

Week 40 Psalm 78, 1 Corinthians 9-13, Psalm 79

Psalm 78 — This is a psalm about God's glorious deeds, both great in His deliverance from bondage, and terrifying in His discipline of sin. **In what ways does God provide for the needs of His people?**

Psalm 78:37-72— This is a psalm about God's glorious deeds, both great in His deliverance from bondage, and terrifying in His discipline of sin. **What is one of the reasons why David was such a good king? See verses 70-72**

I Corinthians 9— Paul shows in his own life how he was putting into practice what he was teaching in chapter eight. As an apostle, he had many rights, but he did not exercise those rights for the sake of proclaiming the gospel. He had the right of receiving hospitality and financial support, of marrying and taking a wife with him like some of the other apostles, but he chose rather to make himself a slave to everyone in order to win more people. For Paul to do this, it required strict self-control and discipline. He did this in order to win a crown that will never fade away, not like those runners who received a perishable wreath for all their grueling hours of effort. In order to win our race for God, **what areas in our lives do we need to practice self-discipline?**

I Corinthians 10— Continuing the theme of Christian liberty and the surrendering of our rights (chapters 8-10), Paul gives the example of the children of Israel in the wilderness who had great spiritual privileges like the church at Corinth, but still committed the sins of idolatry, immorality, complaining, and testing God. Each believer must understand that the punishment of the dying of the Israelites in the wilderness is a warning to each of us. On the encouraging side, we have the promise of God's faithfulness not to allow us to succumb to temptation, but to provide for us a morally right solution in every situation which provides for us a way of escape (vv. 1-13). Paul is stating that the new believers at Corinth must understand that when they are participating in the pagan idolatrous feasts, they are sacrificing to demons. They are provoking the Lord to jealousy when they drink both the cup of Lord (at Lord's Supper) and the cup of demons (vv. 14-22). Following Paul's example, we must set aside our own personal freedom and rights, and seek the good of other people (vv. 23-33, 11:1). **Reading verses 23 to 33, what are some questions we need to ask ourselves in making choices on sensitive issues that might offend a weaker brother or sister?**

I Corinthians 11— At this point the Apostle gives instructions about head coverings that properly distinguish the women from the men as they pray and prophesy in the church. Although fully equal in worth and value, Paul speaks of the different roles women have in the church and in marriage (vv. 2-16). The next issue that Paul addresses was the disunity in the church because of the gluttony, discrimination, and even the drunkenness of some believers at the Love feast and the Lord's Supper. He calls for the self-examination of each believer as to whether he or she is eating and drinking in an unworthy manner, and thus be guilty of sin against the body and blood of Christ (17-34). **Although most of today's Evangelical churches do not require a head covering for women, what biblical principles are seen in**

verses 2 to 16? Extra Question: There are three “looks” a believer should take while participating in the Lord’s Supper: the look back (vv. 23-26a), the look up (vv. 26b), and the look within (vv. 27-28, 31-32). After reading the scripture that pertains to each, please explain the meaning of the three “looks.”

I Corinthians 12— Paul continues to address problems in the church. In this chapter he speaks about spiritual gifts which the Holy Spirit has given to each member of the body for the building up and unification of the church, but here in Corinth the use of the spiritual gifts had the opposite effect. The Holy Spirit distributes the various gifts as He sees best for the benefit of the whole body. With the different gifts, the Holy Spirit gives unique spheres of ministry to serve the body through the Spirit’s various expressions of power. The emphasis in this passage is the unity of the body expressed in a variety of individual parts all working in unison for the building up of the body. Each part of the body is interdependent, and what it contributes is necessary so that no one should feel inferior to the more spectacular parts (gifts). **What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and when does it take place in the life of the believer (v. 13)?**

I Corinthians 13— Love is tossed about today in songs and speech, but in verses 4 to 8 Paul reveals a clear definition of what real love is. The most spectacular gifts or actions that are not truly motivated by love are worthless, and sound like a noisy gong or clanging symbol. The object of our faith and hope will be completely realized when we see Christ in heaven, but love is greatest because it will endure for all eternity. Read verses 4 to 8a out loud and insert your name instead of the word “love.” **How true is that to the way you live? Now read it again inserting the name “Jesus.”**

Psalms 79 — This psalm describes a plea for vengeance, deliverance, and atonement that finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. **Give three requests made of God in this psalm?**

Week 41 Psalm 80, 1 Corinthians 14-16, 2 Corinthians 1-2, Psalm 81

Psalm 80 – This psalm is a prayer for restoration calling upon the God of Heaven’s Armies. There are two glaring omissions in this psalm. **What is the author not telling us about the cause of these events?**

I Corinthians 14— This chapter begins with the words, “Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts, and above all that you may prophesy (HCSB).” The church body was divided and not functioning correctly because of the improper exercise of the gifts of tongues. Because of its impressive nature, the gift of tongues was sought after by the church instead of the gift of prophecy, which was the one most needed in order to build up and mature the local church body. Paul gives specific guidelines for the church to follow in its gatherings. The guidelines that are included in this passage are that everything must be done for the building up of the body (v. 26), that only tongues that have an interpreter could be uttered (v.27), and that everything must be done decently and in order (v. 40). **After your reading of chapters 12 to 14, discuss Paul’s statements about the gift of tongues (or languages), speaking of its participation, purpose, and prohibitions. See 12:30b, 13:1, 13:8b, 14:2, 4, 12, 27, 39, and 40.**

