

THE WHOLE Story +

The Bible in a Year

Upstate Church, welcome to our journey through the Word of God. Our goal is simple. We want to encourage as many people in our church as possible to read through the entire Bible in a year. We want to encourage people to engage with the Bible because, as a church, we believe that no other Christian discipline has the potential to impact our spiritual walk, like daily Bible reading.

The Reading Plan

This resource is one of the multiple guides that will be available to you throughout the year. Each resource will include weekly sermon introductions for the Sunday morning service at Upstate Church. Between each sermon introduction, there will be a week's worth of daily readings.

The daily readings are dated, include selections from the Old and New Testaments, and are for each weekday. This format will take you through the whole Bible in a year, with readings five days per week and two days open for catching up or getting ahead.

The Format

We not only want to encourage you to read the Bible, we want to teach you how to read the Bible. To help Upstate Church members learn to read the Bible, we use the HEAR Journal method in each of the daily readings. Each day, you will see the HEAR acrostic going down the page. The HEAR journal guides your reading and helps you interact with the text.

H – H stands for HIGHLIGHT. As you read through the text, note or highlight something that stands out to you. Don't just read the Word. Interact with it. Ask questions about it. Highlight what stands out. Highlighting is about determining what the Bible says.

E – E stands for explain. In your own words, seek to explain what you highlighted. It may take some investigation if the passage is a little ambiguous. You may need to look at the notes in your study Bible or consult a good commentary if you need to clarify something. Most of the time, you will know precisely what the highlight means, but explaining it in your own words helps you internalize God's message. Explanation is about determining what the Bible means.

A – A stands for apply. After interacting with the Word and understanding it, you need to determine how it applies to your life. Reading the Bible is about more than gaining information. Reading the Bible is about transformation, which comes from beholding the Lord and hearing from Him. Application is about determining what the Bible means for me.

R – R stands for respond. Encountering God in the Bible does not stop when we determine what the Bible says, what the Bible means, or what the Bible means to me. We have not encountered God through the Word until we respond to God accordingly. We respond to God in prayer according to what He reveals to us in the Word. We respond to God in prayer with praise for who He is, confess where we have failed, and repent as we return to God!

The Challenge

We go to the Bible to hear from God. The challenge before our church this year is to learn to go to the Bible to hear from God again and again. Will you embrace this challenge in 2025? Will you read the Bible with us? Will you go to the Word again and again? Will you do all you can to hear from God this year? We cannot wait to see how God works as we run toward His Word.

THE WHOLE
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July 27, 2025

John 1: The Word Made Flesh

The opening verses of John's Gospel do not begin in Bethlehem with a baby in a manger, but in eternity past, with a profound declaration of divine identity: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." These words echo Genesis 1, drawing our hearts back to the very beginning, where God spoke the universe into existence. But John isn't just recalling creation—he's revealing the Creator. He is unveiling Jesus Christ as the eternal Word of God, the One through whom all things were made, the true Light who gives life to all humanity.

John 1 confronts us with the mystery and majesty of the incarnation. This Word, who was with God and was God, "became flesh and dwelt among us" (v.14). In that one sentence, we are brought face-to-face with the staggering reality of the gospel: the God of glory has entered our broken world. The infinite became finite. The eternal stepped into time. The Creator stepped into creation. He did not come as a distant deity but as one who moved into the neighborhood—who took on our frailty, walked our roads, and bore our sorrows.

And yet, the world did not recognize Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But for all who did receive Him—for all who believed in His name—He gave the right to become children of God. John 1 is not just about who Jesus is; it is about what He has come to do: to bring us into the family of God, to make us sons and daughters through faith in Him.

This is the foundation of our faith: Jesus is not merely a good teacher or wise prophet. He is the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth. He reveals the Father perfectly. He brings light into darkness, life out of death, and grace upon grace to all who trust in Him.

So as we open the Gospel of John, we are invited to see the glory of Christ, to believe in Him, and to become part of God's redemptive story. The curtain is being pulled back. The divine Word has been spoken—not in thunder from heaven, but in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is here, and He always has been.

John 1:1-14

Who Is Jesus?

