set free by Jesus. Since you know that story, let me show you something wonderful.

Luke 8:22 says, **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.** Because you have read it, you know that they faced a storm on the way there but Jesus kept them safe. Then Jesus delivered this man from the works of the devil, and now look at verse 40: **Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed Him, for they were all expecting Him.**

Here is what I want you to see, Jesus made this whole trip just to minister to this one man! There were crowds who wanted His ministry, but He still took the time to help this man, and He loves you that much too.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You love me. Please help me to really live like You want. Teach me Your ways and help me to obey them. I am also thankful for the reminder that You care for me and want to meet my needs. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday April 3

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

Praise the Lord! In Psalms 119, David is describing those who have God's blessing and in verse 3, he says, **They do nothing wrong; they walk in His ways.** This goes right along with what I have been saying. We need to learn His ways and then do them. Then we won't be doing anything wrong; we will be walking in His ways and we will be blessed.

Luke 9:1-2 say, **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.**

Jesus wanted to use His disciples in the work of the ministry back then and He still wants to use us today. He also gives us His power and His authority to do the work. We need to believe that He wants to use us and step out in faith. When we do those things, we will find that He is always with us backing us up.

After this, Jesus wanted to feed the multitudes that had come to Him and look at how He did it. Luke 9:16 says, **Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to Heaven, He gave thanks and broke them. Then He gave them to the disciples to set before the people.** Did you see that Jesus used the disciples in this miracle too? He gave them the bread and they actually fed the multitudes.

Prayer: Lord, I really mean it when I say that I want to live for You. Please teach me Your ways and help me to live them out. I know that You want to use me in Your work and I want to be used more. Help me to know that I will always have Your power and authority. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday April 4

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:4 says, **You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.** There are two important things here. First, He has revealed His ways to us, and secondly, we are to obey those ways fully. We should do these things just because they are right and they will bring God's blessings.

Look at the first and last verses from our reading for today. Verse 37 says, **The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.** And Verse 62 says, **Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the Kingdom of God."**

Now, I know these verses were separated by several events, but I want to draw a point from them anyway. I see two groups of people being talked about here. There were the multitudes who were all excited about following Jesus when things were going well, and then there were those who were willing to work and be there in the end.

We all like the exciting times but we also need to be willing to plow when it is time to plow. You see, I want to start off living right for Jesus and I want to make it all the way through to the end.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am thankful that You are making Your ways known to me. Help me to obey You and help me to obey You fully. I am thankful for the times when things seem to be going well and there is a lot of excitement, but I am also committed to living for You when there is a lot of work to be done. I love You so much. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday April 5

Scripture Reading: Judges 15-17

Luke 10:1-24

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:5 says, **Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying Your decrees!** David was saying that he wanted his ways to be steadfast. Doesn't that sound like a good thing for us to want too? When we are steadfast, we will live for God no matter what happens. We would all be better off if we were more steadfast in obeying His decrees.

Luke 10:1-2 say, **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."**

Jesus tells us that more workers are needed and then He tells us to pray for them to come forth. Just about everyone would agree that we need more workers, and yet I am not sure how many of those same people pray for more workers. Remember that God's blessings come when we DO what He says.

In Luke 10, Jesus sent out the workers He had and they did the work He wanted them to do. Look at verse 17, **The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in Your name."** We have joy when we do what He wants.

Prayer: Lord, I want to be more steadfast. I also pray for more workers to come forth. Help me to be willing to pray for that more and help me to be willing to be one of those workers. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday April 6

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

Praise the Lord! In yesterday's verse from Psalms 119, David prayed that he would be more steadfast. Now he says, **Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all Your commands.** When we are steadfast, we will not be put to shame because we will be basing our lives on the Word and that is the best way to live.

The story of the Good Samaritan is very well known by most people. Basically, Jesus said that we should help people when we have the opportunities to do it. It is kind of interesting that the most religious people in the story didn't do that. They knew about God but they weren't letting Him affect their lives enough. We need to really know God and then we need to live like He wants.

In the last part of Luke 11, we have the story of Mary and Martha. Mary had her priorities right. She wanted to be with Jesus learning His ways. When other things distracted Martha, Jesus told her that she was missing out on some of the best that He had for her.