I Corinthians 15— Paul now takes the church back to the two pillars of Christianity, the clear explanation of the gospel, and the declaration of the bodily resurrection of Christ and believers. The widespread belief of the dualistic worldview, that looked at the physical world as evil and the spiritual world as good, had also influenced some of the Corinthian believers. Paul forcefully proves the reality of the physical resurrection of Christ as well as our own physical resurrection in the future. He shows that the resurrection of Jesus was well attested by a multitude of witnesses, including 500 who saw Him in His resurrected body at one time. Christ's resurrection was the first fruits of the harvest and gave us the guarantee that one day all those who believe in Christ will also be resurrected, and death will be the last enemy to be abolished. Paul describes the wonderful transformation of the resurrected body which will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. What an awesome moment it will be when our mortal bodies will take on immortality, and we will be transformed into the likeness of the Heavenly Man, Jesus Christ, who gives us the victory! **Using verses 1-11 from this chapter and other places, what proofs do we have of the resurrection of Christ?**

I Corinthians 16— Paul finishes his letter with a plea to set aside money each first day of the week for the poor and needy Jewish believers in Jerusalem. Nearly a year later, he and messengers from all the supporting churches will take this gift for the purpose of helping the believers in famine, but will also be used to unite Jew and Gentile Christians. Paul speaks of his desire to stay in Ephesus because of the wide open door of ministry and plans soon to send Timothy to Corinth but also has a desire to come to Corinth later. In a final exhortation, he encourages the believers to be on guard against the enemy, stay firm in holding to the apostolic faith, be courageous and strong, and be motivated by love in all they do. He closes his letter with customary greetings and final personal benediction. **Who were Aquila and Priscilla mentioned in verse 19?**

II Corinthians— This book is the most personal letter of the apostle Paul and was written about 56 A.D. from Macedonia. The city of Corinth was famous for its sexual immorality (1000 temple prostitutes) and debauchery (drunken orgies), which affected the lives of members of the church. II Corinthians was Paul's fourth letter to this church (two have been lost), and touched on a lot of important themes necessary for the maturity of the church. After receiving good news from Titus that his third letter (severe and painful, 2:4) had resulted in the repentance of the members for their rebellion against him, Paul gave many words of comfort and direction to them. Some of the major themes of this book are; (1) the progressive transformation of the believer by the Spirit (Chapter 3), (2) the treasure of the gospel in jars of clay (chapter 4), (3) the resurrection and judgment of believers (5:1-15), (4) the ministry of reconciliation given to believers (5:16-21), (5) defense of Paul's ministry (chapters 6, 10-12), and (6) the collection for saints in Israel and motivation for giving (Chapters 8-9).

II Corinthians 1— Paul begins his letter, after his usual greetings, by speaking of the comfort he had received from the Lord during his extreme trials and suffering. In a very personal and transparent way, his desire was to pass along to them this overflowing comfort that he had experienced at a time when he suffered so much adversity that he expected to die. The lesson learned from this trial was to stop trusting in ourselves, but to trust only in God who raises the dead (vv. 1-11). Paul was accused by some that he didn't come to Corinth when he said he

would because he was afraid to face them or at best was not straight forward with his words or promises. Paul said that the real reason for not coming in person was to spare them of a severe rebuke. He did not want to come as a domineering dictator, but a compassionate partner since ultimately it was their own faith that would cause them to stand firm, not his faith (vv. 12-24).

This chapter speaks about the suffering and trials we experience as Christians. What are the byproducts of our trials and suffering? 1. Verses 4-7. 2. James 1:2-4 3. Romans 5:3-5.

II Corinthians 2— Paul made it clear that the reason he delayed his visit was because he did not want another painful encounter. He felt that the severe letter was better than a distressing visit even though the letter's contents gave great anguish and tears to both he and the church. His purpose was not to hurt them, but he wanted to express his love for them (vv. 1-4). Now Paul urges the one disciplined by the church to be forgiven and comforted. The person disciplined most likely was the person who sinned in I Corinthians 5:1-5 or possibly the one who was leading the opposition against Paul (vv. 5-13). God put Paul on display to the world as he preached the gospel and spread the aroma of the knowledge of Christ in every place (vv.14-17).

1. Paul said that we must not be ignorant of Satan's schemes (v. 11). What were the two extremes that Satan would want us to take in the area of church discipline? 2. Explain the meaning behind the imagery Paul gave of the Roman triumphal procession (vv. 14-16).

Psalm 81 — This psalm is a celebration of Israel's past history with the Lord giving certain promises if they obey Him and follow His ways. **What promises (from this chapter) does God give us if we obey Him?**

Week 42 Psalm 82, 2 Corinthians 3-7, Psalm 83

Psalm 82 — This chapter is an admonition to Israel's priesthood who had been granted authority to pass judgments on God's behalf but have not acted justly. **What does it mean when God says "you are gods" in verse 6?**

II Corinthians 3— Paul said he did not need to give letters of recommendation to them since they themselves are his recommendation letter that was read by everyone. This letter was not written with ink, but by the Spirit of God in their hearts which was evidenced by their changed lives. Paul declares that in himself he is not competent to do any type of spiritual work, but that his competency comes through the Spirit that produces life, not the letter of the law that only produces death (vv. 1-6). Paul then contrasts the Old and New Covenants where the Old was glorious in its inauguration when Moses brought the written law down from Mount Sinai, and his face shown with the glory of God even though this glory was fading away. The New Covenant that brought life, not condemnation, was more glorious because it remains forever, and produces righteousness and an ever increasing glory (vv. 7-11). Just like Moses had a veil over his face, the Jews who do not believe have a veil over their hearts when they hear the words of Moses read in the synagogue. The veil is only removed when they believe in Christ and receive the freedom that only the Spirit of the Lord gives. As a believer, without a veil covering his face, beholds the glory of the Lord, he is progressively transformed into the very image of Christ by the Spirit of God (vv. 12-18). ***1. Explain the phrase, "The level skills, but the Spirit produces***

life (v. 6b). 2. What activities are necessary in the life of the believer to be progressively transformed into the likeness of Christ?

