

How God Sees You

Devotional



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You Are Valuable

“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.”
- 1 John 4:9 (ESV)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding of my value in terms of how you see me, Lord. Lord, I thank you for the way that You value me and for the way that how much You value me is unchanging and is independent of anything that I have done or can do.

Intro:

Feeling valued is something that is a natural human desire. As individuals, we want to feel like we are important or cherished to others. This value is often conditional and can require a lot of work on our part. In today’s study, we are going to explore where our true worth comes from.

Read Luke 23:1-49

Background:

- Jesus came to Earth with the knowledge that he was going to die for us.
- Jesus was sent to the cross because the Jews were jealous of the crowds who followed him, the miracles he performed, and that he claimed to be the “Son of God”, which they did not like because he did not conform to the ways of the land and the religious practices that they had.
- Pontius Pilate was a Roman governor who presided over Jesus’ trial.
- At this time, having the public happy mattered more than having justice served, hence why Pilate gave Jesus up and freed an actual criminal named Barrabas, who had been arrested for violence and murder, while knowing Jesus was not a criminal.
- Jesus endured flogging (whipping the skin resulting in the removing of skin in the process), wearing a crown of thorns on his head, being beaten, being forced to carry his own cross (which was big and heavy), but he had become so physically weak that they had to get another man named Simon to carry it for him - and he was nailed to the cross by his hands and feet.

- On the cross people did not die from the loss of blood, but by suffocation because every breath requires you to lift your body and on the cross you cannot properly breathe because your head is hanging below your hands - so it is a slow and painful death
 - The ESV version says in verse 48 that the crowds began “beating their breasts” (as a result of seeing that Jesus was the Son of God) when they saw what had happened, this was a custom of the times that represented grief.
1. Jesus had the power to get himself out of this situation, but instead he stayed and endured all of the pain and died. In doing so he asked God to forgive the people actively harming him. Why do you think Jesus stayed there? Why do you think he asked God to forgive these people?
 2. Is there any relation between us and these people who are hurting Jesus? How are we similar to them?
 3. In the ESV Bible version, it says Jesus’ last words are, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” What is the significance of this?

Read Ephesians 2:4-9

4. What do these verses tell you about your worth in God’s eyes?
5. How does it make you feel that salvation is a gift of God, free for you to take, and is not the result of anything you have done or can do?

You are valuable and God values you more than anything in the world. God made man in his own image. he loves you and values you and your life so much that he sent his only son to die a slow and painful death and spent three days out of reach from his Father so that you could live eternal life and so that you could have a relationship with God here on earth as you walk through darkness and struggle. Your life was bought at the price of God’s son. This unconditional love and grace that God has for you alone is what allows you the opportunity to have eternal life and there is not one thing that you can do to “earn” that for yourself; you just have to accept God’s offer. There is also nothing that you can do to lose the love and grace that God has for you. It is easy to base our value on things like how many friends we have, validation from others, the success we have in the sports we play, in academics, in music, in romantic relationships, in sex; but those things will always leave us feeling disappointed because they will fall short. In these times it is important to know that your value in Christ is the only value that is true and it is unchanging. When Jesus went on the cross, he died for all of the people in the world, but you and your life are so important Jesus would have died on the cross for just you. In Matthew 18:12 Jesus says, “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?” This shows you how much Jesus values you as an individual and how much he cares about your life.

6. What does this tell you about God?
7. What does this tell you about yourself?
8. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: It can be difficult for me to know my worth and where my worth comes from. I find that allowing time to reflect on Jesus' willingness to die for me opens my eyes to how much I am truly valued. This week, we challenge you to set aside a time of silence (maybe 15 to 20 minutes) at some point this week to reflect on what it means to you knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that God sent his only son to die so that you specifically could live. This time can look however you would like it to. Some ideas are to spend the time in prayer, journaling, or in worship.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

John 3:16 (ESV)

Titus 3:4-7

Romans 5:6-8

You Are Known

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

- *Jeremiah 1:5 (Esv)*

Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that you are able to show me what it means to be known by you. I am thankful for the way you know everything about me, yet you still love me unconditionally. I pray that knowing this offers me freedom and security in you.



Intro:

Being known is one of the most special experiences because it is something we all seek. It makes us feel understood and accepted. It is scary because it requires vulnerability and risking being rejected, but when we are known it allows for us to not feel alone. It gives us the freedom to really be comfortable. On the opposite side of the spectrum, it can be really isolating when we don't feel known. What can sting even worse, is when people we think know us fall short. But, there is someone who knows every single thing about us, truly, and that is God.

Read Jeremiah 23:24

Read Matthew 6:8

Read Luke 12:7

Background:

- In the verse from Jeremiah, it is made clear that we can't hide from God and that he sees everything, even the sin and the things that we are ashamed about and do not want to tell others.
- Matthew and Luke are both Gospels of the Bible, which means that they take place and are accounts from when Jesus was on Earth (there are 4 total).
- The verse from Matthew tells us that God knows us so much that he knows what we need without us even asking him.
- In the verse from Luke it is important to note that God knows us even to the smallest details. Sparrows are a bird and in the verse Luke 12:6 God speaks about how sparrows are sold for cheap, but that not a single one is unaccounted for because God's eyes are on them. In verse 7,

he then makes the point that we, humans, are far more valuable than sparrows and that he knows us each so much. None of us will be unaccounted for either, and he knows us so well that he could tell us the number of hairs on our head.

1. What are some things that scare you to show people or tell people about yourself? What is that fear rooted in for you and why are you scared for others to know? How does it make you feel that God knows these things?
2. Have you tried to hide from God in the past? Why or why not?
3. What are 3 questions you would want to ask God to get to know him better?

Summary:

God knows everything about us and knows us to the fullest extent. As Jeremiah 23:24 tells us, it is impossible to hide from God. It is a bit scary knowing that God literally knows everything about us, even the things that we intentionally try to hide from others or things of which we are embarrassed. All of our insecurities, thoughts, or mistakes are all known by God, things that could cause us to be judged or rejected by other people, but instead of judging or rejecting us, God pulls us closer and loves us more than any person ever could.

We have the freedom to be fully vulnerable with God and to tell him anything because he already knows and he still wants a relationship with us. He wants to be able to help guide us through life. Rather than trying to hide from God, this gives us the freedom to go to him with anything and everything because he already knows about it. These can be happy things that we just feel like talking about or this can be something we are not proud of. Regardless, God already knows and he cares.