Why Did Jesus Come?

July 28, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 22-23; 2 Kings 11; Psalm 131; Matthew 8

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July 29, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 24; 2 Kings 12; Psalm 50; Matthew 9

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July 30, 2025

Read: Joel 1-3; Matthew 10

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July 31, 2025

Read: Jonah 1-4; Matthew 11

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August 1, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 13-14; 2 Chronicles 25; Psalm 53; Matthew 12

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August 3, 2025

Matthew 5-7; Sermon on the Mount Part 1

When Jesus opened His mouth to teach the crowds gathered on the hillside, He was not simply offering wise instruction or moral platitudes—He was proclaiming the arrival of the kingdom of God. The Sermon on the Mount, beginning in Matthew 5, is the King's call to a new way of life under His reign. And at the very front door of that call stand the Beatitudes—eight declarations that describe the character and blessedness of those who belong to Him.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” With these words, Jesus turns the world's definition of success upside down. These blessings are not for the self-sufficient, the proud, or the powerful. They are for the spiritually needy, the humble, the mourning, and the meek. The Beatitudes describe those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who are merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers—and yes, even those who are persecuted for His name's sake.

These aren't natural virtues; they are supernatural evidences of grace. The Beatitudes aren't a list of how to enter the kingdom—they are a picture of what those who have already entered the kingdom by faith begin to look like. They are not a ladder to climb but a mirror to reflect the heart of Jesus. He is the only One who is perfectly poor in spirit, perfectly meek, perfectly pure. He is the One who mourns over sin, who brings peace through His blood, who was persecuted and reviled for righteousness' sake.

The Beatitudes are both comforting and confronting. They comfort the weary by showing us that God blesses what the world rejects. They confront the proud by exposing the kind of heart God honors. They teach us that the kingdom of God is not about religious performance but spiritual transformation. This is the kind of life Jesus offers—one rooted not in self-righteousness, but in grace. And He doesn't just describe this life—He makes it possible through His death and resurrection.

As we open this most famous sermon, we do not merely hear good advice. We are being invited to walk in the way of blessing under the reign of Christ. Jesus is here, even in the Beatitudes—declaring what it means to live the truly blessed life.

Matthew 5:1-12

Characteristics of a Blessed Life

Spiritual Poverty

Spiritual Power

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August 4, 2025

Read: Amos 1-3; Matthew 13

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August 5, 2025

Read: Amos 4-6; Psalm 55; Matthew 14

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August 6, 2025

Read: Amos 7-9; Matthew 15

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August 7, 2025

Read: Hosea 1-3; Matthew 16

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August 8, 2025
Read: Hosea 4-6; Psalm 58; Matthew 17

WEEK 33

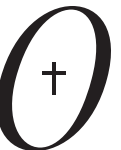
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Story+



August 10, 2025

Matthew 5-7; Sermon on the Mount Part 2

As Jesus draws His Sermon on the Mount to a close, He confronts His listeners with a sobering and urgent call. The crowd has heard the Beatitudes. They have been challenged by His radical reinterpretation of righteousness. They have been invited into a life marked by humility, purity, and trust in God. But now, Jesus presses in with a personal question that echoes through the centuries: Will you merely hear these words, or will you obey them?

The final section of Matthew 7 is not a gentle conclusion—it is a piercing examination of the heart. Jesus makes it clear that not everyone who claims to belong to Him actually does. The test of true discipleship is not found in words spoken or works performed, but in a life built upon obedience to His Word. Many will say, “Lord, Lord,” and yet be unknown by Him. The kingdom of heaven is not entered by association, profession, or performance—but by authentic faith that results in a surrendered life.

Jesus draws a stark contrast between two gates, two roads, two trees, and two builders. The wide gate is easy, the broad road is popular, but it leads to destruction. The narrow gate is difficult, and few find it—but it leads to life. This is the way of the kingdom: not flashy, not self-exalting, not built on sand, but grounded in the solid rock of Christ and His Word.

The imagery of the house built on the rock reminds us that storms will come. Jesus will not endure faith that merely admires. Faith that rests in His finished work and lives in obedience to His teaching is the kind that stands. The storms are not what destroy—it is the foundation that determines the outcome.