II Corinthians 4— The ministry of the Spirit that God had given Paul was not one of deceit or a distortion of the truth, but the preaching of the truth with a clear conscience. The God of this world has veiled the minds of the unbelievers so that they are unable to see and understand the Gospel. Paul did not want to make anything great of himself, but instead he looked at himself as a slave and a clay jar. To him, the real important one was Jesus Christ, who is God's light that shines into our hearts, and God's power that transforms our lives (vv. 1-7). Though Paul was pressured, perplexed, and persecuted, he was never abandoned or destroyed. In fact, the more he suffered and was facing the danger of death, the more the spiritual life of Christ was produced in others. He had confidence that just as Jesus was raised from the dead, sometime in the future, the believers in the church of Corinth and Paul would also be resurrected together and would be in the very presence of God. Paul never gave up trying to reach more and more people so that God would receive more and more glory. Though the momentary light affliction may come, we focus by faith on the unseen realities of the eternal. **After reading this chapter, what actions and attitudes did Paul have where he showed himself to be a true servant of Jesus Christ?**

II Corinthians 5— Paul speaks of four great motivations for Christians to live a life that pleases the Lord (v.9). First, the presence of the Spirit in us is a guarantee that even though our temporary earthly tent is destroyed, we will have a new eternal resurrected body (vv. 1-8). Secondly, every believer will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give account of the deeds done in his or her body, whether good or worthless (v. 10). A third motivation is the fear of the Lord. This is a reverential obedience to the Lord, knowing who He is, and the worship and honor that He deserves (v. 11). In the fourth place, it is the love of Christ that compels us. It is what He has done for us in saving us that spurs us on to fully devote ourselves to Him (vv 14-15). Because of all of this, we are new creatures in Christ and ambassadors with a message of reconciliation. Verse 10 says that one day you will stand before Christ to be judged by Him as to how you lived your life after becoming a believer. Do a realistic inventory of your Christian life up to now (from day of your salvation up to today). **What would Christ say about your life and your obedience to Him? This question is personal. 2. Illustrate and explain the great exchange that is described in verse 21**

II Corinthians 6— Paul was concerned that after all the church at Corinth, still many of them were rejecting God's grace and were deceived by the gospel of works preached by the false teachers that had come to them. Paul declared that he was a servant of God and had put no obstacle in their path to keep them from believing and following the truth. In every way he had suffered and endured for their sakes. He had lived a life of purity, patience and love as a true minister of Christ. As a faithful apostle, he expected to be rejected and accepted, hated and loved, and honored and despised (vv. 1-13). Finally, since we are the temple of the living God, we must not be in partnership with the ungodly influences of the world and Satan, but be wholly devoted to Christ. Verses 14 to 18 teaches that believers are to be separated from nonbelievers and ungodly influences. **Explain what does this mean and does not mean.**

II Corinthians 7— Verse 1 refers back to the previous 5 verses (6:14-18) and encourages believers to make a clean break with all kinds of sins of the flesh and of the spirit, with our eyes set on becoming progressively more like Christ. Paul was filled with apprehension after sending Titus with the “severe letter” to the church of Corinth and not knowing the reaction they might have to it. After searching for Titus and finally finding him in Macedonia, Paul felt great relief when he heard of their grieving for the wrong they had done. Their grieving brought them to genuine godly repentance. He rejoiced in the way the Corinthian church showed obedience, love, and loyalty to him. **1. What is required to bring “holiness to completion” in the life of a Christian (v. 1)? 2. Give a comparison between the lives of Peter (who denied Jesus) and Judas (who betrayed Jesus) regarding godly grief and worldly grief. See verse 10.**

Psalm 83 — This is a song demanding protection from the destruction of a coalition that had come to drive Israel out of Canaan. This psalm appears to be written before the victory mentioned in 2 Chronicles 20. **What does this psalm teach us about placing our faith in God instead of our own craftiness?**

Week 43 Psalm 84, 2 Corinthians 8-12, Psalm 85

Psalm 84 — The Psalmist describes his exuberant longing to worship God in the temple. **What are some of the verbs that the author uses to describe his passion for God?**

II Corinthians 8— Paul speaks of the grace of God that was displayed by the churches of Macedonia who financially gave in their deep poverty beyond their ability, in order to send money to the believers in Jerusalem who were in greater poverty because of famine. He urges the church at Corinth to excel in this grace and to fulfill their promise to prepare a generous gift which will test the genuineness of their love. Paul said that the goal of the church is equality so that members will share material resources with other members in order that the needs of each will be met (vv. 1-15). He then explains that he is sending other brothers with Titus to collect the offering in order to avoid criticism on the way funds are being administered (vv. 16-24). **1. In what way was Christ an example of giving in this chapter? 2. How does the way Paul showed fiscal integrity speak to us today? What safeguards do churches and Christian ministries need to take to show the same integrity?**

II Corinthians 9— Paul bragged on the church of Corinth to the churches of Macedonia on their desire to give of their resources to the impoverished believers of the church of Jerusalem. He sent Titus and other men ahead of him to make sure that the church was prepared to give the generous gifts they had promised, but at the same he didn’t want them to feel they were being forced to give (vv. 1-5). Whether we reap sparingly or generously will depend how much we sow. the important thing is that each person decides in his heart how much to give and then do it cheerfully, not feeling under pressure (vv. 6-9). The benefits of giving were that thanksgiving went to God, and that the whole church was unified because of the generosity of the Gentile church (10-15). **Read verses 6 to 9 and Luke 6:38. What words describe how a Christian should give? What is God’s promise if we give this way?**