So, today we see that we need to live like He wants, help others and keep learning from Him. As I listed these things, it occurred to me how often I make these points for you. I guess we are on track.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. Please help me to consistently study Your Word and help me to really learn the things You are teaching me. I want to help other people and I want to keep You and Your ways first in my life. I also ask You to bless all my brothers and sisters who are doing these devotions. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday April 7

Scripture Reading: Judges 20-21

Luke 11:1-28

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:7 says, **I will praise You with an upright heart as I learn Your righteous laws.** Two things: We need to keep learning His ways and we should praise Him more when we do learn them. I guess there is one more thing: As we do these things, we will be doing them with an upright heart.

Look at what Jesus said in Luke 11:5-6, **Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'"**

Now, we know Jesus was teaching about prayer here and He wanted us to know that we should pray and never give up. We need to pray and pray until we get the answers we need, but there is something more I want to point out here. This man was praying for the needs of someone else.

Now, I know it is all right for us to pray for ourselves but we should also pray for others and their needs. When we pray for others we can know that we are not being selfish and self-centered. So, I do want you to get the point that we need to pray and pray until we have the things we are praying for and I want to encourage you to pray and pray for others until they have the things you are praying for.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that You answer my prayers. Please help me to pray for others more. I know that You want to bless me and meet my needs but I don't ever want to become selfish. Right now, I pray for all my brothers and sisters who will be at Church tomorrow. Help them to be blessed! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday April 8

Scripture Reading: Ruth
Luke 11:29-54

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:8 says, **I will obey Your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.** This statement about God forsaking us might seem like a strange statement to you because we know that God will never forsake us, but it was relevant to David. The more we obey His decrees and live like He wants, the more confidence we will have in our relationship toward God.

Luke 11:34-36 say, **Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. 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.**

Think about how important these verses are. You are spending time filling your eyes with the Word and it will help you in every area of your life. As you spend time in His Word, He is able to teach you and instruct you about life, but there is even more happening. Your life is being filled with the light of God's Word and that is very good. It is also true that you will recognize darkness easier because you will be used to the light. So, keep filling your life and eyes with the Word. It really is helping you.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful that You are teaching me Your ways. Help me to really learn what You are showing me. I also ask You to fill my life with light and help me to close my life and eyes to darkness. I want all that You have for me because I know that You only have good things for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday April 9

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 1-3

Luke 12:1-34

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:9 is a wonderful verse. It says, **How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word.** The way we can know how to live is by being in God's Word. Read, learn and live what God says to you and you will be keeping your way in purity. We really are so blessed to be able to study God's Word openly and freely.

When I opened up my Bible to our reading for today I noticed that the section heading said, "Warnings and Encouragement." I am sure some people might think these two things couldn't really go together but I think they can. You see, if I am getting off track, even a little bit, I would want God to speak to me and correct me. That would be a warning and it would be Him encouraging me to get back on track.

Luke 11:34 says, **Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness.** Keep filling your eyes with the Word and you will be filled with light. As you fill your life with the Word and light, you will be better equipped to help people who are still trapped in the darkness.

Prayer: Lord, I want to keep my life pure and I know that being in Your Word is a key to that. I also ask You to help me. I know that I can do all things with Your help and nothing without it. Please help me to hear Your voice clearly when You are speaking to me about getting off track even if it is only a little bit. I want to be in Your perfect will and I want to accomplish all that You have for me to do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday April 10

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

Praise the Lord! (Really, take some time and Praise Him right now!) Psalms 119:10 says, **I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands.** Seeking Him is always the right thing to do. Matthew 6:33 tells us that we will have His help with the rest of our lives when we seek Him. This verse also tells us that keeping His commands (living like He wants) is one of the ways we seek Him. So, hear from Him and obey what He says.

We are blessed to be able to study God's Word. We also need to realize that there are some responsibilities that go along with our blessings. The last part of Luke 12:48 says, **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.**

As we learn more, we are responsible to live what we learn. Now don't get me wrong, this is not bad news. It is good news, but we do need to keep growing.

