



# **SMALL GROUP** *ministry*

# LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Church Family,

It's the year 2020, and the world we live in is changing in both good and not-so-good ways. For instance, I'd say it's a good change that we no longer spend a fortune on long-distance phone calls to stay in touch with family who live far away. With my smart phone, I can literally call anyone in the world as a part of my monthly fee. Good change! With that same phone, I can access the internet and read through thousands of websites that accurately declare the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Good change! That one change makes it very reasonable that everyone in the world could have access to our Savior in our generation. In contrast to these positive changes or advancements, with that same phone, I could access thousands of websites that would allow me to view pornography or engage in gambling. Bad change! As we drive around the valley, walk through an airport or even try to shop for winter gear at Snappy's, you have to be cautious to avoid people on their phones who are so focused on the screen they are oblivious to your presence as they head to check out. Bad change! I recently read an article about human personalities and the vast majority of people are wired to be change resistant, but the harsh reality is that almost everything is changing very rapidly.

In our culture of change, there is growing confusion over long-held societal beliefs that are challenging the church to return to our foundation and ask harder questions of our Lord and Savior. These are issues and beliefs that a generation ago were indisputable, but today are being called into question by many. Far too often in today's church we want to avoid the hardest subjects and hover around that which is pleasant, easily agreed upon, and does not

invite controversy. The apostle Paul warned in 2 Timothy 4:3, *“the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear something new.”*

Amidst all the changes happening around us, we stand on strong doctrine and reestablish the foundation of truth in God’s Word. It clearly sees issues our society has blurred like life’s purpose, abortion, money, marriage, spiritual discipline, homosexuality, and sexuality. As we jump into this pivotal year of 2020, we will attempt to see these issues as clearly as God does.

Here at Easthaven, it is a major priority to make disciples and guide them on the journey to follow Jesus. Our strategy to accomplish this purpose is to encourage every church member to pick up one of these devotional guides for the study series, work through the five days of devotions each week, gather on the weekend to worship and study collectively, and then gather in a smaller study group in the days that follow for the purpose of processing the truth of that particular passage more practically in the confines of authentic community. We are convinced that when someone does all of these things, they have to grow and mature in their own personal spiritual journey. That is our goal!

Please join us as we strive together to attain 2020 – God’s vision for our blurry lives.

Blessings!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Daniel Lambert". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Blessings!" text.

Pastor Daniel <><

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# Week One



**SMALL GROUP**  
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## WEEK ONE – DAY ONE 5% LIFE CHALLENGE

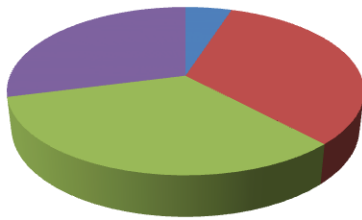
It is a time for new beginnings! What will that mean for your spiritual life? What should you do to start or perhaps continue to grow in your personal journey with Jesus? Where can you begin?

Whether you are a brand new believer, have followed Jesus as Lord and Savior for a few years, or are a seasoned veteran of the faith, the New Year is a great time to reevaluate your spiritual walk and set goals for growth. Last year at church, we were introduced to the *5% Life Challenge*. Some of our pastors attended a Church Planting conference at Hope Church in Las Vegas and returned with this inspiration for us. As we start this year, it's a great time for us to revisit this idea and renew our commitment to seeking the Lord.

This coming weekend, we will hear a message based on **Acts 5:42**. As the New Testament church continued to grow rapidly, even through persecution, God's power was manifest among them as each person learned to follow Jesus as Messiah. For us today, we're reminded that the Bible teaches specific, personal, spiritual disciplines that should be definitive of the life of a Jesus follower.

Let's explore and summarize these disciplines as the elements of *the 5% life*! You will notice they align perfectly with our church's mission outline to Gather, Grow, and Go!

# The 5% Life Challenge



■ Spiritual Life

■ Sleep

■ Work

■ Other

**Personal Application:** Take time today to prayerfully seek God's heart for your life. Pray and ask Him what He would like to do in you this year.

How much have you grown over this past year?

Are you satisfied with your spiritual progress?

Is your Heavenly Father satisfied?

As you pray today, ask the Lord to prepare you for what He wants to do in you in the coming week's study.

[illegible]



### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## WEEK ONE – DAY TWO 5% LIFE CHALLENGE

### 1% Gather Corporately

At Easthaven, we say we gather to encounter Jesus Christ. The secular media and modern culture decry, “the church is dying!” Do you know the truth? Do you know how many people go to see an NFL game every week during the regular season? The answer is over 1 million per week. NFL football is the largest live spectator sporting league in world. Do you know how many Americans go to the cinema to see a movie each week? While this industry is in measureable decline for lots of reasons, there are still over 25.7 million people who see a movie each week. So how does church attendance compare across the US? Depending on whose statistics you can believe, somewhere between 20-31% of self-identified Christians in America say they go to church weekly. That total ranges from 65-101 million people every week. That means way more than twice as many people go to church as go to an NFL game and all movies in cinemas combined! Church is by far the single most popular elective activity Americans engage in weekly.

### Read Hebrews 10:24-25.

These verses are under a subtitle in the Holman Christian Standard Bible entitled “*Exhortations to godliness.*” Why does the author of Hebrews say we should not stay away from our meetings?

What do you expect to happen when you gather for a worship service on the weekend? What do you tend to get out of the experience?

How often is that expectation met?

What added motivation do these verses encourage us to consider?

Do you do anything to prepare yourself to worship in the service? What could you do to enhance the experience for yourself and others?

This is not a church where attendance is kept. You are not judged for missing a weekend; however, we should be in the habit of being here if we're not doing something of eternal significance. Investing in family time together, going on vacation, camping and certainly hunting are important time to make memories, but if we're not doing that, we need to be in church. Don't look for excuses to play instead of worship! Let's model for our kids the priority of gathering for worship. Remember, what you do in moderation, they'll do in excess! If you skip church for any old reason at all, they'll skip for every reason they can imagine.

**Personal Application** - The **1% Gather** commitment means 6-7 hours per month as a minimum. Our weekend services are an average of 75-90 minutes. At Easthaven, there are four worship service time options. Will you take seriously the 1% Gather Commitment?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK ONE – DAY THREE 5% LIFE CHALLENGE**

### **1% Grow Personally**

At Easthaven, we say that we're committed to growing in our love for God and one another. To accomplish this, is it important for us to spend daily, focused time in personal pursuit of spiritual growth? Yes! Jesus did.

#### **Read Mark 1:35.**

Why did Jesus get up early? What did He do?

Read verses 21-34. What had Jesus been doing before getting up early in the morning?

Even while immersed in full time ministry, the next morning He made personal time with His Father a priority.

#### **Read Ephesians 4:15-16.**

How did the apostle Paul challenge believers in Ephesus in these verses?

What do you think “*grow in every way into Him who is the head*” includes?

How does your personal spiritual growth impact the overall health of the body of Christ?

Based on Paul's challenge, we must prioritize our own personal spiritual growth. The importance of it impacts more than just one individual.

**Personal Application - The 1% Grow Personally** Commitment means 15 minutes per day as a minimum. This includes using the Small Group Ministry Books provided by the church, additional Bible Reading plans, and certainly intentional personal prayer time. As you make a habit of this 1% of your day, I believe you will quickly realize it's not nearly enough time to spend with the Lord. That is good, we would encourage you to do more! Your investment in your overall spiritual growth is an investment in your church family as well.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]



## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## **WEEK ONE – DAY FOUR 5% LIFE CHALLENGE**

### **1% Grow Together**

Jesus was teaching about how to restore someone in the church who falls away from the faith or experiences a broken relationship with others in the church and included these words of reminder of the added validation of being together. There is strength in our togetherness.

#### **Read Matthew 18:20.**

Why do you think Jesus chose to mention 2 or 3 being gathered? Read Deuteronomy 19:15 to help answer this question.

What is the value of having additional witnesses in a courtroom?

When we talk about “growing together” in our relationship with the Lord, what does that sound like to you?

#### **Read John 13:34-35.**

How has Jesus loved you?

What kind of standard does that establish for you to love others?

In what ways do you see “loving one another” happening in the church today?

How can you grow together in loving others in the church family?

What are the benefits of maintaining close, authentic connections with others in the church?

When we're growing together in love, how does the world around us see God's love in action?

**Personal Application** - The **1% Grow Together** commitment means a minimum of 1.5 hours each week. Here at Easthaven, this typically means being involved in a Small Group. We also offer a variety of NightLife discipleship classes for adults throughout the week. The important thing is to be together with other believers for the purpose of encouraging on another to grow.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## **WEEK ONE – DAY FOUR 5% LIFE CHALLENGE**

### **2% Go for the Gospel**

At Easthaven, we say we go to live and serve in the power of the Holy Spirit! In order to do this, we have to seriously consider how important it is for us to give of our lives and resources for the declaration of the gospel to all the nations. Let's revisit the last thing Jesus said in His earthly ministry.

**Read Matthew 28:19-20.**

Based on His authority over all things, what did Jesus command His disciples to do?