Authentic faith listens. Authentic faith trusts. Authentic faith follows. And that kind of faith is not produced by human willpower—it is the fruit of a new heart, given by grace. This is the King’s invitation to build our lives on what lasts. To resist the temptation to settle for performance or appearances. To walk the narrow way, even when it’s costly. And to trust that in Him, the way of obedience is also the way of life.

Jesus is here, even in the warnings—calling us not just to admire His words, but to live them. Not just to profess faith, but to possess it. Not just to hear the truth, but to build our lives upon it.

Matthew 7:21-27

Does Jesus Know You?

What’s Your Foundation?

August 11, 2025

Read: Hosea 7-10; Matthew 18

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August 12, 2025

Read: Hosea 11-13; Matthew 19

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August 13, 2025

Read: Hosea 14; 2 Chronicles 26-27; Psalm 61; Matthew 20

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August 14, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 15-16; Matthew 21

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August 15, 2025

Read: Isaiah 1-3; Psalm 9; Matthew 22

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August 17, 2025

Mark 4

THE WHOLE Story

There are moments in Jesus' teaching when the weight of His words presses past the surface and calls for something deeper than attention—it demands examination. Mark 4 begins with one of those moments. A great crowd gathers by the sea, hungry for His miracles, intrigued by His authority. And Jesus, sitting in a boat just off the shore, begins to teach in parables. His first story, the Parable of the Sower, is not merely an illustration—it is a spiritual mirror. This is a parable about hearing. Not with ears, but with hearts. Not just once, but continually. It is a story that asks each of us: What kind of soil am I?

"A sower went out to sow..." The image is familiar, almost mundane. A farmer scattering seed—generously, broadly, almost recklessly. But Jesus is not giving agricultural advice. The seed is the Word of God. The sower is Christ Himself, or anyone who spreads His truth. The focus is not on the seed but on the soil. The condition of the heart.

Some seed falls along the path—hard, trampled, unreceptive. The Word is spoken, but Satan snatches it away before it can take root. Some falls on rocky ground—shallow, impulsive, emotional. It springs up quickly but withers when hardship comes. Some lands among thorns—crowded hearts tangled in worry, wealth, and worldly desires. The seed grows, but it is choked before it can bear fruit. But some seed falls on good soil. It takes root. It endures. It bears fruit—thirty, sixty, even a hundredfold.

This is not a parable about farming—it is a parable about faith. It warns us not to assume that hearing the Word equals obeying it. That emotion equals transformation. That proximity to Jesus equals intimacy with Him. The soil of the heart must be broken, tilled, made ready. The good soil isn't naturally good—it's soil that's been worked, softened by grace, humbled by repentance, and opened to receive the Word of life.

Jesus ends the parable with a challenge: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." This is more than a call to listen—it is a call to listen with your life. To hear the Word and let it go deep. To endure when trials come. To repent when thorns creep in. And to trust that God's Word, when truly received, will always bear fruit.

Jesus is here, sowing the Word even now—scattering the seed of truth into hearts. The question is not whether the seed is powerful. The question is: Will you receive it?

Mark 4:1-9

Jesus Sows the Seed

We Must Respond

You Have a Responsibility



August 18, 2025
Read: Isaiah 4-6; Matthew 23

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August 19, 2025
Read: Micah 1-4; Psalm 10; Matthew 24

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August 20, 2025
Read: Micah 5-7; Matthew 25

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August 21, 2025
Read: Isaiah 7-10; Psalm 22; Matthew 26

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August 22, 2025
Read: Isaiah 11-13; Psalm 118; Matthew 27

WEEK 35

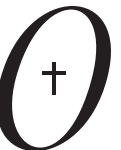
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Story+



August 24, 2025

Proverbs 3:5-6

August 25, 2025

Read: Isaiah 14-16; Matthew 28

In Mark 5, we are brought face-to-face with one of the most haunting and powerful stories in all the Gospels—the healing of a man possessed by a legion of demons. It is a scene that confronts us with the extremes of human brokenness and the unmatched authority of Jesus Christ. This is not just a story about deliverance; it is a declaration of the gospel's power to reach the most hopeless, the most defiled, and the most forgotten. If the man in this story is not beyond the reach of Jesus, then no one is.