Another way we are more responsible is in the fact that we need to be willing to help others. When we know more, we need to help others more. Again, this isn't a negative thing. We all want to be used more and that is what is happening. So, keep learning, live what you learn and be willing to help others along the way.

Prayer: Lord, I want to seek You first in my life. Please continue to teach me Your ways and help me to be faithful with what I learn. I really do want to be a good representative for You to everyone I meet and I know that I can do that with Your help. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday April 11

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:11 is a very important verse. It says, **I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.** The more we store the Word up in our lives, the better we will do. So, if there is any area of your life where you aren't doing well, find out what God's Word says, store it up in your life and you will do better. This really does work. Try it.

Luke 13:10 says, **On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues.** Now, I am pretty sure you have already read the rest of this story, but Jesus healed a woman on the Sabbath and some of the religious people were upset with Him because they thought He shouldn't have done it on that day. I always wonder how many people they were healing on those other days. Probably none!

Anyway, look at what Jesus said in verse 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?**

There are a lot of things we could talk about in this story but here is what I want to point out. She belonged to God and He wanted her healed no matter what day it was! You see, God wants to bless us and nothing will stop Him when we come to Him in faith.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful for the good work You are doing in my life. Please help me to store Your Word up in my heart so I will live more fully for You. I also thank You for all the blessings You bring into my life. Help me to really believe them all and help me to never settle for less than what You have for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday April 12

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:12 says, **Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me Your decrees.** If David was writing daily devotions for people, I bet he would start every day off by saying, "Praise the Lord!" (Sound familiar?) Anyway, Praise Him and keep asking Him to teach you His ways and He surely will.

Jesus knew what He was called to do and He was determined to accomplish all of God's will for His life. Look at Luke 13:31-33, **At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to Him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you." He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day - for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!"**

He knew exactly what God wanted Him to do and He was going to obey the Father. We need to be like that too. When He speaks to you from the Word, you know His will. Then be determined to do what He has told you to do.

James 1:25 says, **But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does.** We are blessed when we DO what He wants.

Prayer: Lord, I ask You to teach me Your ways and help me to be quick to DO the things You teach me. Help me to remember that obeying You in what I know to do will position me to hear more from You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday April 13

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 13-14

Luke 14:1-24

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:13 says, **With my lips I recount all the laws that come from Your mouth.** It is a good thing to speak about the Lord and what He has done for you. Speaking about those things will be good for you and it will also be good for those who hear you. So, use your words to brag on Jesus and the things He is doing in your life.

Luke 14:1 says, **One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, He was being carefully watched.** Did you notice the last part of that verse where it says; He was being carefully watched? You see, the religious people who were opposing Jesus were always watching Him and hoping to catch Him in some mistake.

Jesus took this occasion to teach them about doing good no matter what day it was. You see, the issue came up because Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. The Pharisees wanted to argue about the Sabbath and Jesus just wanted to meet this man's need.

Well in closing, look at verses 13-14, **But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.** We should always reach out to people in need and doing that will please Jesus no matter what day it is.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for the wonderful things You are doing in my life. Please help me to have enough boldness to tell others about You and Your love. I also want to be busy doing Your work no matter what others think. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday April 14

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:14 says, **I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.** I don't know if very many people really live like this. Read the verse again and ask yourself how you are doing on this. This all really comes down to what is most important in our lives and we should care the most about things that will last the longest. God's Word and His wisdom will last forever!

Look at what Jesus said in 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."**

Jesus was really talking about our priorities here too. We need to keep Him in first place in our lives. If other things become more important than Him, we are off track.

Verses 34-35 say, **"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 pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."** When we keep Him in first place, we will be effective for Him as witnesses.

Prayer: Lord, I really do want to keep my priorities right. I know that keeping You first is the most important thing I can do. Help me to seek You first and then let You help me with all the other things. I really do want to be a good witness for You because I know there are so many other people who need to meet You. I also ask you to bless Church tomorrow. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday April 15

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible and we are going through it verse by verse. Verse 15 says, **I meditate on Your precepts and consider Your ways.** We need to read His Word and we need to MEDITATE on it. So, think while you read and then think more about what you read. There is always more for us to learn from God's Word as we meditate on it.