Based on that same authority, to whom are we to go?

As we go, what all are we to do?

We GO in obedience because it's His invitation to all into the eternal Kingdom of God. What can this look like for you to add 2% here?

Are you aware that the opportunity to live and serve happens every single week with our children in AWANA and Explore and with our student ministries in Ignite and Fusion as Small Group Leaders. We always need chaperones on youth mission trips or Kid's camp. We send 2-3 teams a year to India to disciple new believers and to the Czech Republic to help with English Camp. The bottom line is that God saved us to serve Him with our lives.

**Personal Application** - The 2% Go for the Gospel commitment means approximately 7 days this year or literally 168 hours sometime this year. It could all be done in one week or spread out across the year, but how will you Go to live and serve in power of the Holy Spirit.

These little percentages of our lives will add up with great blessings to begin new habits and set new priorities and eventually shape much larger parts of our lives. Take this challenge seriously. Commit the 5% for rest of 2020 and let's see how we will grow, go deeper, see and feel God working in our lives at a whole different level.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]



## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

# Week Two



**SMALL GROUP**  
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## WEEK TWO – DAY ONE

## BIBLE READING

Last week, we studied the importance of living *the 5% life!* A portion of that challenge is to set aside 1% of your day ... that's a minimum of **15 minutes** a day to Grow Personally (Week 1, Day 3). Remember the vision here at Easthaven is to Gather, Grow, and Go. Throughout this week, we will take a look at how living out the small four letter word of *grow* in our love for God and one another will overflow in every aspect of our life, and actually helps fuel our passion to Gather and Go. What better way to *grow* than to set aside time each day to read the Bible, God's written word for us to gain wisdom/truth/answers to life's questions and give us confidence in what we believe. Sit back, grab a cup of coffee/tea/or hot chocolate, and of course your Bible (whether it's book form or electronic).

### **Read Psalm 19:7-11 and Psalm 111:7-10.**

Write down the words or statements used to describe the instruction/word of Lord.

Let's draw out two concepts that are repeated in these passages and pause to consider how we apply them to our lives:

- The instruction of the Lord is ***trustworthy***. When you read the Bible, do you read it trusting the words that are written, or do you allow outside influences to cause you to doubt the authority of God's Word?
- The Psalmist says the Word of God is "more desirable than gold." Are there things in your day or life that you desire more than reading the Bible? A good way to evaluate that is to write out how much time you spend doing things such as yard work, house work, electronics, social media,

reading other books, watching tv, studying the latest sports statistics, hunting, time at the gym, or time spent doing some other hobby. Compare that to how much time you set aside to read God's trustworthy Word?

What is offered to those who follow His Word?

**Personal Application** - 15 minutes of personal growth through reading God's Word. Will you make the commitment to set aside the time to spend in God's Word? If so, take a moment to schedule a 15-minute spot on your phone/calendar for the next 30 days to remind you to pause and read. You'll find that the more you focus on this, the sweeter His Word becomes (*sweeter than honey*) and the easier it is to set other things aside to spend time with Him.

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## WEEK TWO – DAY TWO

## BIBLE READING

Throughout history, the Word of God has been meticulously preserved and recorded, from Moses first writing down the Law (Ex 24:4), to Joshua retelling to the people everything written down by Moses (Joshua 8:34-35), to the king's responsibility to write out his own copy word for word of God's Word and read from it daily (Deut. 17:18-19), to early church leaders like Jerome who recorded the Scriptures into his modern Latin language between 380-400, to men like John Wycliffe or William Tyndale who studied the original languages so they could translate the Bible because they believed the people needed the Bible in their own language and were willing to risk everything so that everyone had a copy of God's Word, to missionaries like William Carey and John Ross who in the early 1800's went to places like India and Korea and invested their lives to learn the language of the people and translate the Bible into the local languages, to the men and women of today who travel into remote villages and translate so every people group has access to the Bible (<http://www.wycliffe.net/BTT3-EN.html>) ... WHY would so much time and energy be spent in preserving the book we call the Bible and translating it into so many languages across the world? Let's take a look at why that is.

**Read Romans 3:21-26 and Romans 16:25-27.**

What mystery is uncovered in the Bible?

Who is this mystery available to?

What purpose do you think the "Law and Prophets" section of Scripture played in revealing this mystery?

What purpose do you think the New Testament section plays in revealing this mystery?

Imagine your life with no access to the Bible. Would you know of this gift Jesus offers?

How would you understand the Love of God for your life?

How would you feel if one day the Bible became accessible and this mystery was unwrapped for you?

Write down three ways you feel reading the Bible will help equip you to GO and share the message of salvation to others?

1-

2-

3-

**Personal Application** - Spend time in prayer for people who do not yet have the Bible in their own language. According to the statistics on the Wycliffe website\* there are around 3,969 languages (out of 7,353 total known languages) with no Bible in their language. That is equal to more than 250 million people around the world. Spend specific time in prayer for Easthaven's adopted people group in India, the 'W' group, that our church continues to send mission teams to and support; yet this people group still does not have a Bible in their language.

\* <https://www.wycliffe.net/en/statistics>



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving a small margin at the top. There are no vertical lines or other markings on the page.

## **WEEK TWO – DAY THREE**

## **BIBLE READING**

“It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.” The Baptist Faith and Message

### **Read John 5:39-40 and Acts 17:11-12.**

What did the people in these verses do?

What was the response each group of people had to what they did?

Which group do you relate to?

### **Read Hebrews 4:12-13.**

How is the Word of God “living and effective”?

Have you ever read the Bible and felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit expose something you thought you were hiding from the Lord?

As you spend time today in prayer, thank Him for revealing that and remember to pray as David said in Psalm 139:23-24 “search me, God, and know my heart ... and lead me in the everlasting way.” Based on these three passages, write down up to four responsibilities you see that we are to have as we take time to read the Bible.

1-

2-

3-

4-

**Personal Application** - Personal Growth is a responsibility that must start with YOU taking the time to spend reading the Bible, letting the Lord reveal things that are hidden in your heart, and being willing to let Him lead you.

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## WEEK TWO – DAY FOUR

## BIBLE READING

As you look around in society, do you feel confused or like there's mixed messages of what truth is? Do you wonder what God wants for your life? Have you ever thought:

“how do I parent these children?”

“how do I respect my parents?”

“how do I have a better relationship with my spouse?”

“how do I stay going to work with that one coworker?”

“why does everything have to be flavored or smell like pumpkin spice from October to November?”

Guess what? The Bible has answers for YOU.

### **Read Romans 15:4.**

The things in the Bible were written for our \_\_\_\_\_ and to give us \_\_\_\_\_. (hint: towards the end of verse 4)

### **Read 2 Timothy 3:12-17.**

This passage doesn't start how most of us would like. “Will be persecuted” and “evil people and imposters will become worse”. Ouch! That means life will be hard, and speaking truth amidst all the voices trying to deceive will be difficult unless we do what Paul instructs. Write down how we, as believers, can stand firm knowing the truth.

*Hint: the subject for this week's study!*

List out the descriptions of what Paul says Scripture is used for, and how scriptures can be used to do these things:

Have you ever approached your reading of the Bible with the above descriptions in mind for your personal life?

Have you ever approached reading the Bible by realizing it contains words He inspired/breathed for YOU to gain His wisdom/intentions/judgements/heart?

### **Read 2 Peter 1:16-21.**

The people Peter was writing to were in the midst of persecution, dispersed, and having people try to persuade them in false teachings. What would be the importance to receiving this word from Peter?

Does knowing that the Bible came from eyewitnesses, and by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit, still have importance for our lives today? Write down an example of how you have found comfort in this truth:

**Personal Application** - Next time there is a question that you have about life, truth, right/wrong behaviors, or just curious about who God is – let us be known as a people who turns FIRST to the very word of God. The Word that He breathed to life so we may be thoroughly equipped for every good work!



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK TWO – DAY FIVE**

## **BIBLE READING**

Nourishment is defined as “food or substances necessary for growth, health, and good condition”. If we want to see personal spiritual growth it is paramount that we begin the journey spending time in God’s Word. God’s Word is a source of life, help, wisdom, and when read and obeyed leads us to GROW in our love for God and love for others!

**Read Job 23:12 and Psalm 119:9-16, 127-131.**

What did Job and the Psalmist expect would happen, or what action would they take when they read God’s word?

What do you expect to happen, or what action do you take when you read God’s Word?

**Read Matthew 4:4.**

Give some examples of how Jesus lived this truth out?

Give some examples of how YOU live this truth out?

**Personal Application** - If you were to rank how important reading God's word is to your daily life on a scale of 1-10 (1 being a low importance)

Before this series started

Now two weeks into the series      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

It is our prayer at Easthaven that your passion continues to GROW in your love for God and one another – that starts with setting aside 1% of your day spent reading the Bible – God’s powerful, inspired, living WORD!