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Jesus and His disciples have just crossed the stormy Sea of Galilee. As they arrive in the region of the Gerasenes—a Gentile, unclean land—they are immediately met by a man who embodies everything the world fears and rejects. He is naked, violent, uncontrollable, and living among the tombs. He has been cast out of society, bound in chains that he continually breaks, consumed by a darkness that no one can tame. Mark tells us he cried out day and night, cutting himself with stones. He is physically alive, but spiritually and emotionally buried in death.

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And then Jesus steps onshore.

Before the man can even cry for help, the demons within him recognize Jesus' authority. "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" they shriek. Even the forces of hell cannot deny who Jesus is. And with a word, the Legion is cast out and driven into a herd of pigs, that rush down the steep bank and drown in the sea. In an instant, the chaos is silenced. The man is free.

When the people come to see what has happened, they find him clothed, sitting, and in his right mind. The same man who had terrified them is now at peace, restored by the grace and power of Jesus. But tragically, instead of rejoicing, the people are afraid—and they ask Jesus to leave.

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The man, however, begs to go with Jesus. But Jesus sends him back to his home with a mission: "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you." And that's exactly what he does. He becomes the first missionary to the Gentiles—not with theological training, but with a testimony.

This story reminds us that Jesus doesn't avoid our darkness—He walks straight into it. He crosses seas and storms to rescue even one soul. No one is too lost, too unclean, too far gone. Jesus is here, even in the tombs, and where He comes, demons flee, the broken are restored, and the outcast becomes the witness.

Mark 5:1-20

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The Power of Jesus is Essential in Restoration

The Power of Jesus Demands a Reckoning

The Power of Jesus Initiates a Great Reversal

August 26, 2025

Read: Isaiah 17-19; Psalm 62; 1 Corinthians 1

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August 27, 2025

Read: Isaiah 20-22; 1 Corinthians 2

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August 28, 2025

Read: Isaiah 23-25; 1 Corinthians 3

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August 29, 2025

Read: Isaiah 26-29; Psalm 65; 1 Corinthians 4

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August 31, 2025

Matthew 14

THE WHOLE Story

The scene that unfolds in Matthew 14 is one of the most awe-inspiring in the Gospels. It is not just a display of Jesus' divine power—it is a deeply personal invitation to trust Him in the middle of life's storms. After a day of miracles and ministry, Jesus sends His disciples across the Sea of Galilee while He retreats alone to pray. As night falls, a storm rises. The winds howl, the waves batter the boat, and the disciples find themselves once again straining at the oars, caught in chaos beyond their control.

It is in that darkness, in the fourth watch of the night—between 3 and 6 a.m., when exhaustion and fear are at their peak—that Jesus comes to them, walking on the water. This moment is not just about supernatural ability. It is a revelation of who Jesus is. In the Old Testament, only God tramples the waves (Job 9:8); only Yahweh rules the sea. So when Jesus comes walking on the water, He is declaring, without a word, that He is the Lord of creation. The storm that terrifies them is under His feet.

The disciples, understandably, are terrified. They think they are seeing a ghost. But Jesus speaks with clarity and compassion: "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." Literally, He says, "I am"—echoing the divine name revealed to Moses at the burning bush. This is no mere rabbi. This is God in the flesh, standing on the waves.

Then Peter—impulsive, courageous, and deeply human—says, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus says one word: "Come." And Peter steps out of the boat. For a moment, he walks on water too. But then his eyes shift from Jesus to the wind, and he begins to sink. He cries out, "Lord, save me!" And immediately, Jesus reaches out His hand and catches him.

This story is not a rebuke of Peter's failure—it is a portrait of grace. Jesus saves doubting disciples. He meets us in the middle of the waves, not once we've reached the shore. The boat isn't the safest place—the presence of Jesus is.

When they climb into the boat, the wind ceases. And those in the boat worship Him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." This is the first time the disciples make such a confession together. It is in the storm—not in the calm—that they come to see Him for who He truly is.