In Matthew 6:8, it tells us God knows what we need without us asking. This is so cool because he knows what is best for us even more than we do. God knows us so much that he knows us better than we know ourselves. Even if it seems like God doesn't understand us, he does. He created us. God knows each of us so much that he knows the number of hairs on each of our heads, as it tells us in Luke 12:7. We are each individually known by him.

4. What does this tell you about God?
5. What does this tell you about you?
6. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: Think of some people who know you really well and reflect on how that makes you feel. They do not know every single thing about you like God does. Try to find out one new fact about God

this week. (maybe try to answer one of questions you listed for wanting to get to know him better in question #3 above).

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

1 Corinthians 8:3

Galatians 4:9

You Are Loved

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- *Romans 8:38-39 (Esv)*

Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray to leave with an understanding of how deeply you love me and how to love others the way that you love me. I am thankful that your love for me is unconditional and never failing.



Intro:

Being loved is one of the best feelings in the world. It makes us not only feel good about ourselves, but it also makes us feel special and important, which we are. But, the thing about love is that people are imperfect and sometimes we may not feel like we are loved.

Many people see love only as a feeling. They see it as something that we get that makes us feel all happy and jittery inside. This is great and love *is* something can be happy and fun, but love in the world can also be really hard which is why it is important to look at what the Bible tells us about love

Read 1 Corinthians 13

Background:

- This is written by the apostle Paul to the people of Corinth who are claiming to be Christians and members of the church, but who are living in a way that is not obedient to God (they are being hypocrites).
- He is trying to make it clear that spiritual gifts without love are worthless and meaningless.
- Love lasts forever, which is why it is superior to the other qualities and gifts we receive from God.
- Love is not measured by actions alone. We have to also gauge the intention and motives for “love,” and what it is rooted in. Is it genuine? Is it pure?
- Love looks for and hopes for the best in others.
- Paul models his description of love off of the love that God gives to each one of us and we are called to love others like God loves us.

1. If you are doing good things but you do not have love what does that mean? What does 1 Corinthians 13 say about not having love? (hint: check out the first 3 verses)
2. Which of the traits of love do you feel is your strongest? Which of the traits of love is your weakest? (verses 4-7)
3. How long does love last? (hint: look in verse 8, pay attention to if it ever ends)
4. In your life, how do you see God's love as being like the love in 1 Corinthians? How does this impact your life and how you feel?

Summary:

Love is more than a feeling, but it is a way of life, a series of actions, a way of being, and a choice. In verses 4-7 it says "*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres (ESV).*" These verses help to define love and its importance. It is not something that God calls us to lightly, but as it states in 1 John 4:19, "*We love because he first loved us.*"

Some people may come from homes or communities where they have seen great examples of love and where it comes naturally to them to love others well. For others, maybe it is the opposite and love is not something they have experienced and so therefore showing love is a struggle. And unfortunately, for many people, they have been told that God does not love them, which couldn't be farther from the truth.

No matter what your background might be, God loves you unconditionally. Unconditionally means that there is nothing we could ever do or say that would take his love for us away, no matter how hard we try. He loves us in the ways stated in 1 Corinthians 13. We may not always notice, but just reminding ourselves that God loves us, even when we are at our lowest is something that would benefit us. God loving us unconditionally is all we need. It is the only validation that is important and it comes from the one who created us and the world around us. God is love and we get to experience the love that we have for other people because of God. He taught us how we should love and modeled that way of love after his own love for us.

Read Romans 5:8

Read John 3:16

God sent his son Jesus to die for us despite us being sinners, all because of his love for us. He

had you, yes you, in mind when he sent his son to die, just because of his unconditional love for you. He gave up his one and only son, making the ultimate sacrifice, because he loves you so much.

5. What does this tell you about God?
6. What does this tell you about you?
7. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: This week I want you to be intentional about showing this kind of love. Pick one of the qualities of love that is described in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 (pick the one that you feel that you need to work on the most) and we encourage you to really be aware of yourself and try to show love in that way. An example of this would be if you struggle with self seeking love, doing something selfless and putting someone before yourself.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

John 3:16

Romans 5:8

1 John 3:1

1 John 4:8

1 John 4:16

You Are Beautiful

“You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you.”

- *Song of Solomon 4:7 (ESV)*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding of my beauty in terms of how you see me, Lord. I thank you for the way that created me and that in doing so, You made no mistake, Lord. I thank you for who I am.

Intro:

Feeling beautiful can be a healthy and natural desire. It can become an unhealthy desire when comparison and societal beauty standards enter the chat. In today’s study, we are going to see how our beauty is really

defined.

Read Psalm 139:13-14

Background:

- Psalm 139 is a hymn and it’s main theme is “know” - it really emphasizes the fact that God really knows us each individually and how there is not a way to hide from God’s knowledge of us, he will always know us so intimately.
1. What does verse 13 tell us about where we come from? (Hint: Really pay attention to “you knitted me together..”)
 2. What does verse 14 tell us about how we were made?
 3. How do these verses speak to how God knows you as an individual?
 4. Do you really believe that God made no mistakes when making you, and that he formed you piece by piece to be who you are? Why or Why not?

Read Proverbs 31:30

Background:

- Proverbs 31 is a passage that comes from a man called Lemuel.
 - It is unknown who exactly he was, many believe that he was in fact a king.
 - This is an oracle that his mother taught him, one that aims to teach him the kind of woman that he should look for in terms of a wife.
5. What does this verse tell us about beauty and where it comes from?
 6. To fear the Lord means to live in a way in which sinning is something that you “fear” because you fear doing things that may distance you from the Lord. It does not mean to live in a way that makes you condemn yourself, or walk on eggshells because God knows that we all sin in our own lives. It just means that we try in our lives to not intentionally sin and it allows us to recognize when we do sin. What might it look like in your life to fear the Lord? Do you already live a God-fearing life?