In Luke 15, we have three parables that all teach the same point. God wants people saved and He is happy when they get saved.

For today, we have the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin. The lost sheep was helpless and the lost coin was worthless as long as they were lost. When they were saved, the sheep found the help he needed and the coin found real value.

We need to realize that all these truths apply to us and our lives. We were helpless and worthless without Jesus. Luke 19:10 says, **For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.** Praise the Lord that He came to seek and to save us. Just like the shepherd and the woman sought until they found what they were looking for, Jesus sought us until He found us.

Prayer: Lord, I love Your Word and I don't ever want to take the things You are showing me for granted. Help me to learn what You initially show me and then help me to meditate on Your Word to learn more. I am also so thankful that You have saved me. Help me to really live for You and help me to share Your love with others more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday April 16

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 19-21

Luke 15:11-32

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:17 says, **Do good to your servant, and I will live; I will obey your Word.** We need to realize that our very life comes from God. He is our life and He is the One who gives us life. After we realize these things, we need to take our lives (that are from Him) and obey His Word.

The lost son was friendless until he was saved. So, we were helpless, worthless and friendless before we were saved, and in Jesus we find help, worth and a friend that is closer than anyone else.

Look at Luke 15:32, **But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.** Each one of these parables ends with a celebration. We should celebrate when someone gets saved. As a matter of fact, the first two point out that there is a celebration in Heaven when people get saved.

Let me point out one more way we can relate to these verses. We can also be like the shepherd, the woman and the father by reaching out to people and bringing them to the Lord. Part of the reason God has left you here on the Earth is to reach others for Him.

Prayer: Lord, I am thankful for the life that You have given me. Please help me to use my life like You want. I want to know Your ways and I want to live like You want. I also want to reach others for You. Please help me to live my life in a way that is worthy of the calling that You have on me. I am so thankful for all the benefits I have because I am saved! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday April 17

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 22-24

Luke 16:1-18

Praise the Lord! I just realized that I covered Psalms 119:17 yesterday when I should have covered verse 16. So, here is verse 16 for today, **I delight in Your decrees; I will not neglect Your Word.** I am sure there are many ways we delight in the Word and the more we do that the better off we will be. It is also very important not to neglect His Word.

Luke 16:10 says, **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.** Be faithful right where you are and you will be ready for more. God is always looking for faithfulness.

Verse 17 says, **It is easier for Heaven and Earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law.** When we base our lives on the Word, we have a firm foundation.

The first part of Hebrews 6:19 says, **We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.** The Word can be an anchor for our souls and it will help us to have stability in our lives. This all ties in with the verse we started with from Psalms 119. We should delight ourselves in the Word and we should not neglect it.

Prayer: Lord, I love You so much and I am so thankful for the things You are teaching me. Please help me. I do want to HEAR what You are saying and I also want to DO what You want. I want Your Word to be the anchor for my soul. I know that Your Word never changes and I want the stability that will come to me as I live consistently for You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday April 18

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:18 says, **Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in Your law.** It is always right to ask God to help you to get more out of His Word. In this case, David asked God to open his eyes. Also notice that David knew that he would be seeing wonderful things from the Word.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus is quite a story and there are lots of lessons we can learn from it. Let me just give you some of the things I thought of for today.

First, what we have and don't have in this life isn't really what is important. Where we end up for all of eternity is what is really important. Think about the rich man. He had it pretty good in this life and that might have lasted 70 or 80 years. Then for all of eternity he was in torment. Bad choice!

Here's another thing that stood out to me. If we want to make any changes in our lives or influence anyone else, we better do it now because it will be too late after we die. The rich man wanted to warn his five brothers, but he was dead and it was too late. So, if you want to be a witness or a good influence on others, get busy because this is the time we can do that. I am sure there are other things you have seen from this story but I am out of space. Think about the things you saw. God was speaking to you from this story.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I ask You to open my eyes to the truth of Your Word more. I really do want to see what You are showing me and I don't want to miss anything You have for me. Help me to live for You today and I know that is how I will be ready for eternity. I also want to be a good witness for You right now. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday April 19

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

Praise the Lord! I should have had Psalms 119:19 yesterday when we talked about the rich man ending up in hell. This verse says, **I am a stranger on Earth; do not hide Your commands from me.** We are strangers here and we will end up home in Heaven. So live for God and help others to go to Heaven with you.