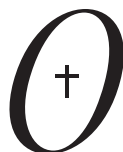
This passage reminds us that faith isn't the absence of fear—it's the choice to look to Jesus in the midst of it. He doesn't always calm the storm first; sometimes, He walks into it and calls us to follow. But He is never far. He is never late. And He never lets go.

Jesus is here, even in the storm. Even in the middle of the night, when our strength is gone and the waves are high—He comes to us. And His presence is enough.

Matthew 14:22-33

The Son of God is Powerful

The Son of God Personal



September 1, 2025

Read: Isaiah 30-32; 1 Corinthians 5

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September 2, 2025

Read: Isaiah 33-35; 1 Corinthians 6

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September 3, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 28; 2 Kings 17; Psalm 66; 1 Corinthians 7

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September 4, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 29-31; 1 Corinthians 8

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September 5, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 18-19; 2 Chronicles 32; Psalm 67; 1 Corinthians 9

WEEK 37

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THE WHOLE
Story+



September 7, 2025

Matthew 16

Matthew 16 stands as a watershed moment in the life and ministry of Jesus. Until now, the disciples have seen His miracles, heard His teaching, and followed Him across towns and hillsides. But now, in a moment of quiet clarity, Jesus turns the question toward them. He moves from the crowds to the core. From the curious to the committed. "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And then more personally, "But who do you say that I am?"

It's a question that echoes through the centuries. It is the most important question anyone will ever answer: Who is Jesus?

Peter speaks first, as he so often does. But this time, he speaks with Spirit-given insight: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is a bold and beautiful confession. He is saying, "You are not just a prophet. You are not just a healer or teacher. You are the Messiah—the long-awaited King sent to rescue God's people." And Jesus affirms it. "Blessed are you, Simon... this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."

Jesus then declares that on this rock—on the confession of His identity—He will build His church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is the first time the word "church" appears in the Gospels. Jesus is announcing the birth of a new community, built on Him, advancing by His authority, and protected by His power.

But the mood shifts suddenly. For the first time, Jesus begins to speak plainly about what kind of Messiah He will be—not the conquering hero the people expected, but the suffering servant they needed. He tells His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer, be rejected, killed, and rise again. And Peter—who had just confessed Him as the Christ—rebukes Him.

Jesus' response is sharp and startling: "Get behind me, Satan." Peter had spoken divine truth, but now he speaks the language of human wisdom, trying to keep Jesus from the cross. But there is no crown without the cross. There is no salvation without sacrifice. And Jesus makes it clear: not only must He suffer, but so must all who follow Him.

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This is not a call to comfortable religion. This is a call to cruciform living—a life shaped by the self-giving love of Jesus. It is the paradox of the kingdom: to find your life, you must lose it. To follow Christ, you must follow Him to the cross.

Matthew 16 calls us to clarity. Who do we say that Jesus is? And if we confess Him as the Christ, will we follow Him all the way—through suffering, surrender, and self-denial? Jesus is here, not just to be admired, but to be followed. Not just to be crowned, but to be crucified. And He invites us to walk with Him, carrying our cross, toward resurrection life.

Matthew 16:13-20

When We Confess Jesus as Christ:

The Church is Built

The Enemy is Defeated

The Power of God is Given

September 8, 2025

Read: Isaiah 36-37; Psalm 123; 1 Corinthians 10

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September 9, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 20; Isaiah 38-40; Psalm 68; 1 Corinthians 11

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September 10, 2025

Read: Isaiah 41-44; 1 Corinthians 12

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September 11, 2025
Read: Isaiah 45-48; 1 Corinthians 13

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September 12, 2025
Read: Isaiah 49-52; Psalm 69; 1 Corinthians 14

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September 14, 2025

John 12

THE WHOLE Story

John 12 opens with a moment of breathtaking beauty and quiet devotion—a moment that prepares us for the passion of Christ not with the sound of crowds or the clang of swords, but with the fragrance of worship. Jesus is just days away from the cross. The hour has come. He knows what lies ahead—betrayal, arrest, crucifixion. But before the shouts of “Hosanna!” and the agony of Gethsemane, we are brought into a home in Bethany, where a woman kneels with perfume and pours out something far more precious than oil.