II Corinthians 10— starting with chapter 10, Paul begins to defend his apostolic authority showing that he appeals to the church at Corinth by the gentleness of Christ, and not using forceful and demanding methods like the false teachers that had come into their assembly. Though he lived in the body, he did not use worldly means of manipulation to produce godly results. On the contrary, he used spiritual weapons to destroy the evil strongholds of the mind and cause every thought to be taken captivity to obey Christ (vv. 1-6). The authority God gave to Paul was for the building up of the church. He was not being two-faced by appearing to be a different person when he was writing them than he was when he was present with them (vv. 7-11). We should never get into the comparison game. These false teachers tried to compare themselves with others using external measurements, but God's mark of a successful ministry is the inward transformation that only the Spirit of God can produce in the heart. This is what the power of Christ accomplished in the believers of Corinth through Paul's ministry. Ultimately, our only boast is in the Lord, and only He can give to us true commendation and approval (vv.12-17). ***What are the weapons of our warfare that demolish the strongholds of the enemy? See verse 4.***

II Corinthians 11— Paul had a fatherly concern that he would be able to present the church of Corinth as pure virgin to Christ. As the serpent had deceived Eve, he was afraid that these false teachers had seduced these believers from a pure devotion to Christ. Because of his pastoral love and tenderness for this flock, he had to forcefully defend his apostolic calling against the abuse and accusations of the false apostles. First, he indicated that he had nothing but pure motives in planning the church which was manifested by the fact he did it free of charge to them. He labored with his own hands as a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3) and received gifts from other churches to evangelize them. The false apostles that came into the church were peddlers of God's Word (2:17), deceitful workers, disguising themselves as angels of light just as Satan had done. Paul then indicated that the sign of a true apostle of Christ is suffering. He then began to "talk like a fool" and chronicle his credentials and experiences of suffering including the daily pressure because of his care for all the churches (vv21-28). Another sign of a true apostle was a willingness to show weakness (vv. 29-33). ***What were the practices mentioned by Paul in this chapter of these deceitful workers who masqueraded as apostles of Christ?***

II Corinthians 12— Paul continues to give his qualifications as an apostle. First, he speaks of visions and revelations and describes a time when he was caught up into the third heaven and heard things so astounding that no human being can tell them. He then speaks of his "thorn in the flesh" that a messenger of Satan sent to keep him from pride. He also reminds them of the other signs of an apostle he did among them which were wonders and miracles. Paul reminded them that he never burdened them with his financial needs, but only sought what was good for them and their building up. His one concern was that when he arrives he might still find them quarreling, jealous, selfish, arrogant, and unrepentant of their sexual immorality and promiscuity. ***What lessons did God teach Paul by allowing him to have this "thorn in the flesh?"***

Psalm 85 — The Lord's unfailing love and faithfulness are remembered by the psalmist in the midst of exile. ***What does verses 10-11 tell us about our proper response to God?***

Week 45 Psalm 86, 2 Corinthians13, Galatians 1-4, Psalm 87

Psalm 86 — This psalm is a prayer of David containing both praises and petitions for God to act on his behalf. Notable in this Psalm are what David asks for, and what he does not. **What does this tell you about David's heart?**

II Corinthians 13— Paul tells the church that this will be the third time he is coming to them and will deal with the sin in the church if they haven't already dealt with it by the time he arrives. Those in the church that don't believe that Paul had Christ's authority are warned that when he arrives in Corinth, God's power will be with him to discipline them. They must test themselves to see if their faith was genuine, but should recognize that he has not failed the test of his apostolic authority, and will make a show of Christ's power if it is necessary. Paul closes his letter with his final greetings encouraging the church to grow in maturity, comfort one another, and live in unity and peace. 1. Paul said, "Examine ourselves to see if your faith is genuine (NLT)." **What evidences are there that we really are born again and a member of God's family? See Romans 8:9, 16, I John 3:14, I John 2:29, 3:9, and I John 5:4. 2. What major doctrine of scripture is found in verse 14?**

Galatians— This short powerful book proclaims the freedom we have in Christ. The purpose was to refute the Judaizers who were trying to persuade the Gentiles that in order to be saved they must obey all of the Law of Moses including circumcision and the dietary laws. This book was written by the Apostle Paul to the churches of Galatia in about 49 A.D. Paul and Barnabas had planted these churches and then heard later that they were being persuaded to give up their freedom in Christ in order to obey all of the law. This book clearly declares the gospel of justification by faith in Christ alone apart from any works of the law (2:16).

Galatians 1— After a brief introduction, Paul begins by telling the believers at Galatia how surprised he is that they have so quickly allowed the content of the gospel to move from salvation by grace through faith to that of human effort and the keeping of the law. He clearly states that the gospel he preached did not come from a human source but was by direct revelation from Jesus Christ Himself. Paul then gives a short history of his life to authenticate his ministry starting with his zealous persecution of the church, his conversion experience, his immediately going to Arabia after being persecuted in Damascus, and then after three years, going to Jerusalem to be with Peter and James. In verse 10 Paul says, "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ." Paul's first priority was to please God, not men. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 meaning the strongest), **how bold are you in declaring your faith in Christ to the non-Christian world instead of appeasing them and going along with their agenda? This is a personal question.**

Galatians 2— Paul continues to prove his premise that we are saved by grace through faith alone. He recounts his meeting with James, Peter, and John in Jerusalem that took place fourteen years later. Even though false brothers had infiltrated the church, he and Barnabas did not give in to the Judaizers for a moment but boldly declared the truth of the gospel and the freedom believers have in Christ. Just as Peter was the Apostle to the Jews, the leaders of the church in Jerusalem recognized Paul's calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and didn't demand that Titus who had accompanied them on the trip be circumcised. Sometime later when

Peter came to Antioch, Paul opposed Peter to his face because of his hypocrisy. When the circumcision group came from Jerusalem, Peter would separate himself from the Gentiles for fear of the Judaizers. Paul said that we Jews know we are justified by faith in Christ alone and not by observing the law which no one can ever keep perfectly. Just because Christians sin, it does not mean that we need to go back and reestablish the law as a means of salvation. The gospel of grace now infuses us with power that the law can never give us. Christ lives in us and produces His righteousness through us as we trust Him moment by moment. If man could become righteous through keeping the law then Christ died in vain. ***What did Paul mean when he said, "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God (v. 19 NIV)?"***
Extra question: Explain the meaning of Galatians 2:20.