You were created intentionally to be the way that you are. You were “knitted together” by God’s hands in your “mother’s womb.” God made no mistakes in how he made you. “You are altogether beautiful” and “there is no flaw in you.” You were “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Every person is beautiful in their own distinct ways and made in “God’s image.” We have imperfections and flaws, but that is not a bad thing like society tells us they are. It frees us from unrealistic pressure and allows us to see true beauty the way that God designed it to be. Embrace that. That doesn’t mean that you are perfect, no one is. It means that you were intentionally created to be the way that you are by God.

That being said, seeking outward beauty can easily become “vain.” That is because often the desire to appear beautiful on the outside is rooted in the worldly desire of wanting approval and validation from other people. There have been “beauty standards” set by society through the entertainment industry and from people saying what looks good and what doesn’t. This is a dangerous thing because it makes people feel bad about themselves if they do not fit into those standards, and for those who do, it can create a heavy reliance on their appearance and may have them falsely believing that is all they have to offer, or all others care to know about them. This is also very difficult to manage because it is not a sin to want to look nice, but it can quickly turn into such if appearance becomes our main priority, an idol, and results in relying on society’s validation that comes from that, or if it turns into us judging how another person may appear. Today, the struggle has been heightened by social media and the number of likes and comments people get on photos of themselves, thus emphasizing comparison to others, and the reliance of approval from others. Admittedly, it is really hard to try to live in a way in which we don’t place a significant value on how others perceive us and our appearance.

The important thing to remember in this is that real beauty comes from us living in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. The only person whose approval matters is that of the Lord, and he will be

judging the appearance of our heart, not the appearance of our face or our body. Some translations of Proverbs 31:30 actually say “beauty is fleeting” instead of “vain” which is also significant because how we look on the outside is not going to stay the same forever, as we age we may no longer fit into society’s beauty standards, but our heart for God is beautiful and has the ability to age gracefully and only get more “beautiful” as we continue to seek and serve the Lord.

7. What does this tell you about God?
8. What does this tell you about you?
9. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: As someone who can get caught up in comparison and obsessing about my appearance out of worry about what others may think, it is relieving to hear about how God weighs my beauty. This week, We want you to choose one way that you want to serve the Lord, whether that be by praying, reading his word, loving people around you, worshiping, etc., and we want you to journal afterwards reflecting on the beauty within that.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

Psalm 34:5

2 Corinthians 4:16

You Are Fearless

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”
- 2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding of how miniscule the things that I fear are in comparison to You and Your power Lord. I thank you for the way that You are always with me Lord, and how you stand alongside me in the face of fear.

Intro:

In a society with so many unknowns and dangers, it is easy to get caught up in fears, worries, and anxieties about what is to come. In this study, we will be looking at why we should not be fearful.

Read Psalm 27:1

Background:

- Psalm 27 is about God’s people having complete confidence in who he is.
 - Verse 1 is talking about having complete confidence in who God is and does so by calling into question people’s fears. In having complete confidence in God, one should not fear anything because all other things are less than God.
1. Why do you think that with God, we should not have anything to fear?
 2. In your life, do you believe and trust that God is truly enough to cast away your worries and fears? Why or Why not?

Read Isaiah 43:1-3

Background:

- These verses come right after the city of Israel falls, this is because the people there turned away from God .
- Where verses 1-3 of chapter 43 pick up, God is offering his people a chance for restoration so that his name can continue to be glorified.

- God offers these people protection and promise, and though he acknowledges that they will face hardship, God says that he will stay with them, and will always be with them.
- 3. When you are “pass(ing) through the waters” of your own life, do you find yourself fearing, or turning to God? Why or why not? (Hint: This question is referring to going through tough situations)

As children of God, there is nothing in this *world* for us to fear. God, Creator of all and our Savior, is with us always. In this world full of darkness, there are a lot of things that can cause people to fear. To fear something is to give it power, and to fear something other than God undermines his power and our trust in him. God is greater than anything and everything that is, ever was, and will be, and we get to be in a relationship with him and to allow him to guide our life. When we lead a life in which we are truly allowing him to lead our life, there is nothing left to fear, besides God himself. To fear God is to fear living life apart from him or his plans for your life. It is important to remember that we have a limited view of what is in front of us but God sees and knows all. Knowing the scope of our view in comparison to his should provide us comfort in choosing to trust in him completely.

- 4. What does this tell you about God?
- 5. What does this tell you about you?
- 6. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: As a worrier and an overthinker, trusting God completely can be very difficult for me to do. I love my comfort zone and find it difficult to obey God’s calls to leave my comfort zone sometimes. This week I challenge you to face a fear by putting faith in the Lord. An example of this could look like fear of not knowing, a fear I have because I am a planner. A way to face this fear this week would maybe be doing something that was not planned, or going without planning out everything for a week and instead inviting God into your lack of a plan, and trusting him.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

Isaiah 41:10

Deuteronomy 31:6

Psalm 23:4

You Are Strong

“The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

- Exodus 15:2 (ESV)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding of my strength in terms of how you see me, Lord. I thank you for the way that I can turn to You always, and for the ways that you empower me and make me strong when things are hard.

Intro:

Strength can be hard to tap into when we are going through situations during which we really need it. In today’s study, we will be discovering where our strength comes from and how we can tap into it during the hard times.

Read Psalm 46:1-3

Background:

- Psalm 46 is a hymn honoring the city of Zion, a city that God has blessed.
- Verse 1-3 touches on God being their (the people of Zion’s) refuge in the face of trials because he is with the people there and will protect them.

1. Where does our strength come from? How does knowing that change how you view hardships in your life?

Read Psalm 91:1-2

Background:

- Psalm 91 is all about seeking refuge in the Lord, and trusting him completely as your defense in the midst of challenging situations.
- These first 2 verses set the tone for the entire Psalm.

2. How can you seek refuge in the Lord in the midst of hard life situations?

The Lord is our strength. We are strong because we have him in our heart. We can get through anything with him. He is a man that even the winds and the waves listen to. We are strong because the Lord is stronger and he is with us and loves us and guides us. In those times that are hard, turning to him will bring us peace and refuge. Having complete trust in him allows us to be strong.

It is easy in the midst of hard times or hard situations to want to either hide from it, panic, and give up, or to want to handle it all by ourselves because we think that we must know the best responses since we are the ones in these hard times. The truth is turning to the Lord for wisdom and guidance is the strongest thing that we can do in those times. He is always with us and knows our struggles and situations and he will help walk us out. Deuteronomy 31:6 serves as a reminder that God “will not leave you or forsake you.”