Her name is Mary—the sister of Martha and Lazarus, the one who had sat at Jesus’ feet listening to His words, the one who had wept at His feet when her brother died. And now, with resurrection still fresh in her memory and love overflowing in her heart, she breaks open a jar of pure nard—an expensive, imported perfume worth nearly a year’s wages—and anoints the feet of Jesus. The whole house is filled with its fragrance.

This act is not random. It is intentional, sacrificial, and deeply personal. Mary doesn’t ask for anything. She doesn’t speak. Her worship is wordless and lavish. In the face of death, she chooses devotion. In the shadow of the cross, she pours out love. Jesus sees it for what it truly is—not waste, but preparation. “Leave her alone,” He says, “so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.” Mary understands, even if only intuitively, what others refuse to see: that Jesus is going to die. And she gives Him the honor due a King, not in triumph, but in sacrifice.

Judas, in contrast, protests. He hides greed behind the mask of charity. But John unmasks Judas’ heart—he didn’t care about the poor. He was a thief. And so, in this moment, we see two responses to Jesus: one gives everything, the other takes what he can. One kneels in love, the other schemes in self-interest. One worships; the other walks toward betrayal.

John 12 reminds us that true worship is costly. It flows not from obligation, but from adoration. It’s not just about the value of what is given, but the heart behind it. Mary gave what was costly because Jesus was worthy. She didn’t just give an offering—she gave herself.

This passage is a holy invitation. Before we rush to the cross, before we cry out “He is risen,” we must first sit in this moment and ask: What is Jesus worth to me? What am I holding back? And will I choose the posture of Mary—humble, grateful, broken and poured out?

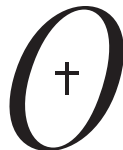
Jesus is here, receiving the worship of those who see His worth, preparing to lay down His life for the world. The fragrance of Mary’s offering lingers still. May our worship today echo hers.

John 12:1-8

The Worship Of Jesus Always Includes:

Sacrifice

Opposition



September 15, 2025

Read: Isaiah 53-55; Psalm 128; 1 Corinthians 15

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September 16, 2025

Read: Isaiah 56-59; Psalm 70; 1 Corinthians 16

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September 17, 2025

Read: Isaiah 60-63; 2 Corinthians 1

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September 18, 2025

Read: Isaiah 64-66; 2 Corinthians 2

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September 19, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 1; 2 Chronicles 33; Psalm 71; 2 Corinthians 3

WEEK 39

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THE WHOLE
Story+



September 21, 2025

Mark 15

Mark 15 brings us to the heart of the gospel. It is the darkest chapter, in the story of Christ, and yet it radiates with holy light. Jesus, the true King, is not seated on a throne but hung on a cross. He is not crowned with gold, but with thorns. He is not surrounded by honor, but by mockery and shame. And yet, in this humiliating death, we see the power of God to save. This is not a tragic accident—it is divine purpose unfolding. The cross is the throne of the suffering King.

From the beginning of the chapter, Jesus is bound and handed over to Pilate. The crowds, so quick to shout “Hosanna” just days earlier, now scream “Crucify Him!” They choose a murderer, Barabbas, and reject the sinless Son of God. Pilate, swayed by public opinion, delivers Jesus to be scourged and crucified. And then comes the mockery.

Roman soldiers clothe Him in a purple robe, twist together a crown of thorns, and kneel in fake homage: “Hail, King of the Jews!” They strike Him, spit on Him, and lead Him away to be crucified. But they do not realize—they are not merely mocking a man; they are mocking the only true King. Every insult becomes a twisted coronation. Every blow fulfills prophecy.

As Jesus hangs between two criminals, He is derided by the crowd, the religious leaders, and even those crucified beside Him. “He saved others; He cannot save Himself.” But that is precisely the point. He does not save Himself so He can save us. The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to give His life as a ransom for many.