Galatians 3— Paul begins in verse 2 with a question. Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the Law of Moses or believing the message you heard about Christ? "After starting your new life in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort (v 3 NLT)?" The principle of salvation by faith starts all the way back with Abraham in Genesis 15:6 where he believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness. So now all who have faith in Christ are Abraham's children. The law brings a curse not life, but Christ took the curse for us by dying on the cross (Deuteronomy 21:23). Because of his faith, God gave an unconditional promise to Abraham which preceded the law by 430 years. The "promise" declares what God will do for us, and the "law" speaks of what we do for God through our own efforts. The law was given to show people their sins until the coming of the promised seed (Jesus Christ) who would come and take away their sins. The law can't give life and makes everyone prisoners of sin. We, however, "receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ (v. 22 NLT)." Since we are all children of God by faith, the law is no longer our guardian. It doesn't matter your race, status in life, or gender. If your faith is in Christ, then you are heirs of Abraham and the promise God made to him. ***In verses 2 to 3, what proof or evidence did Paul give that salvation is by faith and not by obeying the law? Extra Question: If we become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus alone (v. 26), what is the meaning of baptism in verse 27 which on the surface seems t***

Galatians 4— Before the coming of Christ to redeem those under the law, people were like children under a guardian who receive instructions and commands from these guardians even though they are heirs of the father's wealth, and their guardian is a slave. But now through faith in Christ, we have been adopted as sons (and daughters) with the full rights and privileges of adult sonship including the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-7). "But now you Galatians are returning to childhood living by being enslaved again to useless principles and special days and seasons. I am so fearful that my ministry with you has been wasted. You have changed. You once had great love and empathy for my broken physical condition, but now I have become your enemy for telling you the truth. These Judaizer guardians have evil intentions to return you to the bondage of the law, but now I am going through labor pains until Christ is formed in you (vv. 8-20 paraphrased)." Paul then gives an allegory to show the difference between those who are born after the flesh or human effort, and those who are born of the promise. Those who wish to live under the law (Sinai Covenant) are like Abraham's son, Ishmael, who was a child of the slave Hagar. Those who wish to live by faith in God's promise are like Abraham's son, Isaac, who was a child of Sarah, the free woman (New Covenant) (vv. 21-31). 1. A phrase in verse 4

says, “But when the fullness of times had come (ESV, NKJV).” This refers to the coming of the first coming of Christ to earth. **How were the conditions of the world ripe for Christ’s first coming and for the spreading of the gospel to the known world in the first century? 2. What is the main principle being taught in the story of Sarah and Hagar in verses 21-31?**

Psalm 87 — The psalmist gives a joyous song celebrating the majesty of Jerusalem, the city of God. Consider verses 5 and 6, where God registers the inhabitants of Zion. **Explain whether you think this is prophetic or historical**

Week 46 Psalm 88, Galatians 5-6, Ephesians 1-3 Psalm 89

Psalm 88 — The psalmist blames God and begs for help during a time of adversity and despair. **Have you experienced a time when you blamed God for the struggles in your life? If so, how did you overcome your doubts?**

Galatians 5— After a contrast of slavery and freedom in chapter 4, Paul emphasizes the importance of freedom that only comes through Christ. The act of circumcision has no value in the Christian life since being circumcised obligates a person to keep all of the law and cuts that person off from Christ Himself. The true righteousness of God is received by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit with acts of love as the end result (vv. 1-6). The churches of Galatia were spiritually advancing, but this false teaching had caused them to get off course. This doctrine of the freedom in Christ is not a license to do anything we want but is an opportunity to serve one another in love (vv. 7-15). The key to living a life that is honoring Christ is to walk in obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The choice is clear, live under the system of the law with the end result being the works of the flesh (sinful nature) and finally ends in death (vv. 19-21), or keep in step with the Holy Spirit’s promptings which produces in us the fruit of the Spirit (vv. 22-23) with eternal life as the end result. Daily we crucify (put to death) our sinful desires by calling on the Holy Spirit to give us power over them moment by moment. **How do we walk in (live by) the Spirit (v. 16, 18, and 24-25)?**

Galatians 6— This chapter speaks of the ways of walking in the Spirit and in love including the gentle handling of brothers who have sinned, sharing in the burdens of others, being responsible with one’s own work and conduct, and generously providing for the needs of those who teach us (vv. 1-6). God has put in the universe the law of sowing and reaping. Our actions have consequences with the result of decay and death if we sow to the flesh or eternal life if we sow to the Spirit. We must never get greedy doing good to all people and especially to believers because God guarantees a bountiful harvest. The Judaizers didn’t keep the law themselves, but they wanted these people to be circumcised so that they can boast that they have made a convert. Paul boasted in the weakness and shame of the cross because through Christ’s death the evil Satanic world system has been destroyed. Such a system had absolutely no attraction to him. What really matters is *that through the power of the cross of Christ*, God is creating a whole new creation of people who are being transformed from the inside out (vv. 7-17). **Explain the meaning of verses 2 and 5. It seems like Paul is contradicting himself.**

Ephesians 61 A.D. This book was a circular letter to be sent first to the church at Ephesus, and then to be read to all the churches in the province. This marvelous letter begins with the incredible blessings we have received because of our relationship with Christ, and the awesome future the Father has planned for us all because we have by faith trusted in Christ. “In God’s eternal plan, God’s great masterpiece the church has now been manifested, in which Christ is united with all the redeemed whether Jew or Gentile, transforming relationships in this life and leading to a glorious future.” Chapters 1 to 3 describe all our blessings we have received and then chapters 4 to 6 gives us practical ways we can live in unity in our relationship with God and other believers. In chapters 5 and 6 Paul speaks of the various attitudes and responses in relationship to marriage, family, and work. The book closes with the believer’s armor that must be put on daily for the spiritual battles we face.