3. What does this tell you about God?
4. What does this tell you about you?
5. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: When I am walking through tough situations, my natural instinct can often be to take it all on myself and not turn to anyone else, including God. God wants us to turn to him when we are struggling though. This week I challenge you to seek refuge in the Lord and lean on his strength. I challenge you to let the Lord in on something going on in your life that requires you to be strong, and to ask him for strength to get through it. Then I want you to journal about how it makes you feel to have let God into that situation.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:
Psalm 62:1-2

You Are A Child Of God

*“And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”
- 2 Corinthians 6:18 (Esv)*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that you show me what it means to be your child. I am thankful that you created me and that I get to have a perfect and dependable father in you forever.

Intro:

When you think about being someone’s child, what may come to mind are the roles of parents or guardians. Of course they are responsible for the everyday wellbeing of their children, but we also have the gift of having another father, in heaven, God. Let’s take a closer look at what this means.

Read Galatians 3:23 - 4:7

Background:

- This is written by the apostle Paul to the people of the churches in Galatia (“foolish” people) - there were a lot of false teachers taking over the churches in Galatia during this time.
- Before Christ came there was a law. This law was in place because Jesus had not come to save people yet, so it was there to be a system that would help to regulate transgressions (offenses or breaking of laws or rules) and to teach people about God and what a life following him required (pre-Jesus). The law was “our guardian.” That lifestyle was like slavery.
- This showed that people needed a savior.
- After Jesus came, people were no longer slaves to the law, but rather were able to be with God because Jesus took on all of our sins and died for us (we are now called to have faith that Jesus died for our sins).
- This allowed us to be children of God and to be in relationship with him without needing to have that law, which was never meant to be in place forever, but only until Jesus came.
- All believers now get to be children of God.

- Men and women at that time were said to have the rights of “sons and daughters,” when they had the right to inheritance. We obtained sonship after Jesus died for us because we became heirs to God’s promise for us (as descendants to Abraham).
- He wants unity among the church rather than division. He calls us all one in Christ.

1. What was the role of the law?
2. What does it mean to be a child of God? (to have sonship)
3. What is the difference between being a slave to the law and a child of God?

Before Jesus died for our sins, “*We were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.*” (*Galatians 3:23*). The law showed us where we as people, imperfect and sinners, have fallen short and was a great foreteller for Jesus coming. It shows us that because of God sending his son to die for us, we have become children of God. We are official heirs to God’s promise to us, a promise that offers us eternal life with him in heaven.

People “*were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.*” (*Galatians 4:3*) This was back when things were legalistic and people were praising and worshiping those that were not God. But God sent Jesus so that we could in fact be his children. He wanted there to be a way for us to be in a relationship with him, but because sin separated us from him, Jesus died for our sins. Jesus redeemed us and now we get to be children of God and get to call him father.

God guides us, teaches us, provides for us, and takes care of us. This is the same thing that parents on Earth are supposed to do (though in our fallen world, this is sadly not always reality). God “prunes” us so that we can always improve and experience growth, just like our parents do for us at times. God is our perfect father.

4. What does this tell you about God?
5. What does this tell you about you?
6. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: When we think of children, we think about them relying on their parents/guardians and how they run to their parents when they need something, want something, or want someone to play and talk to. We are able to have this freedom with God as well. I challenge you this week to go to God as you are, like a child running to their parents.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

John 1:12

John 14:26
Isaiah 58:11
John 15:1-17

You Are Not Alone

“I will never leave you or forsake you”
- Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding that I am never really alone, Lord. I thank you for the way that You are with me at all times and the way that I can reach out to you at any time with no bounds.

Intro:

Loneliness can be very hard to go through, especially amidst challenging experiences or when trying to manage difficult feelings. In today's study, we are going to see how we are never really alone.

Read Matthew 4:1-11

Background:

- The enemy knew of God's plan for his son Jesus to bring redemption and salvation to all people, a plan that relied on Jesus living a sinless life and dying on the cross, so the enemy wanted to tempt Jesus to try to get him to sin so that the plan could not be executed
 - Jesus was fully human, so these were real temptations that Jesus experienced but he remained faithful
1. What are some of the most difficult worldly temptations that are hardest for you to overcome?
 2. Are there times in your life when you feel/have felt like you are alone in being tempted by things, or times when you feel alone in general? How does it change the way you think about those times knowing that Jesus, our Savior, was tempted during his time on Earth like we are daily?

Read Galatians 2:20

Background:

- The book of Galatians was written by a man named Paul who was formerly known as Saul, and when he was called Saul, he was known for killing and persecuting many Christians - but he found Jesus and that is when he got a new name and became a new man.

- When Paul says, “ I have been crucified with Christ,” he is not talking literally, he is referring to the person he was before, who lived life in a self-advancing way that was full of sin and giving into worldly desires.
 - When Paul says, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me,” he is not saying he is fully Christ and has no characteristics of himself or no personality, it means that he has given God control over his life now instead of his own self.
3. Christ lives in all of us, and we have the choice to allow him to guide our lives and let him into all parts of our life. In your life, do you feel like you have made that choice? If so, has that been hard for you? If not, what do you think is holding you back?

Read 1 John 1:7

Background:

- “Walk in light” is referring to living a life that is Christ-like, and that is pleasing to God - living in a way that is different from others around you.
 - “Fellowship” is referring to community with others who are living life in a way that is serving the Lord.
4. How does fellowship look in your life? Do you feel like you have people in your life that “walk in light” alongside you?
5. How do you think having other people following Jesus in your life helps/can help you to not feel alone?

We are not alone. We are not ever alone, God is always with us. When we are facing struggles, he is with us and he does not like to see us struggle. When we fall down, he is there to lift us up. When we are tempted, he is with us. It is easy to feel alone in relation to God because we do not see him, and he doesn't necessarily respond to us in ways that we are used to with other people. We must remember, when he came down in human form, he was fully human whilst being fully God which means that he too experienced sadness, anger, temptation and more. He knows what we are going through, and he does not want us going through things alone. That is why he sent his Son to die on the cross for us, so that we can have a relationship with him and let him in, and so when we do fall, he can offer us grace and mercy because he loves us so much.