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

# Week Three



**SMALL GROUP**  
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## WEEK THREE – DAY ONE

## PRAYER

Many times throughout the Christian life, prayer can become a lost art, a forgotten tool, a mechanized routine that Christians do out of habit or guilt. Because prayer can often be stereotyped as the “Sunday School answer” to most application-related questions, Christians can easily begin to lose sight of the true importance, value, and need for a healthy and active prayer life. There is simply more to praying than a quick life update before God. The Lord has given Christians this weapon of warfare, this powerful source of communication, and this joyful ability to spend quality time with the Creator of the universe. It’s time we took a serious look at our prayer lives and evaluate if we are making the most of and utilizing this gift from God to the fullest.

This weekend, we will hear a sermon based out of 1 John 5:14-16. God encourages us throughout the Bible to be in a constant state of prayer, presenting requests to the Lord in forms of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. In the upcoming week, a centralized look at prayer will bring it to focus from your perspective as well as from God’s viewpoint.

### **Personal Application:**

Take some personal, alone time to sit in silence. Use this time to:

- Evaluate your prayer time
- Analyze the structure of your prayers
- Categorize the requests you present to God
- Listen to anything the Lord may be saying to you.

Is your prayer time short and brief or lengthy and repetitive?

Do you pray in a certain pattern or are you praying without much structure or organization?

Do you only ask God for things or do you spend time confessing, praising, and thanking Him?



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

Have you ever stopped to consider how God looks at prayers offered to him? God spoke through his Word in order to inform us of his desire to keep in communication and stay connected with his creation. Prayer, therefore, is not a human creation used to ask questions of God in hope that he is listening. Instead, prayer is a way of communication that God created specifically for his children to utilize that he may demonstrate his sovereign care and support to those who come before him and ask. Think of a parent whose teenager desperately wants a cell phone. As a parent, you likely know your teenager wants a cell phone because it is a common desire. However, if your teenager never asks for one, you may be less inclined to give them one. The lack of connection in that regard creates a disconnect that impedes the giving of the gift. Likewise, if the only time your teenager ever talks to you is when they want a cell phone, the connection between you two may feel fake or unappreciative. God knows what you want even before you do, but a strong connection to him is vital for your prayer life to remain healthy and active. If you never ask anything of God or the only time you ever pray is to request something, you will have an unhealthy connection to the Creator, causing your prayer life to suffer.

### **Read Jeremiah 29:12.**

In the Holman Christian Standard Bible, God calls the reader to do three things before he will listen. What are those three things?

What does it mean to call and come to God before praying?

## Read 2 Chronicles 7:14.

God is speaking to Solomon after he finished dedicating the temple of the Lord and praying before the people during the Golden Age of Israel. How is the verse from God conditional?

Why does God ask certain things of his people before they come to him in prayer?

How does this relate to establishing a healthier connection with God?

**Personal Application:** God views our prayer time as an indicator of our connection to him. If our hearts are not fully invested in the time we are dedicating to our verbal connection with God, it will show through in sporadic prayer times with little passion and many distractions. Plan out extra time before, during, and after praying. Focus more on:

- Preparing your heart
- Eliminating distractions
- Calling out to the Lord
- Remaining intentional in your words
- Taking time afterwards to sit silently, listening for God's calling.

How has your view on God's perspective changed?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

One of the many benefits prayer provides for us from God is a mechanism of defense. Spiritual warfare is something Christians encounter every day, whether it is realized or not. The world we live in provides enough distractions to easily overwhelm and consume the heart and mind of a defenseless and unsuspecting person. Every person has their own struggle with some form of spiritual warfare. It may be a materialistic warfare in handling money or possessions; a health-related warfare related to struggling with one's own, a family member's, or a friend's health; an addiction-based warfare; an identity warfare in understanding and making decisions related to one's self; a spiritual warfare in struggling to discern God's commands versus earthly desires; or it could easily become an overlap of any of the above. God knows how sin easily corrupts and twists the words we hear every day, so he gave us many gifts to fight back against such warfare, including the idea of prayer. In coming to God in prayer against warfare, we can take a moment to silence the screaming voices of this world and speak with the one true voice of our Lord.

### **Read James 5:13.**

The book of James is known for being overtly straightforward and to the point. What is the benefit of James' extreme honesty in encouraging his readers to pray and praise more?

How often do you make excuses to avoid praying for spiritual warfare? What kinds of excuses are common to make? Why do we sometimes assume praying won't be effective?

What do you think James would say about the variety of excuses we create to avoid praying?

## **Read Matthew 26:41**

Compare and contrast the spirit and the flesh in this verse. How does prayer relate to the spirit? How does prayer relate to the flesh?

Recall or look back at the events of Matthew that follow Jesus praying in the garden. What do the disciples do while Jesus prays?

What do they do when Jesus is arrested?

When Jesus is on trial?

How do you think their times spent praying prepared them for what happened in these situations?

**Personal Application:** The use of prayer as a weapon of warfare can easily be overlooked in the chaos and busyness of life. A major component of successfully utilizing prayer as a weapon involves making prayer the primary and first reaction to symptoms of warfare. Let prayer become a primary response to any obstacle that may come your way. Do excuses derail you from praying, or are you using prayer to fight the desires of the flesh? Use this week to make prayer your first reaction to situations.



[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK THREE – DAY FOUR**

## **PRAYER**

One of the most overlooked uses of prayer is the illumination and increased clarity we receive in our image of who God is. When we connect with the Lord through prayer and praising, our own sense of understanding continues to increase and grow. We see God work in innovative ways, through new perspectives, and with amplified trust in God's sovereignty. As imperfect people, we will never come remotely close to comprehending the work and power of the Lord, but that should not deter us from discovering and seeking the kingdom further. Prayer is just one incredibly beneficial tool to grow us in that pursuit.

**Read Ephesians 1:18-19.**

What is the benefit of increasing your perception before you enter into a time of prayer?

What are examples of hope that you have found in God's calling in your life?

What are the riches of his inheritance that Paul is alluding to in verse 18? How are those riches related to your life enlightenment?

How can you see your own perception of God change through prayer? Where would you like to see your own perspective on God's work in your life increase and stretch through prayer?

**Personal Application:** God takes great delight in giving wisdom, perspective, enlightenment, and insight to his children, and often this happens through our time with prayer. As mentioned before, a healthy prayer life is based on building a stronger connection with God. When a healthy prayer connection is established, it can begin to grow. Through this growth, instruction and vision begin to develop and flourish.

Take time this week to pray for increased perception, then go about your day with intentional efforts to look for God's work with fresh eyes. Make resilient efforts to look for God consistently and creatively in people around you, in your work environment, in your family and friends, and in your daily activities. As you practice this, ask yourself this question: Where do you begin to see God's work appear where it previously remained invisible to your vision?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## WEEK THREE – DAY FIVE

## PRAYER

Oftentimes, prayer is seen and used as a means of communicating *requests* to God. In fact, in Philippians 4:6, Paul reminds us to not worry, but instead, “in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” God loves his children and he wants to give to those who ask. However, a frequently overlooked piece of that verse is the phrase “with thanksgiving.” How often in prayer do we spend time simply thanking God and praising him for his mighty works and love? When life gets busy and distractions weigh on the mind, prayers tend to be shortened to a quick thank-you for the meal and the day, then a list of requests, with a concluding “Amen.” Prayer is not just about connecting with God over desires you want help with; our connection to God through prayer should involve praise and thanksgiving as well. When we step back and look at our lives, there will always be innumerable ways to thank God and praise him.

### **Read Psalm 17:6.**

Psalm 17 is a Davidic prayer for protection. What does this verse demonstrate about David’s trust in the Lord?

David praises God in this verse for the Lord’s loyalty to listen. How might this declaration of praise strengthen or enliven the remainder of David’s prayer?

### **Read Psalm 141:2.**

Why does David compare his prayer to an incense offering to God?

How might God view our prayers differently when we begin them with statements of praise instead of diving straight into requests?

How can you personally make your prayers like “incense?” Like the evening offering to God?

**Personal Application:** A healthy and active prayer life requires work and creativity. Its enemies include earthly distractions, excuses, monotony, distrust, and lack of focus. God established prayer as a means of connection for his creation to communicate with him. When we fail to fend off these enemies, our prayers can become dull, mechanical, and passionless. Worse yet, an unhealthy prayer life causes us to lose our awe and wonder at our Creator. When we lose sight of how powerful, mighty, imaginative, and inexplicably merciful and compassionate God is, we lose faith in the ability of prayer, thus deteriorating our connection to God himself.

In order to fight these enemies and maintain a healthy connection to God, spend focused and distraction-free time during prayer to marvel at the majesty of God. Try saying an occasional prayer or two solely focused on praising the Lord, without requests. Grow your reverence and gratitude of the Lord through prayer and watch as your prayer life flourishes with it.



[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

# Week Four



**SMALL GROUP**  
ministry

## **WEEK FOUR – DAYS ONE-FIVE**

## **TITHING**

This week will focus on an online series from Dave Ramsey. You can access this series for FREE from RightNow Media.

For RightNow Media access, go to [easthaven.church](http://easthaven.church), then click on RightNow Media under the resource tab.