Ephesians 1— After a short greeting, the Apostle Paul gives us two extended sentences in the Greek language. The first sentence is found in verses 3 to 14, and the second sentence is from verses 15 to 23. We as Christians have been blessed with a multitude of blessings by the Father which came to us through our relationship with Christ. God chose us and adopted us that we should be holy and blameless sons and daughters. The first mystery that Paul revealed in this book is that God will gather together all of His people, both which are in heaven and on earth, in the dispensation of the fullness of the times at the end of the age (vv. 3-14). In an extended prayer for the believers, Paul prays that they will realize and appropriate all the richness and power that is theirs in Christ. The passage ends with the exaltation of Christ over all creation and created beings to become the head over all things for the benefit of the Church, which is His body that fills everything with Himself. 1. Verses 3 to 14 say that the great spiritual blessing to become God’s children was a joint participation of the Trinity. What part did each member of the Trinity play for us to become His children? See verses 4-5, 11, verse 7, and verse 13. 2. What are the four prayer requests that Paul makes for the believers? See verses 13 to 21.

Ephesians 2— Paul now speaks of our past slavery to sin, self, and the Devil that was our life’s narrative thus leaving us hopeless and spiritually dead (vv. 1-3). The words “But God” shows us the initiative God took, motivated by His mercy and love, to transform evil vile sinners, to raise them from the dead and give them new life, and enthrone them in heavenly realms with Christ. All this was an incredible free gift of God’s grace, apart from any human effort, for the purpose of doing good works which are motivated by God’s Spirit living in us and are done for His glory (4-10). Now Paul changes from addressing personal reconciliation to that of corporate reconciliation. He paints a bleak portrait of the Gentiles past which was without Christ, without hope, and excluded from the covenants and citizenship of Israel. The words “But now in Christ Jesus” shows the reconciliation that the cross and the blood of Christ achieved to unite two previously hostile enemies to become one new body, thus granting peace, equality, and access through the Spirit to the Father. Now it is clear that race, culture, social status, education, past religion, or gender are no longer relevant. Everyone who is born of the Spirit is a member of the God’s new building, a holy temple of God, with the foundation made up of the apostles and the prophets, and Christ being the cornerstone. **1. Who are the three enemies of the Christian? See verses 1 to 3. 2. Express in bullet points the means and goal of salvation in verses 8 to 10.**

Ephesians 3— Paul continues to speak about this body, the church, which God revealed to him. This revelation was a mystery that was not previously known to past generations. “This is so God’s multi-faceted wisdom may now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavens (v. 10/HCSB).” The apostle addresses his prayer to the Father of not only the Jews but also the Gentiles whether they are in heaven or on earth. First, he asks that our inner man will be strengthened with power through the Spirit. Secondly, he prays that they will have the comprehension and knowledge of the love of Christ in all its fullness (14-19). Paul finishes with the fact that God’s ability to work in us and for us far exceeds our scope of comprehension. He then ends with a beautiful doxology (vv. 20-21). ***What are the two mysteries found in chapters 1 and 3, and what did Paul mean by the word mystery? See 1:9,10 and 3:3, 6.***

Psalm 89— This is a song, likely a lament, which struggles with God’s discipline and His unsearchable ways. **In verses 38 & 39, Did God break His promise to David and renounce His covenant?**

Week 47 Psalm 90, Ephesians 4-6, Philippians 1-2, Psalm 91

Psalm 90 — Moses contrasts God eternal nature and man’s mortality, asking God to relent and renew his favor toward Israel. Look for “You”, “We”, and “Our” in this psalm. **Do any of these words stand out to you? If so, why?**

Ephesians 4— Paul has just written three chapters describing all the blessings we have received as children of God without giving a single command. Now in chapters 4 to 6, believers are given practical ways we should respond and “walk worthy of the calling we have received.” Godly living with fellow believers will require patience, humility, and love as we strive for unity in the body. This unity of the Church has as its foundation the Biblical teachings of the first three chapters (vv. 1-6). To promote the unity and growth of the body, Jesus distributed gifts to all believers at His resurrection but gave the specific gifts for some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers in order to equip, build up, and prepare the saints for works of service and to reach their full maturity in Christ (vv. 7-16). The life of the non-believing Gentiles is one of futility and rebellion, as well as being marked by sensuality and impurity. As believers, we are commanded to take off the old self and its practices and put on the new self that God planted in us the moment we believed so that Holy Spirit can produce in us the very likeness of Christ (vv. 17-24). The righteous character of Christ will be evidenced in: our truthful speaking, our handling of anger, our industry at work, our wholesome talk, our words and attitudes with others, and our forgiving spirit (vv. 25-32). ***Taking into consideration this chapter, give a summary of what a mature Christian looks like.***

Ephesians 5— Paul gives general instructions on how we can be imitators of God and walk in love as we saw in the life of Christ. He gives us guidelines for sexual propriety, speech, and godly living. Since we are children of light, we need to be godly in our associations and conduct, living a life of goodness, righteousness, and truth. We need to have as our goal the desire to please the Lord in everything, exposing the fruitless works of darkness, and wisely investing our time in discerning and doing the will of God. The keys to a Spirit-filled life are a community of

believers that are filled with praise and thanksgiving, mutually submitting themselves to each other in love (vv. 1-21). From 5:22 to 6:9, the apostle spells out the duties and responses in our relationships in life: in marriage, between children and parents, and between slaves and masters (employees and employers). In the relationship of marriage, Paul says, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord (v. 22).” To the husbands he says, “Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her (v. 25).” Then to sum up he says, “Let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (v.33).” In this passage the relationship between the husband and the wife is mirrored in the relationship between Christ and the church. “All concerned experience personal worth, value, security, and significance when these reciprocal relationships are exercised under the lordship of Christ.” #12 p. 717. ***Explain the biblical meaning and purpose of wives submitting to their husbands, and husbands loving your wives as Christ loved the church.***