God also commands us to walk alongside one another. Having community with one another is a gift because it allows us to have people there to encourage us in our faith when we are in the middle of a challenging season. Community allows us to also not feel alone in living a life that is pleasing to the Lord, because it is hard to do so in a world full of sin and darkness.

6. What does this tell you about God?

7. What does this tell you about you?
8. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: It can be challenging to feel like you are walking through things alone. I can easily get caught up in feeling like I need to go through tough things alone. This week to combat that, I challenge you to reach out to God and someone who you trust who knows Jesus, and I want you to let them know about something hard going on in your life. This is not easy and requires vulnerability, but trust me, it will be so refreshing and you will not feel so alone. If this is something that you are not ready for inviting another person in yet, that is fine and I just challenge you to open up to God.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

Galatians 6:2

Proverbs 27:17

Joshua 1:9

You Are a Neighbor to Everyone

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”
- John 15:12 (Esv)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that you teach me how to be a neighbor to everyone, even to those who are hard for me to love or respect. I am thankful for your loyalty to all of us despite our sin and how others view us.

Intro:

We have all heard things such as “Treat others the way you want to be treated,” or “Be kind to everyone.” Both are great things to keep in mind, but also God calls us to something more difficult. Rather than just treating others how we want to be treated we have to treat others how God treats us. This is because God calls us all “neighbors” to one another, even to the people we may find hardest to love. But what does it mean to be a “neighbor to all”?.

Read Ephesians 4:25-32

Background:

- It is mostly believed that Paul is the author of Ephesians; however, some people believe it was written on Paul’s behalf (from his perspective) but was written by someone who wrote like Paul.
 - Anger does not equal sin ; you can be angry in a righteous way.
1. In the Ephesians passage what are we called to do or be towards our neighbors? (Look in verse 25 and verse 32)

Read Luke 6:27- 36 (love your enemies) 37- 42 (judging people)

Background:

- Luke wrote the gospel of Luke in the Bible (there are 4 gospels and they all take place during Jesus’ lifetime).

- This was written in response to people (the Pharisees = Jews who look at scripture and word of mouth for law ; and the Sadducees = Jews that look at scripture alone for law) hating Jesus and Jesus' disciples during the time.
 - There were 12 disciples, which are people who followed Jesus closely and got to participate in and witness Jesus' teachings, miracles, and life.
 - The Pharisees and Sadducees did not like Jesus because of his teachings and who he was claiming to be (the son of God ; the Messiah) was a threat to their ways of life (the power that they had and their beliefs).
 - It is important to note that judging is different from confronting someone (a fellow christian) with the hard truth. Sometimes calling out the sin of those close to us out of love and honesty is ok. This is only in a relationship in which both parties have earned the right to speak into each other's lives and have agreed to push each other to be better and to help each other identify the sin in each other's lives because they love and care about one another (and with acknowledgment that they are both sinners and are not perfect or looking down at the other person). Where it crosses a line into judgment is when there are condescending and condemning vibes, having a "greater than thou" mindset, and pushing shame upon others, rather than adding in encouragement.
2. Why do you think it is hard for people to love their enemies? Why do you think it is important for us to love our enemies?
 3. What are the 4 things mentioned in verse 37 and 38 that if you do or don't do it will or won't be done to you? Which one do you struggle with the most?

Read Romans 12:9-21

Background:

- This is written by the apostle Paul to describe new life in Christ (for true christians).
 - Abhor = regard with hate or disgust
 - Persecute = mal treatment or actions towards a group of people (often race or religion) ; in this case for being christians
 - Vengeance - payback for a wrongdoing ; in this case God is saying leave our vengeance for God to handle
4. List out the different things that we are called to do in this passage? Who is someone in your life that you see demonstrating any or all of those traits alongside you?

Some of the ways God calls us to be good neighbors are listed in Luke 6. God calls us to *"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will*

be put into your lap.” (Luke 6:37-38) God calls us to live in a Christlike way. How he loves us and treats us is how we should treat others. No one is perfect and everyone is different. Everyone is different from one another which means there are people you will love and mesh with and there will be people who just by breathing can get under your skin. But, we are all children of God and therefore need to be good neighbors to one another (even if that means setting aside our pride or feelings at times).

Loving people who love us well and treat us nicely is usually pretty easy. The real struggle comes when we are called to love those who are not as easy for us to love. God says, *“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do to them (Luke 6:27-30 ESV).”* What this **doesn’t** mean is that people get free passes to treat you however and that there should be no justice or action taken if necessary, because consequences for our actions are real and we are called to obey the law. What it **does** mean though, is that we should not stoop to the same level as our “enemies,” but rather stay in our character and align with how we are called to live, and that means in love and selfless nature. It is also important to note that to love someone does not mean we have to like them, but it does mean that we must still act in love towards them and turn the other cheek rather than drop to their level. As it says in Romans 12:19, God says *“Vengeance is mine.”* When it gets hard to love certain people we should go to God for help and trust that he is in control and is the ultimate judge.

We are called to *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, live in harmony with one another.” (Romans 12:15-16)* This is such a special way to bond with others and to do life together. Life is not going to be easy and God never promised us it would be. Following God is not a guarantee of a life free of hardships or a life of perfection, but rather offers us freedom from our burdens and the ability to get through certain things with God and those doing life with us. It is important to sympathize with and to genuinely be there for others.

We are not called to do life alone. We are called to be dependent not only on God, but on each other. We are called to love each other, take care of each other, and really just show people who God is because of our own heart for others and how we choose to treat people. We just have to actively decide to look at others as our neighbors, as our siblings in Christ.

DON’T OVERLOOK: We need to respect, love, honor, and be neighborly to non-believers **JUST AS MUCH AS** we do believers, because they are our neighbors too.

5. What does this tell you about God?
6. What does this tell you about you?
7. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: Two things this week. One is to thank someone in your life who has been a good neighbor to you. Two, is to really try to be intentional about being a good neighbor this week. Every night this week write down one good neighbor act you did on that day. (This is to help you be more aware of how you can be a good neighbor so that it can become a bigger part of your character). **BONUS:** Reach out to someone in your life that it is hard to be a good neighbor to and do something / say something nice to them (it might be random and could feel a bit uncomfortable, but it will demonstrate God's love to them through you).