### **LIFE. MONEY. LEGACY By Dave Ramsey**

**<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/853>**

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

# Week Five



**SMALL GROUP**  
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Marriage is a Covenant and a Divine Institution

This coming weekend we will hear a message based on marriage. Here are a few questions that will be addressed. What does the Bible say about marriage? What are biblical principles and guidelines for both husband and wife? How can divorce be avoided? Does God permit divorce?

God was the creator of man and woman and also the creator of marriage, therefore marriage is seen as a divine institution. In Genesis 2:18 “The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” This does not mean that the woman is to be man’s slave or servant, but a “suitable” helpmate for man. This doesn’t mean the woman is inferior or to wait on man hand and foot. Marriage is ordained by God Himself as He says in Malachi 2:14, “... the LORD hath been witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously: yet she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant.”

God performed the first marriage ceremony in Genesis 2:18, 21-24: “So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

What does it mean to ‘leave and cleave’?

What are some potential consequences if either one or both do not ‘leave and cleave’?



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

### God's Role for the Husband

Men have great responsibilities t because they are commanded to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Eph. 5:25). In Ephesians 5:22-23 Paul instructs husbands: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

The apostle Peter further instructs husbands in I Peter 3:7: “Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.” Generally women are weaker physically, but not inferior spiritually.

In Malachi 2:15 the prophet says, “And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And why one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.”

OK Men – If you are married, do you still open the car door for her?

Do you walk beside or behind your wife or do you find yourself walking in front of her because you are in a hurry?

Do you ever do the dishes?

Do you have a wandering eye?

Is compromising part of your vocabulary?

**Personal Application:**

What are some practical ways husbands can love their wives like Christ loves the church?

If husbands are to live with their wives in an understanding way, how does a husband go about increasing his understanding of his wife?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

### God's Role for the Wife

God made them male and female and they are co-equals and co-heirs before Christ, although the man is by God's design, the head of the household. In 1 Peter 3:1-2 Peter said under divine inspiration that, "...wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct." Elsewhere, in Colossians 3:18-19 it is written, "Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." But husbands are also commanded by God to "... love your wives, and do not be harsh with them."

In Colossians 3:18-19 Paul gives additional instructions to wives: "Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled."

OK Ladies – What does it mean to be 'subject to your husbands' if you are co-equal and co-heirs before Christ?

### **Personal Application:**

These verses about submission are not intended by God to be a weapon used by the husband but are intended for the wife as a way to glorify God in the marriage.

Husbands, how do we approach the idea of submission in a way that is loving our wives like Christ loved the church?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]



[illegible]

God's Design for Marriage – But what about divorce and marrying someone who is not a Christian?

Here is proof that bigamy is not scriptural as Paul says in I Corinthians 7:1-5 that "...each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Marriage is from God, Divorce is from Man

God hates divorce and it was never His intention for husbands and wives to be separated but to remain together forever as stated in Malachi 2:16, "For the LORD, the God of Israel, says he hates putting away (divorce): for one covers violence with his garment, says the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously." In Matthew 19:8 "Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."

Paul plainly teaches that we are not to marry someone who is not a Christian saying in 2 Corinthians 6:14 to "...not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" Conversely Paul commands those who are already married to an unbeliever that "Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them" (I Cor. 7:20).

That is, you should not divorce them since God hates divorce. Paul tells us why in I Corinthians 7:16: "How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?"

But now we get to the sticky question, “Are there any circumstances when divorce is permitted”?

**Personal Application:**

What are things we can do daily that will help us value our marriage in the same way God values our marriage?

God is a God of redemption. Regardless of past mistakes, He has both grace and forgiveness for us right now. What needs to change today about your marriage so that it is strengthened against divorce?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

[illegible]

**Cord of Three Strands**

Marriage is a wonderful experience and when a husband and wife can work together with the Holy Spirit, it is one of the most beautiful experiences that any human can ever have. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 shows that “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

When two cords of husband and wife are bound together, they are not easily broken, and when three strands are woven together, these three cords are not quickly broken. If the third cord or strand is God, then three are better than two. And even the Devil can not break what God has joined together.

Have you ever seen a two-legged stool?

Would you want to sit on a such a stool?

**Personal Application:**

What needs to happen in your marriage to strengthen God’s role in that relationship?

If you are single... what are things you need to be doing right now to fortify your relationship with God so that He is where He belongs in your life?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]



# Week Six



**SMALL GROUP**  
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## **WEEK SIX – DAY ONE**

## **ABORTION**

### **God Creates Life and Controls Death**

This week's study focuses on one of the most hotly debated topics in our society today: Abortion. Since abortion became legal in 1973, more than 58 million legal abortions have been performed in our country and this number continues to rise every day. Here at EBC, we stand firmly on the truth of God's Word and believe every life is created by God for a purpose. One of the greatest sins of our nation is that of legally ending the lives of unborn children who have been created by our Great God. As followers of Christ, we need to understand the foundation of our beliefs and stand up for what the Bible teaches about this divisive evil. This week, we will study what the Bible says about the beginning of life and who is responsible for creating, and ending, human life. Please read our foundation verse for this week.

### **Read Psalms 100:3.**

What does the psalmist want us to do, according to the first part of this verse?

Why do you think the verse starts off this way?

According to this verse, who made us and to whom do we belong?

Who do you think this verse applies to?

### **Read Deuteronomy 32:39.**

What does God say about himself in this verse?

Who has control over life and death?

What does this verse say about mankind's role in life and death?

**Personal Application-** Today's study reminded us that God is in control of life and death. Take a few minutes today to pray for God's heart regarding the unborn. Does today's study challenge you in any way?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

### When Does Life Begin?

One of the Pro-Abortion movement's biggest tricks is renaming an unborn child a "fetus" and arguing that a fetus is simply a clump of cells. Pro-Abortionists argue that a "fetus" does not become a person at conception, some going as far as saying a baby is not fully human until birth. As you read this Psalm penned by King David, think about when David's relationship with his Creator began and what this says about when the unborn becomes a human.

### Read Psalms 139:13-16

Who created the psalmist, David, according to this passage?

Where did God form David? When did this happen?

What are the "inward parts" mentioned in verse 13?

Think about the intimacy of this act of creation. God formed your inward parts before your birth. How does this affect your view of your relationship with God?

In verse 14, how does David describe his own creation? How does this apply to you? How does this apply to an unborn child?

In verse 16, what does God's eyes see before David is even formed? What do you think this means?

What is written in God's book? When is it written there?

What does this passage tell us about how God views the unborn?

**Personal Application-** Each one of us is lovingly made by a God who knows everything about us long before we are born. His hand is on us in the womb and He has plans for us long before we take our first breath. Take a few minutes to think about the intimacy involved in your creation and thank God for His loving act of creating you.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]



### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

God Values Children.

From Old Testament times, God has shown the value He places on children. Throughout the Bible, we see story after story of God granting children to the childless as a great gift (Sarah & Abraham *Genesis 17:19*, Hannah & *Samuel 1:19-20*, Elizabeth & Zacharias *Luke 1:13*). Today we look at Old Testament law regarding children and then look at how Jesus treated children who were brought to him. As you complete today's study, reflect on what God is saying to us about the value of children. When does a child become of value to God?

**Read Exodus 21:22-25.**

This passage of the law given by God to Moses established the punishment that should befall a person who caused harm to a woman and her unborn baby. What is the punishment if the woman is hurt, but the child is born unharmed?

Why is there a punishment when the child is not harmed? What does this say about the child's value in God's eyes?

What is the punishment if the baby is harmed?

What do these punishments say about how God feels about the unborn?

## **Read Mark 10:13-16.**

How does Jesus react when the disciples tried to send the children away from Him? What does He command them to do?

What are some ways that people keep children from coming to Jesus in our society today?

In verse 16 in the Holman Christian Standard Bible, we see Jesus not only laying His hands on the children, but “taking them in His arms.” What does this verse tell you about how Jesus feels about children?

**Personal Application-** Today’s study focused on the great value God places on children, both before and after they are born, which is in direct opposition to the way our country treats the unborn. EBC has a heart for children both before and after birth. We have many opportunities for you to make an impact on children. EBC teaches hundreds of kids about the love of Jesus at Explore during the weekend services and at Ignite, Fusion and AWANA each Wednesday during the school year. EBC is also active in Child Bridge and supports Hope Pregnancy Ministries which is dedicated to providing life-affirming reproductive healthcare services in Kalispell and the surrounding communities. Is God asking you to get involved? Would you prayerfully consider volunteering your time to share God’s love with His children?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK SIX – DAY FOUR**

## **ABORTION**

### **God Creates Each of us For a Purpose**

Today, we will look at the beginning of life for two men who did great things for the Kingdom of God. As you read these stories, think about when God gave each of these men his purpose and reflect on when God gave you your purpose.

### **Read Jeremiah 1:4-5.**

Verse 1 tells us that Jeremiah is the author of this book. However, according to verse 4, who is actually speaking the words that Jeremiah records in verse 5?

Where was Jeremiah formed?

When was Jeremiah chosen to become a prophet of God?

Verse 5 says that God knew Jeremiah before he was even formed. What do you think this means? What did God know about Jeremiah?