Ephesians 6— Now Paul speaks of the relationship between children and parents and brings to mind the importance of this because it is the 5th Commandment with a promise for children who keep it. Fathers also must be careful not to stir up anger in their children by the way they discipline them (vv. 1-4). Next, the apostle speaks of the relationship of slaves (employees) and masters (employers). Slaves should serve their masters as he would serve Christ, realizing that someday the Lord will pay them back. Masters are to treat their slaves in the same manner that Christ would treat masters since one day they will be judged by Christ Himself for their stewardship (vv. 5-9). Finally, Paul reminds believers that they are engaged in a fierce spiritual conflict against Satan and his spiritual forces of evil. Unless we find our strength in the Lord’s mighty power, daily put on the believer’s armor, and stand firm in the victory Christ has already won, we will not win in the battle. In addition to the spiritual armor that protects us, we must use the offensive weapons of God’s Word and prayer in order to have victory in the battle (vv. 10-24). ***1. What is spiritual warfare? 2. What are some steps we need to take to gain victory in our battle over our enemy?***

Philippians— This epistle was written by the Apostle Paul while he was under house arrest awaiting trial in Rome about 62 AD. This marvelous book was a personal letter to the church of Philippi thanking them for their generous financial support and encouraging them to keep Christ at the forefront of their church and personal lives. The beginning of the church of Philippi is described in Acts 16:12-40, and speaks of Lydia coming to know the Lord, the imprisonment of Paul and Silas, and the salvation of the jailer and his family. “Christ” and “joy” are the two themes of this book (each given 18 times), with the most precious words in this letter showing Christ’s humility and exaltation (2:5-11).

Philippians 1— After his initial greeting to the church, Paul tells them of his affection for them and thanks them for their partnership in spreading the gospel. He then prays for them that their love would grow in knowledge and discernment, and that their holiness would increase (vv. 1-11). Paul rejoices that his imprisonment has caused the advance of the gospel, even though some may preach the gospel out of rivalry and strife. His desire is that he will not be ashamed about anything, but will speak boldly for Christ and honor Him (vv. 12-20). Although Paul lived to serve Christ, he also had a desire to depart and be with Christ. He knew that he would stay longer on this earth because of the work God wanted him to do for the churches (vv. 21-30). ***As***

you read over this chapter, what godly attitudes, motives, and desires do we see in the Apostle Paul that should also be in our lives?

Philippians 2— Paul desires that the church in Philippi be united in one spirit and purpose by living a life of humility and selflessness (vv. 1-4). Christ Jesus, clearly shown here as fully God, is our true example of humility. He now has been exalted by the Father to the highest place (vv. 5-11). We are to shine as lights in the world by living a pure and blameless life in a depraved generation (vv. 12-18). It was Timothy who has genuine interest for the welfare of the church, thus showing the Christ-like attitude of humility and love. Paul sent Epaphroditus back to the church of Philippi, thanking God for sparing his life and for his faithful service to Paul in Rome (vv. 19-30). **1. Reading this chapter, what are the attitudes and actions we should have as Christians? Which one do you need to work on the most? 2. What is your understanding of verses 12b and 13? Is salvation by grace or works? Explain.**

Psalms 91 — Commonly known as the “Soldier’s Psalm”, it recounts the blessing of God’s protection toward those who trust in Him. **Are the promises in this psalm conditional?**

Week 48 Psalm 92, Philippians 3-4, Psalm 93 and 94

Philippians 3— In this Christ-centered chapter, Paul contrasts the self-righteousness of the Judaizers including that of his former life, with the perfect righteousness of God which comes only through faith in Christ Jesus. He wanted to truly know Christ and the dynamic power of His resurrection. Such knowledge only comes through sharing in His suffering and death (vv. 1-11). Being assured of attaining eternal life through faith in Christ, we now have a responsibility to run the specific race God has set up for each one of us. Forgetting the past victories or defeats, we now press on to finish our race well, and receive personally from Christ our heavenly reward (vv. 12-15). Though the believers at Philippi were proud citizens of Rome, they needed to focus on their eternal citizenship in heaven (vv. 16-21). **1. If Paul was blameless regarding the righteousness of the law (v. 6), why did he need the righteousness of God that comes by faith? 2. Comparing your spiritual life to a race, where are you right now? 1. Not sure there is a race. 2. Sitting the race out. 3. At the starting blocks. 4. Running at full speed. 5. Ready to give up. Explain.**

Philippians 4— This fourth chapter contains some powerful verses that have been a great consolation to Christians down through the ages. After urging Euodia and Syntyche to be unified, Paul encourages the church to find their full joy in the Lord and be known for graciousness (vv. 1-5). He further gives the prescription to live a life that is not controlled by worry, and then guarantees complete peace for those who follow it (vv. 6-7). Paul asserts that right thinking will lead to godly living (vv. 8-9). He had learned contentment over the years because he found out that Christ would give him the strength to see him through every circumstance (vv. 10-14). Paul assured the church that all their needs would be met in light of their fragrant offering to him (vv. 15-23). **Is it a sin to worry? What is the prescription to live a worry-free life? Have you found it and do you practice it? EXTRA: Why is the teaching of verse 8 so important for the Christian?**

Psalm 92 — God's love and faithfulness are celebrated with this song. **List the ways that God's love and faithfulness are manifested (hint: look for the use of God's proper name Yahweh, translated as LORD in most English Bibles).**

Psalm 93 — The psalmist teaches that God is in control, mightier than nature, and trustworthy forever. **List the attributes of God described in this psalm.**