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

1 Peter 3:8-9

Proverbs 24:17-18

1 John 4:20-21

You Are a Sinner

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
- Romans 3:23 (Esv)*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that acknowledging my status as a sinner leads me to recognize my need to live a life alongside you. I am thankful for the grace and mercy that you have given me.

Intro:

What is sin? According to google, a sin is “an immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law.” According to Romans 14:23, “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” Sin is what separates us from God. It is where we as humans fall short.

You are a sinner. We all are. Sin looks differently in everyone’s life, but it is there. We are in constant battle because we live in a world full of temptation and imperfection. A world that is rooted in the self and doing whatever it takes to help us flourish even if that means stepping on those around us. A world that is full of peer pressure and standards that are set by other people, people that are also sinners.

But there is good news!

Read Romans 5:8-10

Romans 5:12-6:14

Romans 6:23

Background:

- This book is written by the apostle Paul and this chapter speaks a lot about sin and what Jesus’ death on the cross really meant (and how powerful it truly was).
- In verse 5:12 the “one man,” is referring to Adam. Adam was the first man that God created. God also created a woman, Eve, to be Adam’s companion because men are not meant to be

alone. They were in the Garden of Eden and were able to eat anything except from one tree, “The Tree of Knowledge.” But they were tempted by a serpent (aka the enemy or the devil ; fallen angel Lucifer). They ended up eating fruit from that tree anyways, making it the first sin and bringing separation from God onto mankind. (for more on this check out Genesis 2-3).

- Adam committed the first sin for all of mankind, but Jesus’s death on the cross brought on grace and salvation for all of mankind.
 - Grace = undeserved mercy or favor.
1. What does the term “sin” mean to you? What does sin look like in your life? (What role does it play in your life, and how big of a role does it play? How does it affect your life?)
 2. Read Romans 5:18-19. One man disobeyed God, leading to condemnation for all people. Another man lived a sinless life and sacrificed his life, leading to all people being made righteous. Who are these men? (hint: one of them is spoken about in the background info and the other was the son of God)
 3. Read verse Romans 6:14. You are not under ____ but under ____? How does this make you feel?

1 John 1:9-10

Background:

- Confession is when you identify your sin and ask God for forgiveness and then turn away from the sin.
 - We all sin and no one is in the clear from sinning. Acknowledgment and being aware of our sins is a sign of our hearts being changed by God.
4. Have you ever confessed your sins to God? Why or why not?

The term sin is thrown around so much, and not always in a God-honoring and truthful way. What is true is that sin is inevitable and it affects us all. No one is immune to sin. Sin is also one of those things where it can be a mixture of what is said in the bible with personal conviction and intention. God knows each of us and our hearts and he is also the ONLY one who we will have to answer to for our sins.

The good news is that Jesus died on the cross so that all of our sins could be forgiven, and so that in God’s eyes we can be sinless. Now there is a free gift offered to everyone, a free gift of eternal life. All we have to do is accept that gift. “If you declare with your mouth “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you

believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” (Romans 9:9-10 NIV)

When we decide to say yes to the free gift that God offers us, we are not expected to be perfect. God wants us to come as we are. Don't wait to go to God until you think you “feel worthy,” or after you think you no longer have struggles with making decisions you are not proud of. Go to him in the midst of that. As Romans 5:8 said Jesus was sent to die for us “while we were still sinners”. We are still sinners today, and sin leads to death, but God offers us a way to have eternal life with him in Heaven. God loves you so much. He had YOU in mind when he sent Jesus to die on the cross and he wants a relationship with YOU!

In Romans 6:1-2 it says “*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*” and in 2 Corinthians 5:17 it says “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*” It is important to note that we should not take advantage of grace because as true believers, God changes our hearts to reflect his and sin could not be more separate from God. Therefore while we are sinners and will still make mistakes as followers, we should be cautious of intentionally and or habitually sinning. Not because we will lose salvation, because that is established through grace alone from Jesus dying on the cross, but because in true pursuit of God we can experience sanctification, being made Holy, from God. This process allows us to live lives that have more freedom, joy, and a closeness to God.

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about you?
3. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: One day this week try to practice confession- no matter if you have done this before or this is the first time you are trying to confess. There is no cookie cutter way that this has to be done. What's important is that you are acknowledging your sin, asking God to forgive your sin, and then making an effort to turn away from that sin. (It may also be helpful to share your sin with someone close to you, someone who is a good mentor or leader for you in your relationship with God. They can help you by providing accountability, praying for you, and offering encouragement.)

If this is maybe something you are not quite comfortable with yet then that is so fine, you can maybe start by asking God to reveal your sin to you and or to work on changing your heart to be more reflective of his heart.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

John 3:16

Romans (entire book is helpful)

You Are Imperfect, and That is Okay

“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your eye, then you will see clearly the speck out of your brother’s eye”

- *Matthew 7: 3-5 (ESV)*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that knowing that I am imperfect leads me to an understanding of why I need you. I am thankful for the unconditional love that you have given me and that you see me as cleaned of my imperfections.

Intro:

Though we were all perfectly made the way that we were supposed to be by our perfect creator, God, none of us are perfect. That is why it is important to recognize where we personally fall short and recognize why we need the Lord. In today’s study, we are going to further explore just that.

Read James 4:10

1. What do you think it means to “humble yourself before the Lord”?
2. Why is it important to humble yourself before the Lord?

Read John 8:1-11

Background:

- Jesus was a man that attracted huge crowds of people who desperately wanted to learn from him. So here we see that he has one of these crowds prepared to listen to him.
- These people called Pharisees were strict law followers and teachers of the law. They did not like Jesus because Jesus loved outcasts, even people who had broken the law.
- Adultery, being unfaithful to your husband/wife, was a major crime that was punishable by death at that time. They used stoning to carry out these executions. Stoning someone would essentially consist of people throwing stones at another person until they were no longer alive.

- The Pharisees brought this woman before Jesus and chose to ask Jesus what they should do as they wanted to expose Jesus as someone who was willing to go against what the law stated.
3. In our lives we may not fall short in that same way but we may fall short in school, in our relationships, and in many other ways. Have you ever felt / How do you think you would feel if your shortcoming was put before everyone? Do you feel like God would want you to feel shame in that way?
 4. Why do you think it is easier to shame others for their wrong doings that are publicized, than our own wrong doings?