### **Read Luke 1:13-17 & 1:41-44.**

In verses 13-17, the angel Gabriel tells Zechariah that his wife, Elizabeth, will bear a son who is to be called John (who we know as John the Baptist). Zechariah doubts this possibility, as his wife is barren and they are both advanced in years. Gabriel then tells Zechariah that God has great plans for this miracle child. What are God's plans for this baby according to verses 16 and 17?

According to verse 15, when will John receive the Holy Spirit?

In verses 41-44, Mary has learned that she is carrying the Son of God and has come to see her cousin Elizabeth. When Elizabeth hears Mary's greeting, she is filled with the Holy Spirit; but, who is the first to react to Mary's arrival according to verse 41? How does this verse relate to the prophesy given to Zechariah in Luke 1:15?

How does Elizabeth describe her baby's reaction in verse 44?

What do these verses say about the soul of an unborn child?

How do today's passages challenge the Pro-Abortion argument about when life begins?

Today, we looked at two important men of faith born centuries apart. God made it clear that He had a purpose for both of these men before they were even formed in the womb and He made sure their stories were recorded for us to read thousands of years later. Reflect on these two men's testimonies. How do their experiences apply to us? Are these two men the only people who had a purpose before birth or might this apply to you and me and millions of unborn babies?

**Personal Application-** God has a purpose for you. Have you surrendered to God's call in your life? Take some time today to thank God for giving you a purpose from the day He formed you.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]



## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

### A Nation Under Attack.

The United States of America has been a powerful nation for more than two centuries. Perhaps we feel our nation is invincible, yet we have accepted a great sin as part of our culture.

Today, we will look at another nation that had accepted sin as part of its culture. God warned this nation to repent. As you read the story of this nation, reflect on what the people did to turn the tide of wrath that God had promised if they did not repent. Do you think our nation is in a similar situation?

### **Read Jonah 1:2 and 3:4-10.**

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. Ancient historians indicate it was the largest city in the world at this time, some putting its size at 48 miles in circumference. It had great wealth and power and was surrounded by huge walls where one could drive two chariots side-by-side. However, like many “great” cities, Nineveh was plagued with sin.

How does God describe the city of Nineveh in Jonah 1:2?

What does God ask Jonah to do? Why does He want Jonah to cry out against Nineveh?

What does Jonah tell the inhabitants of Nineveh as he begins to walk through the great city in verse 4?

According to verse 5, what is the first thing the people of Nineveh do when Jonah cries out against them? What did they believe about God here?

What actions did the Ninevites take in order to save their city?

In verse 5, who proclaimed the fast? How did the revival of Nineveh begin according to this verse?

What happens in verse 6?

In verse 8, who must call out to God? Who must turn from evil?

How does God respond to the city of Nineveh's repentance?

Do you think our nation is in peril? According to this passage, what must we do to turn away God's wrath?

### **Read 2 Chronicles 7:14.**

In this verse, God tells His people how they can heal their land. What are the three things they must do?

List how the Ninevites in the passage above did these three things.

**Personal Application**-Today's study showed a great city that had accepted sin as part of its culture and was given a chance to repent before God destroyed it for its wickedness. Do you see parallels between Nineveh and our country today? Notice this revival started with the people and spread up to the King. Take some time today to pray for healing in our country; pray that we, our countrymen and our leaders will humble ourselves, seek God, and turn from wickedness.

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

# Week Seven



**SMALL GROUP**  
ministry

## **WEEK SEVEN – DAY ONE SEXUAL INTEGRITY**

### **Gods Design for Marriage and Sex**

This week at EBC we will be looking at the topic of sexual integrity. We must understand that God's plan restricts sex to the confines of biblical marriage. Any form of sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful and must be guarded against.

#### **Read 1 Corinthians 7:2-9.**

What do these verses tell us about sexual relations?

What limitations does God's word place on sexual relations?

Paul wishes people would remain single and celibate, for the purpose of being dedicated to the advancement of the Gospel. Paul also understands the physical desires and passions of the flesh, and therefore he exhorts marriage. Why does he do this?

Why does Paul place so much emphasis on marriage and sex? The desires and urges of physical intimacy are great and we must understand that they are God given and purposeful. God instituted marriage and sex in the very beginning.

## **Read Genesis 1:28.**

In Adam and Eve's God-given design, God ordained sexuality as a primary part of their being. God commands the first human beings to bear His image in love, intimacy, creativity, cooperation, and glory through being fruitful and multiplying. Adam was made for God and Eve was made for Adam. Adam proclaims with great excitement at the visibility of Eve's flesh in all of its beauty to his eyes (Genesis 2:23). In the perfection of God's creation, sex is beautiful and we should cherish it under the lordship of Christ.

### **Personal Application:**

Pause today and thank God for making us physical beings with physical desires. Beyond that, Thank God for giving us a glorious means of expression of those desires through marriage. If you are married, praise God for your spouse now. Examine your own life to see if there is unrepentant sexual sin in it. Do you desire to be intentional about killing that sin? Are your marriage rights of sex a proclamation of God's design and an act of worship?



[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## **WEEK SEVEN – DAY TWO SEXUAL INTEGRITY**

### **Anything Else is Sin**

We must have a lofty view of God-ordained and biblical marriage-confined sex. Too often sex is an under discussed topic in the church, and that is blatantly wrong. We have allowed the world's view and our sinful corruption blur the understanding of what sex is, mistaking it as dirty or wrong. We must understand that what God created, instituted, and made pleasurable is a beautiful and holy symbolic picture of unity and delight. Sex is remarkably sacred and ultimately about seeking that which God made man and woman for in marriage.

With that foundational understanding, we must also know that humans are sinful and have corrupted, as we are prone to, that which God intended as holy. Any form of sexual activity outside the confines of biblical marriage is unquestionably sinful.

**Read Hebrews 13:4, Acts 15:19-20, Galatians 5:19-21.**

Why is the Bible so adamant about sexual sin?

What do these verses say about sexual sin?

Sexual sin is not new, in fact it is very common (That is why it is addressed with such frequency in Scripture) ...what warnings are given to those in sexual sin? What comparisons are made?

According to these (and numerous other) Scriptures, all forms of sexual activity apart from marriage between one biological man and one biological woman are sin. This includes, but is not limited to, premarital sex, fornication, pornography, homosexuality, and adultery. The list is not exhaustive, but it is spiritually exhausting.

The commonality of the sin does not excuse the sinfulness of the sin. The root cause of these sins includes self-centeredness, pride, deception, arrogance, and pursuing fleshly desires. Simply put, in exploring and pursuing sexual sin, the believer settles for glimpses of glory and crumbs of the Lord's prepared feast.

### **Personal Application:**

God takes sex very seriously, and as believers, we should as well. The biblical picture of sexuality is more vibrant than the trivial pleasure-seeking view held by the culture we find ourselves in. The Christian view of sexuality is actually a radical view in comparison to the world's. It goes against culture and holds up marital sex as nothing less than God-glorifying. It is time to repent! It is time for us to raise the bar and elevate sex beyond physical pleasure giving and gaining. Pray that you would stand firm upon truth, pray that you would seek a protected heart and mind. Flee from sexual sin.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## WEEK SEVEN – DAY THREE SEXUAL INTEGRITY

### The Pornography Problem

The greatest threat to sexual purity is the modern pandemic of pornography availability and addiction.

<https://www.unitedfamilies.org>:

- Over **40 million Americans** are regular visitors to porn sites. The average visit lasts **6 minutes and 29 seconds**
- There are around **42 million porn websites**, which totals around **370 million pages of porn**.
- The porn industry's **annual revenue** is more than the **NFL, NBA, and MLB combined**. It is also more than the combined revenues of **ABC, CBS, and NBC**.
- **47% of families** in the United States reported that pornography is a problem in their home.
- **Eleven** is the average age that a child is first exposed to porn, and **94% of children will see porn by the age of 14**.
- **70% of Christian youth pastors** report that they have had at least one teen come to them for help in dealing with pornography in the past 12 months.
- **68% of church-going men** and over **50% of pastors** view porn on a regular basis. Of young Christian adults 18-24 years old, **76%** actively search for porn.
- **33% of women** aged 25-and-under search for porn at least once per month.
- Only **13%** of self-identified Christian women say they never watch porn – **87% of Christian women** have watched porn.
- **55% of married men** and 25% of married women say they watch porn at least once a month.

These statistics can be overwhelming. The fact that pornography has such a tight grip on our society does not mean that we are helpless to fight against it. We must admit that this problem is significant and there is a desperate need for purity.

**Read Psalm 51:7-10, Matthew 5:8, Titus 1:15, James 4:7-8.**

How do we pursue purity?

What are the defining characteristics of those with pure hearts according to these verses?

How does God develop purity in the willing believer?

How are humility/brokenness and purity related?

**Personal Application:**

Are you actively pursuing purity daily? Do you have safeguards for yourself and family to protect against the plague of pornography? If you have a problem with viewing pornography, repent and seek the Lord's help. Also, confess your sins to a brother or sister in Christ (James 5:16) and seek accountability. Pray for your children, grandchildren, and the young people of this generation who will face this specific issue with increased accessibility and frequency.