Let's talk about forgiveness today. Luke 17:4 says, **If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him.** We need to forgive people because it is what God wants.

Ephesians 4:32 says, **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** Here we are told to forgive others just like God forgave us. We didn't deserve it and the people we forgive probably won't deserve it either, but it is what God wants.

Now, look at the reaction of the Apostles back in Luke 17. In Verse 4, Jesus told them to forgive and verse 5 says, **The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"** They knew it was going to take a lot of faith for them to forgive like Jesus wanted. and I know it will take a lot of faith for you to forgive like that too.

Prayer: Lord, I am so glad that I am going to spend all of eternity with You. Help me to live like You want while I am here and help me to forgive others. Thank You for setting me free from all my sins. I know I didn't deserve any of Your blessings and yet You have given them to me. Help me to step out in faith and forgive others just like You have forgiven me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday April 20

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:20 says, **My soul is consumed with longing for Your laws at all times.** Aren't there times when you just hunger and thirst for Jesus and His Word? That is good, but notice that David said he had that longing "at all times." The more time you spend in the Word the more you will love it and the more sense it will make to you because God will have already taught you along the way.

Look at 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."**

The Kingdom of God is a very important subject and I have several series of teachings on it. When we gave our lives to Jesus, we were transferred out of the kingdom of darkness and placed into the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is where God rules as King. When we let Jesus rule and reign in our lives, we are part of His Kingdom and His Kingdom is part of us. Some people are looking for the Kingdom to be set up on the Earth, but it isn't time for that yet. Now, the Kingdom of God is within us. Our lives are the realm where He rules and reigns.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I am so thankful that I have given my life to You. I hunger and thirst for Your ways and yet I know that it would be good for me to long for them even more. I also want to let You rule and reign in my life more. Help me to know what areas of my life I have not surrendered to You and help me to do it today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday April 21

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:21 says, **You rebuke the arrogant, who are cursed and who stray from Your commands.** This should not describe us because we live according to His ways. If you do find yourself getting off track, repent and ask God to help you and He will. He loves us and He is always willing to help us.

Luke 18:1 says, **Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.** Do you know the lesson Jesus was teaching the people here? We should always pray and we should never give up! The devil will always try to get us discouraged in an effort to get us to quit on anything that is good. So, keep praying and don't let the devil have any victory in your life.

Look at what Jesus said in verse 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?** God will see that justice is served and He will sort out all the things that don't seem to make sense now. Also, notice the last question Jesus asked here. When He returns, will He find faith on the Earth? He will if I am still here and I hope that is true for you too. Let's pray, keep praying and never quit. Let's stand in faith for however long it takes. Believe me, when we get the answers, it will be worth the effort.

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for the things You are teaching me and I don't ever want to stray from Your ways. Please keep me on track and help me to be a light to others. Teach me to pray more and help me to never ever quit. I want to be faithful to You and Your ways all the time and I want to live by faith all the days of my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday April 22

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:22 says, **Remove from me scorn and contempt, for I keep Your statutes.** When we live like God wants, we will always be in good standing with Him. There might be times when people scorn us but He never will, and that is what is most important. So, keep living for Him and you are going to be all right.

Look at what Jesus said in Luke 18:29-30, **"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."**

When Jesus starts off a statement with, "I tell you the truth," I pay attention. Oh, I know everything He said was the truth, but He was emphasizing this and I don't want to miss what He was saying.

Basically, He was telling us about the law of sowing and reaping. If we give some things up for Him and the Kingdom of God, He will make sure we have a harvest on what we have given. Not only that, He will make sure we are rewarded for all of eternity. So, if you are called on to make some sacrifices along the way, know that God knows what is going on and He is going to take care of you in this life and even more in Heaven.