Then, at noon, darkness covers the land. For three hours, the light is extinguished. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cries out with a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” It is not a cry of confusion—it is a cry of substitution. Jesus is bearing the full weight of sin. He is standing in our place, absorbing the wrath of God. The silence of the Father in that moment speaks to the severity of what our sin required—and the depth of what His love has accomplished.

At His death, the curtain in the temple is torn in two—from top to bottom. Access to God is no longer restricted. The barrier has been removed. And a Roman centurion, seeing how Jesus died, declares, “Truly this man was the Son of God.”

Mark 15 is a confrontation with the cross in all its horror and glory. It shows us that salvation comes not through strength, but through sacrifice, that the kingdom is not built by power, but through love. And that our King wears a crown of thorns, not because He had to, but because He chose to.

Jesus is here, forsaken so that we might be forgiven. Mocked so that we might be called sons and daughters. Pierced so that we might be healed. He is the crucified King. And in His wounds, we find life.

Mark 15:22-39

On the cross, we see:

Jesus’ Cry

Jesus’ Death

Jesus’ Victory

September 22, 2025

Read: Nahum 1-3; Psalm 149; 2 Corinthians 4

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September 23, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 22-23; Psalm 73; 2 Corinthians 5

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September 24, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 34-35; 2 Corinthians 6

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September 25, 2025
Read: Habakkuk 1-3; 2 Corinthians 7

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September 26, 2025
Read: Zephaniah 1-3; Psalm 74; 2 Corinthians 8

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September 28, 2025

John 20

THE WHOLE Story

John 20 opens with the quiet of early morning. The shadows of death still linger. The tomb is sealed—or so they think. The One they had followed, loved, and hoped in had been crucified, laid in a borrowed grave. All seemed lost. The air is heavy with grief and confusion. But what happens next changes everything—not just for the disciples, but for the entire world. For the tomb is not closed. The grave is not occupied. Jesus has risen.

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb while it is still dark. She is not expecting resurrection—she is coming to grieve. But when she arrives, the stone has been rolled away. Panicked and bewildered, she runs to tell Peter and John. They come, see the empty linen cloths, and leave still uncertain. But Mary stays. She weeps outside the tomb, longing for answers, aching for hope. And then, in her sorrow, she hears a voice: “Woman, why are you weeping?” She turns and sees someone she assumes is the gardener.

Until He speaks her name: “Mary.”

In that moment, everything changes. The risen Jesus doesn’t first appear to rulers or priests or even the apostles—He comes to a woman weeping in a garden. He doesn’t thunder from the heavens—He whispers a name. And the tomb that once held death now holds life. The garden that once echoed with mourning now sings with resurrection.

Jesus appears to His disciples next—not with condemnation, but with peace. “Peace be with you,” He says, showing them His hands and side. He breathes on them, not with judgment, but with the Spirit. Where there had been fear, He brings joy. Where there had been doubt, He brings assurance.

This is no myth. No symbol. No metaphor. The resurrection of Jesus is the historical, bodily, world-altering triumph of God over death. Sin has been defeated. Death has lost its sting. The tomb is empty, and our hope is alive.

John 20 is not just the conclusion of the Gospel—it is the turning point of redemptive history. And it is deeply personal. Jesus knows His sheep by name. He comes to the brokenhearted. He enters locked rooms of fear. He replaces sorrow with joy, and doubt with faith.

Jesus is here, not in theory but in power, not in memory but in flesh and blood, raised and reigning. He is alive, and because He lives, everything changes.

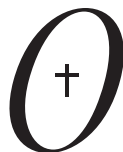
John 20:1-29

An Encounter With the Resurrected Jesus Moves Us From:

Confusion to Clarity

Fear to Peace

Doubt to Faith



September 29, 2025

Read: Jeremiah 1-4; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 9

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September 30, 2025

Read: Jeremiah 5-7; Psalm 75; 2 Corinthians 10

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October 1, 2025

Read: Jeremiah 8-10; 2 Corinthians 11

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October 2, 2025

Read: Jeremiah 11-13; 2 Corinthians 12

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October 3, 2025
Read: Jeremiah 14-16; Psalm 76; 2 Corinthians 13

October 3, 2025
Read: Jeremiah 14-16; Psalm 76; 2 Corinthians 13

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