We are not perfect. We will make mistakes and fall short in many different areas in our lives. The good news is that God sees us and loves us still despite that, and always will. No one's imperfection and downfalls are beyond God's reach. Being imperfect actually allows us to see how much we need God in our lives and how big and amazing God really is. It allows us to place and see God in his proper position, above all else, and to humble ourselves before God as we have been called to do.

Accepting our imperfection can allow us to show grace to the people around us because we can't expect people to be perfect. It is really easy to expect great things out of people and often times we place higher levels of expectation on different people; like parents, teachers, pastors, celebrities, etc., but recognizing others as the human beings they are allows us to look at their imperfections as such and see how we also are imperfect and make mistakes.

Accepting our imperfection also allows us to show ourselves grace. As easy as it is to have great expectations of other people, it is also really easy to have great expectations for ourselves. It is important to recognize that we will never be perfect and that we will make mistakes. This will help us to realize that we always have ways to grow, and when we fall down, we don't need to be so hard on ourselves, or self condemn.

5. What does this tell you about God?
6. What does this tell you about you?
7. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: I can sometimes get caught up in feeling like I am less than because of my shortcomings. I find it helpful to turn to God in those moments, confess and repent, and thank God for his grace and mercy. This week I challenge you to reflect on a time recently that you may have fallen short, and take that to God. Thank him for being who he is and always loving you despite your shortcomings. Or reflect on a time recently that you may have been quick to judge a peer for their shortcomings. Pray for them and consider doing an act of love or kindness for them to show them that you love and care for them.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

Ecclesiastes 7:20

Romans 2:1

1 John 1:8-9

You Are Enough

“But he (God) said to me, ‘my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities.

For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (Esv)



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that you help me to see myself in the way that you see me. God, I thank you that your grace extends to me despite my sins and imperfections. I am enough with you and because of you. I am thankful for the way that you see me and the truths you say into my life.

Intro:

For many people, we recognize our flaws, sin, and shortcomings and can fall into the belief that we are not enough, not even to receive God’s free gift of grace. This is a result of comparison, which leads us to feel as though we are not as good as others. And settling is often the result of this feeling. We can fall into the lie that we have to do more to “earn” God’s grace and love, or that there is even more that we can do. We will dive into what the Word has to say about that in today’s study.

Read Luke 15:1-7

Background:

- This is a parable, which is a story used to illustrate spiritual lessons or ideas (similar to allegories and extended metaphors).
- Eating together in biblical times was a special and sacred thing.
- During Jesus’ time on the Earth, he was known for being popular with the underdogs and the outcasts. He often went to the low places that others would have turned away from. Because of this, people (the Pharisees - Jews who did not like Jesus because he was uprooting their law with his teachings and causing them to lose some of their power) “grumbled” at Jesus and did not understand why he would hang out with such “unworthy” people.
- Jesus tells them this parable to explain his outlook on this.

- He also provides 2 other parables in Luke 15 as well, that offer the same idea, but with different stories (Luke 15:8-10 and Luke 15:9-31).
 - We are the sheep and God is the shepherd going after his lost sheep.
1. What do verses 4 and 5 mean to you knowing that we are the sheep and God would be willing to leave the 99 for you alone? How does it make you feel that God celebrates each and every one of us?
 2. Jesus often ate with a lot of outcasts and sinners at this time (please refer to the background for further context). How do you think they felt knowing Jesus? How did he make them feel?
 3. How can you be a shepherd as well? (a shepherd to those in your life who may not know Jesus)

When Jesus died on the cross for us, we were offered grace for our sins. A chance to change our destiny of death because of sin to eternal life. It can be hard to believe that this gift really is just that, a gift that requires nothing more from us than believing in Jesus's sacrifice. We might feel like we have to eliminate all sin from our lives, never make mistakes again, read the bible everyday, always go to church, or any other self imposed rule. While it is good to do things that glorify God, we should not be doing them in order to secure salvation. The truth is, living in this legalistic way actually minimizes the true and full power of Jesus's sacrifice and God's grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV)

We are not enough on our own, but with the cross, we have been made to be enough. Enough for him to leave the ninety nine to come after just the one, the one meaning us. Jesus says "*What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.*" (Verses 4-5) He chases after the one, and when he finds them he celebrates and is happy.

4. What does this tell you about God?
5. What does this tell you about you?
6. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge:

1) Just like Jesus left the 99 to find the 1, this week try your best to go out of your way to be nice to someone, specifically someone who might usually be written off as an outcast.

2) Write down the ways you have felt that you were not enough in the past then destroy the paper (rip it up, cut it up, crumble it, etc.) and get a new one and write out the truths (keep this one and put it somewhere special and in a place where you can find it later if you ever need a reminder.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

Matthew 18:12-14

Luke 15:8-31 (other 2 parables)

Isaiah 43:4

You Are Called, and Have a Divine Purpose

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

- *Jeremiah 29:11*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that I leave with an understanding that you have a plan for my life Lord. I thank you for the way that You have a plan for my life Lord, and I pray that I trust you and yield to Your plan for my life.

Intro:

Being called is a gift of God and we all have different God-given gifts and callings. Obeying these can be difficult. This week’s study is going to cover how we can go about obeying our callings.

Read Romans 12:1-2

Background:

- These verses let us know what it means to live the life God wants us to live, and in a way that is pleasing to him.
1. What might it look like to “present your body as a living sacrifice” to the Lord, and not to “be conformed to this world?”
 2. Why does God call us to live differently than others may choose to live?

Read Romans 12:3-8

Background:

- This passage is discussing the body of Christ, often used in metaphor to the human body, and how God gave all of us different gifts to use for furthering the kingdom of heaven.
3. Why is it important that we all have different functions in the body of Christ? What would it look like if we all had the same functions?
 4. What do you think your gifts are? How do you use them/want to use them?
 5. Do you ever find yourself wishing you had the gifts of others? Why is that a toxic way of thinking?

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

Background:

- Trusting in the Lord with all your heart is trusting the Lord with complete and full confidence in his plans and calls on your life.
 - Leaning not on your own understanding means adhering to the Lord's call for you without needing to have all of the answers as we as people often want to do.
 - Making straight a path here is emphasizing and referring to a moral path.
6. In your life, do you find that you fully trust the Lord with all your heart? Why or why not?