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK SEVEN – DAY FOUR    SEXUAL INTEGRITY**

### **Solutions and Safe Guards - Part 1:**

We have established the beauty and holiness of sexual relations within biblical marriage. We have also identified the sinfulness of any other sexual acts, highlighting the dangers of pornography. It is important to not only identify the issues but it is important to pinpoint some solutions and safe guards to help protect the sanctify of sex within marriage. Let's take a look at three areas today: heart check, blind spots, and potential landmines.

#### **Heart Check**

**Read 1 John 5:17** – Is it right?

**Read Romans 13:14** – Will this bring me near temptation?

**Read Romans 14:21** – Will it cause yourself or someone else to stumble?

**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:22** – Does it appear evil? Is it blameless?

**Read Luke 16:15** – Am I trying to justify my actions?

**Read Luke 14:26** – Am I denying my flesh?

**Read 1 Corinthians 10:31**– Will this bring glory to God?

#### **Blind Spots**

Blinds spots are areas we aren't usually aware of, where there are gaps in our perception that keep us from seeing the truth. The danger is that we often don't see the problem until it is too late. We are often blinded by stubborn resistance, selfishness, or maybe most dangerously, willful ignorance.

**Read Luke 11:34, Psalm 119:29, Matthew 11:28-29.**

The Bible reminds us that we are responsible for all of our sins, including those that are in our blind spots. So, we must continuously seek the Lord's help in revealing to us the areas where we are potentially sinning unaware.

**Read Psalm 19:12-13.**

### **Potential Landmines**

The world we live in is a mine field of sexual temptations and potential compromises. Unlike blind spots, we know what these potential dangers are, and we must do all we can to avoid them. If you are challenged with looking at pornography, guard yourself with programs that keep you accountable or with not being on the internet in a private area. If you are being tempted in an unhealthy physical or emotional relationship with someone that might lead to adultery, FLEE and break that relationship at all costs.

**Read 1 Corinthians 6:18, Ecclesiastes 21:2, 2 Timothy 2:22.**

### **Personal Application:**

You might want to copy the "Heart Check" Scriptures and put them in places of potential temptation. Examine your heart and pray for wisdom and for God to reveal blind spots that are leading you to potential sin. Identify landmines in your life, and pray for God to remove those and then actively join the Lord in the journey to cleanse your life of all unrighteousness and temptations.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK SEVEN – DAY FIVE SEXUAL INTEGRITY**

### **Solutions and Safe Guards – Part 2:**

If the challenges and problems facing our sexual integrity seem daunting and overwhelming, it is because they are! Sexual concessions and temptations face all of us daily, and are increasingly available in our technological times. Men, being more visually constructed and created, are in danger of wandering eyes leading to compromised relationships and therefore desecrating the beauty and wonder of sex as designed by God. Women are not exempt from the persuasions and enticements of sexual sin, and must continuously seek wisdom and protection from the Lord.

There is good news! We don't have to face these trials and tests alone! We were created to do this life together with the Body of Christ. We were created for community. In Easthaven, we have the potential for relational community and accountability. Surrounding yourself with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ who are seeking and striving for holiness and righteousness can help you face your blind spots and flee your landmines. Having same gender relationships that are deep and growing in righteousness can help us check the depths of our hearts and challenge us in the Word.

- **Hebrews 10:24-25**
- **Romans 14:10-12**
- **James 5:14-15**
- **Psalms 133:1-3**
- **1 Thessalonians 5:11**
- **1 Peter 3:8**

## **Personal Application**

Are you currently in community with fellow believers? Are you a part of a small group of relationally-close, same-gender Christians who can help refine you and keep you accountable? If married, do you have open and transparent conversations about your sexual integrity? Pray that God would surround you with the necessary community and that EBC would be a place where accountability and community groups thrive.



## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

# Week Eight



**SMALL GROUP**  
ministry

## **WEEK EIGHT – DAY ONE      HOMOSEXUALITY**

### **Homosexuality and the Bible**

Every day, believers in Christ are faced with various aspects of culture that collide with our faith. Our conscience conflicts with what our society normalizes. One of the most obvious and overt demonstrations of this is the attempt by the media, government, and celebrities to elevate homosexual desires and relationships and even ‘marriage’ to a customary status. This week at EBC we will be looking at how we are to respond to homosexuality and the homosexual agenda, without compromise to the Truth from God’s Word that has and always will be the same.

**Read Romans 1:26-28, Genesis 19:1-11, Leviticus 18:22.**

The Bible is clear to what is sinful and what is not permissible according to God’s righteous standards. Unfortunately, the world tries to blur the lines between what is sinful and what is allowable.

- According to these Scriptures, what does the Bible say about homosexuality?
- Is this a new issue?
- Has God’s view on homosexuality changed over time?

According to what we see on TV, in the movies, on social media, or in our political arenas we are sometimes led to believe that homosexual relationships are very common and should be embraced as normative. Watching even the most harmless of channels (my family loves the Food network), we are bombarded with numerous outwardly gay individuals. Let’s not be mistaken though. According to the latest polls performed by Barna Research Group and Pew Research, the percentage of the population in the United States that identifies as homosexual is only 3.2% (up from 2.7% over the last 40+ years).

Romans 1 is a warning to believers that the broken and sinful world we live in will continue to attempt to make normal the sinful decisions of a sinful people. We must be aware that there is a blatant and militant agenda in our world to normalize and accept homosexuality.

**Personal Application:**

Take time to seek the Lord's direction and clarity on this subject that can be perceived as a hot button topic in today's blurry world. Prayerfully ask the Lord to give you a passionately broken and humble heart. Pray that you would stand firm on the Eternal Truth of God's Word. Do you have people in your life that identify as gay? Please take time today to pray for them and pray that God gives you an opportunity to sensitively respond and share the life-giving truth with them.

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## **WEEK EIGHT – DAY TWO     HOMOSEXUALITY**

### **Homosexuality and Southern Baptists**

We at Easthaven Baptist Church stand firm upon the Scripture as the inspired, inerrant and infallible, authority in our lives. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Southern Baptist Convention. Easthaven is associated with the SBC, cooperating together with about 45,000 churches in the United States. While each church is autonomous, they do overwhelmingly agree on certain doctrinal truths. One way that we define some of our theological treaties is a document that is called the “Baptist Faith and Message”. Covering a vast array of doctrines, article 18 speaks to the family. It addresses marriage and relationships in this way:

#### **“XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.”

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. We believe that Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God’s unique gift to provide for the man and woman in the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standard, and the means for procreation of the human race. (Herschel Hobbs and Tom Eliff, Committee on commentary of the Baptist Faith and Message)



**Read Mark 10:6-12, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Corinthians 7:1-16, Hebrews 13:4.**

- Do you believe that God has a purpose and intention for introducing marriage in creation?
- According to these verses, what are relationships that are outside of the biblical standards?
- What do deviations from the biblical standard for marriage create?
- In attempts to legitimize sexual relationships that the Bible has declared illicit or perverse, what compromises are made in our culture?
- How do we avoid falling prey to the accommodations that are sometimes attempted to be demanded of us by the world around us?

**Personal Application:**

It is vitally important for us to know what we believe and why we believe it when it comes to the sanctity of marriage. We must acknowledge the demand of God to limit marriage and sexual relationships between one biological man and one biological woman restricted to the ordination of biblical marriage. Pray that God gives clarity to your stance. Pray that you have the ability to speak with boldness in a world that sways its beliefs to the spirit of the age. Commit to knowing doctrine well and being able to defend, with grace, your theological stance when it comes to homosexuality.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

## **WEEK EIGHT – DAY THREE HOMOSEXUALITY**

### **Homosexuality Hits Home**

It is funny how often we have a stance on a certain subject that we personally and intimately know little about. Prior to having children of my own, I might have been heard saying something like “I would never parent like that” or “When I have kids I will never let them act like that”. Then having kids of my own shakes the very foundation of what I truly believe. Those stances that I took prior to having kids were not necessarily wrong. They, in fact, became foundational principles that shaped my parenting philosophy. Even though what I said prior to having kids was built upon truth and understanding, it wasn’t until I had children of my own that I was confronted with the reality of those values.

The same thing holds true when we are confronted with personal realities of homosexuality. We have spent a couple days building upon paramount doctrinal truths of God’s word when it comes to homosexuality. If given a quiz on the subject, we might find ourselves able to clearly define our stance. In fact many of us could confidently stand up before congress, in a grand auditorium of strangers and passionately outline a sound defense of the beliefs of Easthaven Baptist Church and its members.

The challenge really rises when we are confronted with people we love and care about who claim to live a homosexual lifestyle. When it comes to friends, co-workers, or even family, our defense is sometimes shaken. It is not that we believe the truths discussed in the previous lessons any less, but it is that our hearts break when the rubber of our faith meets the road of reality.

- What do we do when we learn that a person close to us is gay?
- Do you have close relationships with homosexual people?
- Have those relationships suffered?