Psalm 94 — God's role as divine Judge is examined in this psalm. **What actions does God take toward the various types of people listed here?**

Week 49 Psalm 95- Psalm 101

Psalm 95 — This psalm (possibly written by David) celebrates God's sovereignty and exhorts us to remain malleable to His instruction. The dangers of hardening our hearts toward God are still present today. **What are some ways that we can avoid making the same mistake that the Israelites did? See also Hebrews 3:12-15 & 4:6-7**

Psalm 96 — This is a song declaring the glories of God to the nations and compelling us to do the same. **Why is God worthy to be praised (vv 4-6, 10, 13)?**

Psalm 97 — God's righteous and just reign is celebrated in this psalm. **What are we instructed to do in response to God's sovereign rule (see vv 10 - 12)?**

Psalm 98 — This psalm helps us to remember that God loves to rescue his people. **How has the LORD rescued you?**

Psalm 99 — The psalmist reminds us that our omnipotent God provides both forgiveness and discipline when we go astray. **What were the sins of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel? See Exodus 32:35, Numbers 20:10-12 & 1 Samuel 15:11, 35;16:1**

Psalm 100— This is a song celebrating God, who is both our Creator and our Shepherd. **Consider verse 3. How does it feel to be cherished by God?**

Psalm 101— David ponders God's love and vows to uphold righteousness during his reign. **How can we internalize David's passion to order our thoughts, conduct, and relationships?**

Week 50 Psalm 102- Psalm 108

Psalm 102— The psalmist reminds himself of God's compassion and glory in the midst of intense personal grief. **How does reminding ourselves of God's goodness help in times of great distress (see verses 12, 13, 18-21; Hebrews 10:23)?**

Psalm 103— David reminds us to be mindful of all of God's benefits and encourages us to praise Him for all that He has done. **Who does David encourage to praise God (hint: look for the word praise in the psalm)?**

Psalm 104 — God’s greatness is celebrated in this psalm recounting the many wondrous things that He has done. **Imagine you were writing this psalm, how is He “very great” to you?**

Psalm 105 — The psalmist recounts Israel’s miraculous deliverance from famine, slavery, and their conquest of Canaan, giving glory to God for all that he has done. **Why did God do this for the Israelites?**

Psalm 106— This is a psalm contrasting God’s faithful providence and Israel’s waywardness. Consider the sins of the Israelites and God’s responses (hint: look for “they” and “he”). **How does God deal with their sinfulness?**

Psalm 107 — This is a song which reminds us that God is faithful to forgive and rescue us when we falter. This chapter describes different adversities that God allows us to endure, whether caused by our own choices or by circumstances we can’t control. **What did this adversity cause them to do? See verses 6, 13, 19, and 28. Have you ever had such an experience that you responded in the same way? If so, describe.**

Psalm 108 — David recalls God’s promises while asking for help against Israel’s foes. David feels like God has rejected Israel (vs. 11). **What is his response? See verses 1-6, 12-13, also 7-9.**

Week 51 Psalm 109- Psalm 115

Psalm 109 — David appeals to God against wicked enemies who tried to destroy him. Do we have the right to ask **God to judge those who have wronged or betrayed us? Consider vv 4-7, Luke 23: 34, and Romans 12:14, 17-19.**

Psalm 110 — This is a messianic psalm which was quoted by Jesus in the gospels and mentioned by the Apostles in various epistles. **What does this Psalm teach us about Jesus?**

Psalm 111 — This is a song praising God’s works and commending those who reverence Him. **What are some of the attributes of God’s works mentioned in this psalm (see vv 2-4, 6-7)?**

Psalm 112 — The various ways that God blesses those who love and revere Him are discussed in this Psalm. Besides material blessings, **what are some other ways that the righteous are blessed?**

Psalm 113 — The psalmist exhorts us to praise God for His lofty majesty and His care of the lowest among men. Consider the contrasts in this Psalm, from the highest heavens to the dust of the earth. **How does this show us that God is worthy to be praised?**

Psalm 114 — This psalm celebrates the terrifying and formidable presence of God. Put yourself in the Israelites’ shoes for a moment. **How would you feel to experience the Red Sea, the Jordan (vv 3, 5), or to watch Mount Sinai (vv 4, 6) tremble under the magnitude of God’s presence (see also Exodus 3:6, 19:16; Acts 7:32; Hebrews 12:21; John 10:28-29)?**

Psalm 115 — The psalmist encourages us to trust in and praise God who is our help and shield. **What reasons and results does the psalmist give for trusting in God?**

Week 52 Psalm 116- Psalm 119

Psalm 116 — This is a personal song of thanksgiving to God for deliverance from trouble. **Considering vv 1-2 and 12-14, what do we have to offer God for His goodness to us?**

Psalm 117 — This is a song of praise for God's steadfast love and faithfulness. **How has God been great to you?**

Psalm 118 — This is a Messianic psalm celebrating God's salvation. Can you find the verses in this Psalm which are cited in the New Testament (hint: There are 3 verses cited in the New Testament. **Use your study bible cross-reference and footnote)?**

Psalm 119:1-48 — This Psalm is an acrostic whose 22 stanzas of eight verses in each stanza begin with a different letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Consider the possible contradiction between verses 4 and 5. **What does this teach us about holiness, repentance, and devotion?**

Psalm 119:49-96 — The psalmist takes comfort in the promised blessings for those who keep God's Word. **What are the different words the author used to describe the Word of God?**

Psalm 119:97-136— These stanzas of Psalm 119 reflect praise of God's Word, commitment to keep it, and requests for divine providence. As you reflect upon the stanzas of this psalm, **what stands out to you?**

Psalm 119:137-176— The psalmist pleads for deliverance from his adversaries in order to devote himself to God's law. **How does the psalmist's passion for God's Word encourage you?**