God calls us to live a life using the gifts that he has blessed us with to serve him and grow the kingdom of God. This looks like living a life that may look different than others around us, and it will not be easy. In the world full of darkness and sin, we are called to be a light pointing others to God. While we do not have to live this way in order to receive God's gift of salvation, we get to live this way to experience the fullness of God. In order to best serve the Lord with our lives, it requires us to have complete trust in the Lord and his plan for our life, and complete trust that the gifts that the Lord has blessed us with are the gifts that we are meant to have. That life and those gifts that he has planned and given to us should look different from the neighbor down the street, *and we know from experience how hard it is sometimes when we wish we could be doing something different or that we had different gifts, the gifts that others have.* In reading Romans 12, we see how in the "body of Christ" we all have different roles and functions and in 1 Corinthians 12, we see this "body of Christ" compared to the human body. This comparison brings up the point that if the foot decided that they wanted to be the arm then there would be no foot. In reality, the foot can do different things than the arm, and in our own lives, who one person can reach and what they are able to do will be different from who another can reach and do, and that is necessary. Only we can choose to trust the Lord, use our gifts, and adhere to his calling for us.

7. What does this tell you about God?
8. What does this tell you about you?
9. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: When it comes to the day to day lives of believers and nonbelievers, a lot of our lives look the same on the outside. We all go to school, work, go to the same restaurants, workout at the same gyms, listen to the same music platforms, and etc. Reflect on your answer to question number 4. This week, we challenge you to consider ways that you can use your gifts or callings to keep God in the center of your day to day life. (ex: listen to a worship song before work)

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

1 Peter 4:10-11

You Are Capable

*“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”
Philippians 4:13 (Esv)*



Prayer Prompt:

Lord, I pray that my heart is open to hear from You and to learn from Your Word today. I pray that you show me that my strength comes from you alone. I know that I am able to challenge and push myself because I have you. I am thankful for you being there for me when it is hard to be there for myself.

Intro:

When it comes to doing certain things, it is easy for us as people to say that we are not able to do them way too early on in the process. Maybe we feel as though it would be hard, or that we are not ready, or maybe we feel like we just have nothing to bring to the table whatsoever.

This mindset can cause us to miss out on opportunities that God is giving us. It also can cause us to miss out on where God is calling us. He often calls us out of our comfort zones, and there is beauty in that. We want to make sure that we are not writing ourselves out of the narrative too fast because we are, in fact, capable.

Read Hebrews 13:20-21

Background:

- This is referred to as a Benediction, which is the giving or utterance of a blessing.
- Many churches or religious services give a benediction at the end of their services.
- The anonymous author of this part of the bible was, through God, invoking a blessing to the readers of this benediction.
- Jesus was resurrected on the 3rd day after he died on the cross, which is what verse 20 was referring to (Read Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20 for resurrection details).

1. Where have you felt that you were incapable or not properly equipped?
2. What does the term “equip” mean to you?

3. God calls us to do everything in his glory. Do you live your life with this in mind? Why or why not?
4. What is one thing that you feel called to, but that you have not done yet because you have not felt capable?

Being capable is the easy part. Believing that we are capable is the hard part. There is a lot that we are able to do, we just have to do it. We as people get stuck in our own heads by over-thinking, talking ourselves down, or thinking about what others will think of us, when in reality we can do a lot of the things we think that we can not do and God could be calling us to do so.

We are called to obey our callings and to trust in God as we are capable of doing all of this through God. God does not call the equipped, but he equips the called. If we never step out of our comfort zone then we will not be able to see all the things that we really are able to do and accomplish. We will not be able to experience what it feels like for God to provide us with what we need to be able to do something, to equip us.

God is always in control and a life with him does not guarantee us no hardship, suffering, nor does it guarantee that we will have riches, but if God is calling you to something, then He will equip you for it. whatever it is. Accept the benediction from God and trust that God has your back, and through him and because of him you are capable.

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Verses Hebrews 13:20-21)

5. What does this tell you about God?
6. What does this tell you about you?
7. How can you apply this to your life?

Challenge: Do the one thing that you have felt called to do, but haven't felt capable of doing. This might be a process depending on the calling, but use this week and this devotion as encouragement to move in the direction of following and obeying one of God's callings for your life.

Other verses to read for further exploration on this topic:

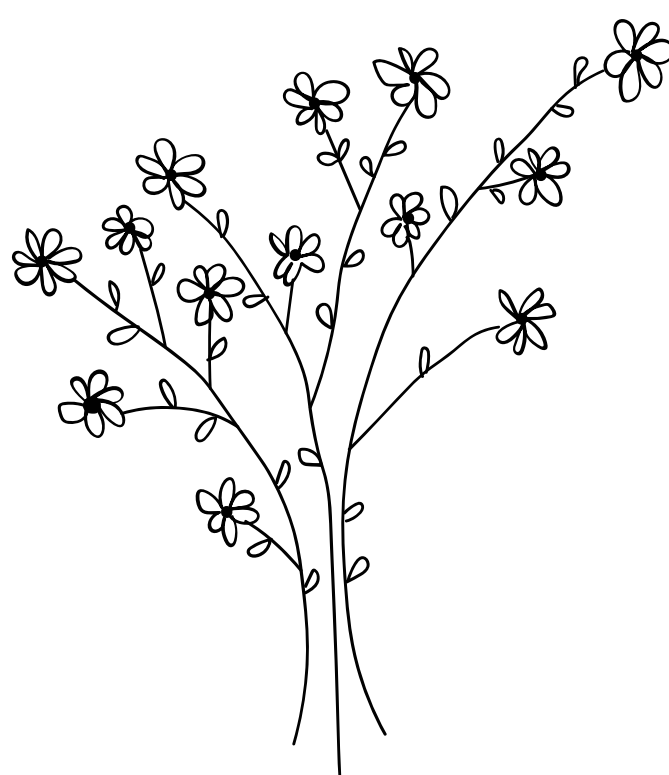
Deuteronomy 20:4

Matthew 25:15

Romans 12:6-8

*Congrats! You've completed this full Bible
study!*

**We hope that you are leaving the How God Sees
You Bible study with a greater knowledge of
what God says is true about you, and that you
feel closer to God Himself!**



We recommend the Crossway ESV Study Bible for in depth Bible study! Much of the background information included in this study came from there!