**Read Matthew 18:15, Galatians 6:1, Proverbs 15:1, 2 Timothy 2:24-26.**

- According to these verses, are we supposed to respond to sinful behavior? If so, how?
- What are some gracious responses to our homosexual friends and family?
- Is it hard to be grace-filled and gentle when our emotions get the best of us? Is it necessary?

**Personal Application:**

Are there names of family or friends that come to mind right now? Would you commit to praying for them now and on a regular basis? Are you willing to turn the responsibility of their lives being changed over to God who has abundant experience and ability in the life-changing department? Pray now for gracious and compassionate responses to be the defining characteristic of your bold stance upon God's Truth.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

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## **WEEK EIGHT – DAY FOUR    HOMOSEXUALITY**

### **How do we respond?**

In our culture today, it seems that so many are easily offended. The other side of the coin of offense is that many people don't respond well to adverse situations or circumstances and are easily offensive in their presentations. A distinctive trait of a born-again believer is how they respond to the sin and brokenness of the world with a measure of grace that is unexpected and unique. The first aspect of our response is that we must recognize that we are saved by amazing grace despite our own sinfulness. The magnitude of my sin is so great that it cost the very life of God's own Son, Jesus Christ, as a propitiation for the deserved penalty of death. Therefore, I have been forgiven at such a great cost, that I humbly offer grace to others. The one who gives grace most freely and frequently is the one who recognizes they have been given more grace than they would ever give.

### **Read Ephesians 4:15.**

In order to remain true to our Gospel mandate, believers must continue to call people to repent of their sins and trust in the atoning work of Jesus Christ for forgiveness, restoration, and reconciliation. We believe all sins, including sexual sins, must be pointed out as sinful, inappropriate, and hurtful. But we must also continue to be Christ-like towards ALL people and treat everyone we encounter with dignity and grace. Ephesians 4:15 is a reminder to "Speak the truth in love".

Our words must be unmistakably unchanging, founded upon Biblical principles that remain relevant today. Our tone must reflect a Christ-like, grace-filled, compassionate conversation with real people who have fallen and failed into sin but are created in the image of God (*Imago Dei*) and are valued by Christ.



**Read James 1:19-26, 2 Timothy 2:22-26, Jude 20-25, 2 Corinthians 5:17.**

- What do these verses tell us about Scripture?
- Has God's Word ever changed? Will it ever change?
- Why is it important to have a high view of Scripture when addressing cultural issues?

In the twenty-first century, there is an emphasis upon individual rights. We understand this, but quickly counter and point out that individual rights stop where God's Word takes a stand. There is an objective truth in our universe and that objective truth is powerfully portrayed in God's revelation through His Word.

So, where does this lead us? We will continue to share the Gospel in a loving and kind way. We will pray for the salvation of all people. We will lift high the standards of God's Word in marriage and sexuality. We will encourage persons with same-sex attraction to understand the reality of God's Word and seek to avail themselves of the hope that is found in the Gospel.

### **Personal Application:**

At this point you may find it helpful to review the first two days and solidify your understanding of what God's Word says on the matter of Homosexuality. We must pray that God's Word will prevail and that His Truths would be made known in this world of blurry lies and cloudy judgement. It is not enough for us to simply proclaim our values, we must boldly declare the authority and power of Scripture to convict and transform.

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK EIGHT – DAY FIVE      HOMOSEXUALITY**

### **The Compassionate Christian**

My prayer is that this week was challenging and convicting while not being excessively burdening or discouraging. Unfortunately, our sin-sick and broken world has blurred so many issues that we are sometimes crippled by the results. Believers are often so burdened by the numerous “hot-button” social issues that it paralyzes them spiritually and keeps them from responding at all. The important aspect of the believer’s response to remember is to always act and react with a heart of compassion and not condemnation.

**Read Colossians 3:12, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, Philippians 2:1-3, Ephesians 4:32, 1 Peter 3:8, Matthew 7:12.**

- What is the common thread in these verses?
- Not only in the area of homosexuality, but in all areas, how should believers act? React?
- What are some differentiating character traits that distinguish believers from unbelievers? Specifically, the way we respond to adversity is a defining characteristic to the world around us.

**Read Philippians 4:4-9.**

- What worries you about this week’s topic?
- What is our mindset and spiritual posture in the midst of a crooked and depraved generation?
- According to these verses what are the most vitally important things we can do while facing adversity?

One last thought, often times the “What” is our focus less than the “why”. The demeaned behavior trumps the personal causes and effects. A reminder that no one should be defined by their sin, and “shepherdless” sheep are aimless wanderers who might bite before they recognize their need for the Shepherd. It should be saddening and shocking, but not surprising, that sexual trauma (including molestation and abuse) is a significant cause of a person entering the homosexual lifestyle. Almost 50% of lesbians and 75% of bisexual women have self-reported molestation and abuse by an intimate relation in their past. 85% in the LGBTQ community have been victims of some form of sexual assault. (hrc.org, nsvrc.org, pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study)

Richard Land of Focus on the Family reminds us; “Christians loving homosexuals without accepting their lifestyle is the way we can be most helpful in helping homosexuals to be liberated from that lifestyle...We must come to a place where we understand that homosexuality is a symptom of deeper influences that result in same sex attraction.” (sbclife.net)

It is vitally important that Christians share the truth of God’s love with everyone we encounter. We must provide opportunities and encourage them to experience the miracle of grace and healing that comes from the Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **Personal Application**

Have you ever met this subject with condemnation and not compassion? Repent and ask that God gives you a humble and broken heart for the lost. Pray for the homosexuals you may know personally. Pray for God-ordained encounters that offer opportunities to share the Gospel in a grace-filled and God-glorifying way. Pray for the hurt and broken. Pray for those who have suffered injustice and are in need of righteousness.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

# Week Nine



**SMALL GROUP**  
ministry



## **WEEK NINE – DAY ONE PERSONAL SECURITY**

### **Receive Him.**

Personal Security in Christ, living beyond our own insecurities, live as a “Child of God” according to His plan & not hindered by our sense of self. (**Rom 8:28**)

### **Read John 1:12.**

Who are God’s children?

What do we need to do to become His children?

Who are we before we believe Him and receive Him?

What does it mean to receive Him?

What about faith?

“Saving faith results in assurance that God has accepted us because of Christ. If you are persuaded that Jesus, by His death and resurrection, did all that ever will be necessary for us to stand in God’s holy presence—if you believe that God receives us on His behalf—you will be saved and know it. Assurance rises not out of ourselves but from the settled conviction that Jesus paid our debts and met God’s requirements for us.”

<https://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/october-2004/step-four-receive-christ/>

Have you received The Lord Jesus as YOUR personal Lord and Savior? Ask Him to forgive all of your sins and commit to live the rest of your life serving Him.

He must be Lord and Savior. You cannot be lost if you are His.

**Personal Application:** Write down a short testimony (your story) about how you asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. That's your story!

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## WEEK NINE – DAY TWO PERSONAL SECURITY

### **You have been chosen.**

Read: 1Peter 2:9 “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

God chose all believers to be someone special in His Kingdom. When you became one of His, that was only the beginning. The “abundant life” (John 10:10) started when you became a believer. You have the rest of your life to be molded into the likeness of Christ and serve Him.

The priesthood of each believer is a responsibility. “Being a priest involves both opportunity and responsibility. In the Old Testament, a priest held a special place in the worship of God. Priests were responsible for certain aspects of worship, such as the sacrifice of animals. They served as mediators between the people and God.”  
<https://www.baptistdistinctives.org/resources/articles/the-priesthood-of-the-believer-or-of-believers/>

The difference now is, as believers, we are to put on the Lord Jesus, Romans 13:13-14.

The Priest of the Old Covenant had to set aside his life for a period and serve at the Temple. We, as believers, are to set aside our lives from the worldly lifestyle and spend our time in service.

How can we serve as a priestly person? What needs to change in your life to show that you are God’s special possession?

**Personal Application**-Take some time to reflect on your life. What do you need to change so others will see the light of Jesus in your life as a testimony of who you are in Jesus?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK NINE – DAY THREE PERSONAL SECURITY**

### **Live by Faith.**

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Faith is what we need for salvation and faith is our call to serve him. It is our fruit that matters.

The Apostle Paul wrote “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23 (HCSB)

When we place our faith in the Lord Jesus, The Holy Spirit indwells us and as we allow Him to lead our lives, only then can we experience the fruit of The Spirit. His faithfulness to us is our ability to be faithful to Him.

Are you living by faith? Are you experiencing the “Fruit of the Spirit?”

Spending time daily in prayer and Scripture reading are the main ways we can be transformed and let Christ live through us. We must deny those worldly desires that entangle us and try to lure us “back to Egypt.” That place we were before God saved us from our sins and sinful life.



What steps do you need to take to no longer live your life, but to let Him live through you? Maybe you need to make new friends at Church. How do you do that?

Are you involved in something where you may not get anything out of it, but are giving all of yourself to someone else? Isn't that what Jesus did? He is our example.