Prayer: Lord, I am glad that You are teaching me Your ways. Please help me to really believe them. I want to live like You want. Help me to know that You never miss a thing, and help me to remember that You will always take care of me. I also ask You to bless Church today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday April 23

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 7-9
Luke 19:1-28

Praise the Lord! Look at what David wrote in Psalms 119:23, **Though rulers sit together and slander me, Your servant will meditate on Your decrees.** When people come against us, we often find out what is really in our hearts. David said that he kept meditating on God's Word even when people came against him. That is what he did and we would do better if we would do the same thing.

Zacchaeus was a man who really wanted to know Jesus. He was also willing to do whatever it took to meet him. Because of his persistence, he found Jesus and was saved. You see, this is a principle. When we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. This is always true. So, draw near to Him often.

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.'** I have made the point many times that God is looking for faithfulness. When He finds us being faithful, He will promote us and use us more. Way too many people think they can wait to be faithful until after they are promoted, but it doesn't work that way. Be faithful right now with what you have right now. That is what God is wanting from you. When we do those things, we will also be faithful when He gives us more.

Prayer: Lord, I want to meditate on Your Word more. Help me to do that when things are going well and when I am facing a trial. I also ask You to help me to be more faithful. I want to be used by You more and I know that being faithful right where I am will position me for more. I also ask You to bless all my brothers and sisters who are doing these devotions today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday April 24

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 10-12

Luke 19:29-48

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:24 says, **Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.** We would all do better if we would allow the Word to be our counselor. There is a place to get counsel from people, but even then the Word needs to be the most important thing in our lives. So, let God speak to you from His Word and live like He wants and you will always do better.

In our reading from Luke, Jesus is heading to Jerusalem. He knew the religious leaders were going to try to take His life there but He was still willing to go. You see, they were not going to take His life because they overpowered Him. He came to lay down His life.

John 10:17-18 say, **The reason my Father loves Me is that I lay down My life - only to take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from My Father.**

God sent Jesus to pay the price for our sins. As we read about His sacrifice, we need to remember that God did it all for us. With this in mind, look at Romans 8:32, **He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all - how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?**

Prayer: Lord, I am so thankful for Your Word and I want it to be my counselor. Help me to know my worth because of what Jesus did for me on the cross. Help me also to know that Your love for me has not changed. You met my every need in Jesus and You will surely meet all the rest of my needs. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday April 25

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:25 says, **I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to Your Word.** The Word should be the source of our whole life. Matthew 4:4 says, **Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God.'"**

Luke 20:2 says, **"Tell us by what authority You are doing these things," they said. "Who gave You this authority?"** They were all concerned about the authority Jesus had because they hadn't given Him authority. When Jesus clearly pointed out that He was under God's authority, they rejected His claim.

After this, they tried to trick Him with a question about paying taxes. Jesus was calm and merely told them to honor those who are in authority in this world and He told them that we should honor God even more.

Verse 26 says, **They were unable to trap Him in what He had said there in public. And astonished by His answer, they became silent.** I love it when things like this happen. Jesus was not drawn in to their arguments. He stayed on track and won every time they tried to trick Him. Jesus is so wonderful!

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I love the Word. Please help me to have all the Life that You have for me and help me to be sustained by the Word! I also am so thankful that I am studying the life of Jesus. I want to accept every Word You spoke as truth and I especially want to apply what You said. Help me to keep studying Your Word and please continue to teach me Your ways. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday April 26

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:26 says, **I recounted my ways and You answered me; teach me Your decrees.** We sometimes have to give up our ways to find His ways. Believe me, His ways are always better. Now, when we have accepted His ways, we will also find that more of His Word will make sense to us and we will find that it becomes even easier to yield to Him.

Jesus often found acceptance with many people, but there were some who rejected Him. Those who rejected Him were the people who thought they knew all the answers.

Look at Luke 20:46-47, **Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely.**

These people talked a good talk and they could tell others how to live, but they were hypocritical. We need to know the truth, speak the truth AND live the truth. When we do those things we are on track and living like God wants.

Prayer: Lord, I love You and I know Your ways are always right. Please help me to accept Your ways all the time. I also ask You to show me if there are any areas in my life where I am not living what I say I believe. Help me to grow in those areas. I want to know the right things, speak the right things and back up what I say with the way I live. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday April 27

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

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:27 says, **Let me understand the teaching of Your precepts; then I will meditate on Your wonders.** God gives us understanding and then there is always more for us to learn as we meditate on His Word. It is amazing to me that there is always more for us to get from verses that we might have been over many times. So, keep asking God to give you understanding and He will.

I have always wondered if the last part of Luke 20 was tied into the first part of Luke 21. In the last verse of Luke 20, Jesus was talking to those hypocrites and He said, **They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely.** Then right after that the Word says, **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 have always wondered if this poor widow was one of the ones these hypocrites had ripped off. Either way, Jesus was going to take care of this woman because she was putting her trust and confidence in God. That is really the exact opposite of what the hypocrites were doing. They thought they were good enough and didn't need God's help. This woman knew she needed God and she was the one who found God and His help.

Prayer: Lord, I ask You to give me understanding of Your Word and help me to meditate on what You show me so I can receive even more. Help me to seek You and Your Wisdom more. I also want to keep all my trust and confidence in You and You alone. Help me to help people who are in need and don't ever let me take advantage of others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday April 28

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 19-20

Luke 21:20-48

Praise the Lord! When you are weary, what do you do? Look at what David said in Psalms 119:28, **My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to Your Word.** David turned to the Word for strength. The good news here is the fact that we can always do this. Next time you are weary, turn to God and His Word and see if you find the strength You need.

Look at what Jesus said in Luke 21:33, **Heaven and Earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away.** What a declaration!

Verses 37-38 say, **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.** I bet they did come to hear Him. He was saying things that no person had ever said and He had a level of authority that no person had ever had.

So, people came early in the morning to hear Him. I guess we are kind of like that too. Many of you come to His Word early in the morning, and even if you don't do it early in the morning, hearing from Him through His Word is an important part of your life and that is a very good thing.

Prayer: Lord, I love Your Word. I know that I am strengthened by it and I want to do my best as I read and study. I want my life to be strong and stable and I know that You are producing those things in me and I am thankful. Please continue to help me as I live for You. I also ask You to bless Church tomorrow. Help us all to be there ready and willing to hear from You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sunday April 29

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

Praise the Lord! I hope you like the way we go straight through the Word with our Scripture Readings. It is important for us to have ALL of the Word. That is why we cover the whole Bible each year and I know many of you have ready through it more than once and that is great. Keep reading and you will make it this year too. In two days you will be one-third of the way through the Bible this year.

John 10:10 says, **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.** Luke 22:3-4 say, **Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.**

These two verses illustrate the same truth. Jesus is giving His life to give life to others and the devil is right in there killing, stealing and destroying.

We need to keep our lives open to Jesus and closed to the devil! Ephesians 4:27 says, **And do not give the devil a foothold.** Don't give the devil any place in your life. We do that by resisting Him and we do that by submitting to God. James 4:7 says, **Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for the Word. Please help me to keep reading it and continue to speak to me. I know that Your ways are always right and I want to live like You want. Please help me to know how to keep my life open to You and closed to the devil. I don't want to give the evil one any openings into my life. I also want all the life and life to the full that You have for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday April 30

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 23-24

Luke 22:31-53

Praise the Lord! Psalms 119:29 says, **Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me through your law.** David asked God to be gracious to him through the law. I don't think many people think any grace could come from the law but David knew that keeping the law (living like God wanted) would bring God's grace.

If you ever come to a crossroad where your will is different than what God wants for you, accept His will for your life.

Luke 22:39-42 say, **Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and His disciples followed Him. On reaching the place, He said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."** Jesus willingly submitted His will to the will of the Father.

When we face a time like this, we can turn to Him for help and He will help us. Hebrews 4:15 says, **For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin.**

Prayer: Lord, I thank You that You love me and that You always have my best interest in mind. Help me to remember Your love and care when I need to do what You want rather than what I want. I also know that giving in to You and Your will quicker is always a wise thing and I want to do it more. In Jesus' Name, Amen.