Are you living your life by faith? Forsaking All, I Trust Him  
(FAITH)

**Personal Application** -- The best way to “be crucified with Christ” as Jesus commanded, is to take up your cross daily and follow Him. Follow Him! Jesus was all about relationships. He spent His time with people to invest in their lives. He was their friend. Are you investing and making friends? Get involved and invest in someone other than you.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

[illegible]

## **WEEK NINE – DAY FOUR PERSONAL SECURITY**

### **Friends in the Messiah.**

John 15:15 “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”

There are no hidden meanings for the believer. We are His friends and He has given us all the answers to our questions. He invites us to participate in His plan to tell the lost who He is and encourage us to love one another as a demonstration of our faith and trust in Him.

Have you thought about what a true friendship in Christ is?

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another” (Prov. 27:17). Friction may happen and sparks may fly but we need to grow together.

There is no better friend than Jesus. His promises are everlasting. We must be involved in the Master’s business. What is preventing you from getting involved? Invest in someone’s life.

List some ways you would like to be a part of another's life and start praying for the desire. Your joy comes from knowing the Lord Jesus and loving others. They are the two greatest Commandments.

**Personal Application-** We are all called to be mentors. As a mentor we can teach, counsel or disciple other Christian friends. The opportunities are considerable, and the impact is eternal for them and you! Get involved in a small group, AWANA, ministry, a committee that interests you. Have you attended PLACE?

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

[illegible]

## **WEEK NINE – DAY FIVE PERSONAL SECURITY**

### **Personal Security**

Colossians 3:1-4 “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

Do you have a personal security of where you will spend eternity? Have you been raised with Christ? You can only experience that same resurrection power by knowing Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

Going through the motions or saying a prayer without a change of lifestyle can make you unsure of where you will go when you die. Even confessing that, “I was saved as a child so I am ok” may be just deception.

Where is your mind set? If your desire is for earthly things and not eternal things, you may be missing the mark. You cannot earn your way into Heaven, but you can demonstrate who you are in Christ with your actions. It is a two-step process Receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior and then serve Him with your life.

**Read: 1 John 5:11-13.**

What “things” is John talking about?



Are you living a life that is continually involved in sin?

Or, are you living a life where you agree and confess your sin and make it your priority to walk with Him?

**Personal Application-** Are you a Spiritual or Carnal person?

The Spiritual Person - Some spiritual traits which result from trusting God:

- Christ-centered

- Empowered by the Holy Spirit

- Introduces others to Christ

- Effective prayer life

- Understands God's Word

- Trusts & obeys God

- Experiences love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, goodness & self-control

The Carnal Person - Some or all of the following traits may characterize the Christian who does not fully trust God:

- Unbelief

- Disobedience

- Poor prayer life

- No desire for Bible study

- Legalistic attitude or critical spirit

- Impure thoughts, jealousy, guilt

- Frustration, aimlessness

- Worry, discouragement

- Loss of love for God and others

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/the-spirit-filled-life.html>

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

# Week Ten



**SMALL GROUP**  
ministry

## WEEK TEN – DAY ONE

## WITNESSING

How were you introduced to the Gospel? If you are like most, someone shared God's love and forgiveness with you and how it has changed their life! What if they never talked with you at that exact moment that God prepared your heart to put your faith and trust in Him? Where would you be now? It is an amazing thing to be part of God's plan to redeem the lost. He asks us to participate in the most wonderful experience a person can have. It is a simple request He's made, yet most believers in Jesus rarely, if ever, share their faith with anyone. We all have the desire, but fail to step up and start the conversation. Some have tried but seem to produce no fruit or experience ridicule, so they quit. So, what is the problem?

For the next week we will learn together how to share our faith with confidence, be obedient to God's call for our participation, and to feel excited when the opportunities arise.

Read Acts 1:8.

Read each word slowly. “<sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Do you see who Jesus is talking to? You! And every believer!

**Personal Application:** Start praying every day as often as you remember to begin recognizing those opportunities God is giving you to share His love with someone. Begin by taking notice of lost people even if you aren't ready to speak to them. Pray that God will put people in your path that you will feel comfortable sharing the Gospel with. Just recognize the times **they** say something to you that would start the conversation. You will be amazed at how many times they start the conversation with just a word or two. Make this a priority in your life to start praying for the lost friends, family, classmates, co-workers you see regularly.

Start by writing their names down below and praying for them. And pray for someone to share the Gospel with that you will feel comfortable with.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]



## WEEK TEN – DAY TWO

## WITNESSING

“Then He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.” Mark 16:15

What does that word preach mean to you? Are you off the hook? Does preach sound like preacher as in a full-time ministry vocation?

Well preach means to speak, talk, declare in a Spiritual sense.

How can we go? Re-read Acts 1:8, “you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”. Jerusalem may be your neighborhood, workplace or school. Judea is also a familiar place, your town. Samaria was not a place local Jewish people went to. It’s a place you may not have any thought of going to, maybe a mission trip. Have you ever given any thought to any of these places? Maybe your Jerusalem is working at AWANA, working with kids that need a Christian mentor, they may even be ready to receive Jesus as their Savior and you can be the person God uses! Maybe Judea is your class or work. And Samaria, somewhere you never thought you would go. Maybe you are the preacher in this verse.

### **Read 1 Peter 3:15.**

Are you amazed that we can honor Him with how we live our lives? That is all He asks us to do. Being a witness and sharing Jesus is a great way to honor Him. We need to be ready when that opportunity arises and take it. Look for the opportunities during your day. So, what are you going to say? A great book to help you become comfortable in these conversations is “**Share Jesus**

**without Fear”** by William Faye. There is even a website:  
<http://www.sharejesuswithoutfear.com>

So how do you start? By praying for the lost ones in your life. Chances are that someone prayed for you. Praying for the lost is a great way to get in the mindset of not only a steady prayer life but also staying focused on what we are called as believers to do. Pray, Love, Serve.

**Personal Application-**The **1%** rule counts here too. That would account for 15 mins per day praying for the lost. How can you pray for 15 minutes each day? While you are walking with Jesus! As you go about your day as the Lord Jesus brings thoughts of people into your path or mind. So, start by praying for the lost ones in your life, the opportunity to share with someone that you will feel comfortable talking with and get familiar with what you are going to say. Maybe get radical and “think about the least likely person you can think of in your life that would ever come to Christ.” *Bill Fay*

Start praying about it now.

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]

### Are you praying about it?

You may remember this verse from a few weeks ago.

Read Mark 1:35. Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He got up, went out, and made His way to a deserted place. And He was praying there. HCSB

Our goal in life is to know our Creator and Savior and to make Him known. Start your day in prayer. Stay in your comfort zone. Maybe it's a short prayer. "Heavenly Father thank you for loving me like you do and for sending the Lord Jesus to pay my sin debt. Fill me with your Spirit and guide me to be more like Jesus today. Help me see the opportunities that you place in my path to share Jesus with someone."

Why did Jesus get up early?

What did He do? What should we be doing?

**Personal Application-** Commitment means 15 minutes per day as a minimum. Start a prayer journal. Write down who you are praying for and track the opportunities. You won't run out of people to pray for and think of the eternal impact. You get to participate in God's eternal plan in others life.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

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**Results!**

We all get tired of planting seeds only to see little fruit. Why can't we see results like Billy Graham or Dawson Trotman? Have you ever looked into their prayer life? Dawson Trotman, Founder of The Navigators would spend 10% of his day in prayer. That's 2.4 hours!

So, start where you are. But do not get discouraged and lose the desire to see the lost saved from an eternity separated from God. Maybe we should add this to our prayer today. "Heavenly Father, teach me to love the lost like you do."

We already know how patient God is. Look how patient He is with us. So, get going and do your part.

**Read: 1 Corinthians 3:6-11.**

Do you see your part? The part you can play in someone's life is leading them to the Cross.

Are you starting to see the picture? It is not about you and me. It is how we live our lives in service to our Lord and Savior

How can you make small changes in your daily routine to be better prepared to be an effective servant?



**Personal Application-** The most important thing in our lives is to find our calling and pursue it. Believers in Jesus and the Gospel have been given His Spirit to guide us and gifts to serve Him. Do you know your gift? Do you have a desire to serve Him? Have you attended PLACE? You may never experience real joy and peace until you find a place to serve the Lord Jesus and others.

## SERMON NOTES:

[illegible]

[illegible]

**Be Honorable.**

**Read 1 Peter 3:15.**

Are you heading in the direction to be an honorable servant? It is determined by the path that you are on.

How does a believer live a life that honors Him?

What do we all need to do to be a better servant?

What are the distractions in your life that need to be “put away”?

**Read Romans 1:16, and Romans 10:17.**

Are you uncomfortable sharing your faith because you don’t have all of the answers? Who changes their heart anyway?

Where do they get the faith to believe?

**Personal Application-** It is all up to you. God is looking to bless those who seek and walk with Him. In the book of Micah, the prophet tells us God’s desire for our lives. “Mankind, He has told you what is good and what it is the LORD requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness (or mercy), and to walk humbly with your God. Look for those opportunities to share His Love with others and plant the seeds of faith in their lives with His Word and your life.

[illegible]

## PRAAYER REQUESTS:

[illegible]