

COVENANT EFC  
40<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
Disciple Now!

# OCTOBER

DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL 2018

*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood.*

ACTS 20:28 (NIV)



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*Also available at [www.cefc.org.sg](http://www.cefc.org.sg) and "Covenant EFC" mobile app.*

# MEMORY VERSES

## 2018

### JANUARY

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;  
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,  
and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

**ACTS 1:8 (NIV)**

### FEBRUARY

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

**ACTS 2:42 (NIV)**

### MARCH

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.  
They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere  
hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the  
Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**ACTS 2:46-47 (NIV)**

### APRIL

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven  
given to mankind by which we must be saved.

**ACTS 4:12 (NIV)**

### MAY

So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not  
be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order  
to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from  
among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.

We will turn this responsibility over to them...

**ACTS 6:2-3 (NIV)**

## JUNE

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

**ACTS 13:2-3 (NIV)**

## JULY

They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household.”

**ACTS 16:31 (NIV)**

## AUGUST

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

**ACTS 17:11 (NIV)**

## SEPTEMBER

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.”

**ACTS 18:9-10 (NIV)**

## OCTOBER

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood.

**ACTS 20:28 (NIV)**

## NOVEMBER

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

**ACTS 20:32 (NIV)**

## DECEMBER

He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ — with all boldness and without hindrance!

**ACTS 28:31 (NIV)**

# FOREWORD

BY SENIOR PASTORS

*As we lead Covenant EFC towards Vision 2028  
and our 50th Jubilee Anniversary, God has  
given us Acts 20:28 as our spiritual anchor:*

## "PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION

*to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood."* As church leaders and members, we are to **pay careful attention** to our hearts' condition and to our triune God.

At last year's Listening Retreat, God impressed a spiritual burden upon us for 2018: **WE ARE CHURCH: PRAY AND REPENT!**

### **We are CHURCH**

We believe God has called us to be *One Church with Multiple Centres* and pursue the *A.D.I.D. of A Certain Kind* within each local centre through small groups. We will enhance the small group strategy so that we can make disciples who make disciples. This year, we were led to preach on the book of Acts, as we rediscover what the Church is all about.

### **We Are Church: PRAY!**

I (Rev Tan Kay Kiong) received a distinct picture of Moses praying in the mountain with his hands supported by Aaron and Hur. As I read the account in Exodus 17, the burden was clear:

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"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood."

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**ACTS 20:28**

**1. We Are Under Attack** (Exo 17:8)

Many of us are living defeated lives stained by sin and the affairs of this world. The devil has launched his arsenal of attacks against every possible area of our lives.

**2. We Must Fight with the Weapons of God** (Exo 17:9b)

The staff in Moses' hand was the staff of God. Formerly used to goad sheep, this once ordinary staff became God's weapon to fight spiritual battles. We must put on God's spiritual armour so that we can stand against the devil's schemes.

**3. We Must Fight with the Weapons of God and Hold Up Our Hands**  
(Exo 17:11a)

Joshua and his troops were fighting with all their might against the enemies, but the secret to their victory was Moses' hands raised to God in desperate intercession. Aaron and Hur helped Moses keep his hands up. We must hold up our hands in intercession for spiritual victory in our lives.

**We Are Church: Pray and REPENT!**

There is no true prayer without **REPENTANCE**. "Bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance." – Luke 3:8. God spoke to me (Rev Tony Yeo) through the book of Joel:

1. Repent **humbly** – put on **sackcloth, wail** before the altar, declare a **holy fast** and call a **sacred assembly** (Joel 1:13-14).
2. Repent **wholeheartedly** – rend your **heart** and not your garments (Joel 2:12-13). Return to God with all our hearts for He is gracious and compassionate!
3. Repent **urgently** – in the light of the day of the Lord and His coming judgement (Joel 3:3-14).

We believe that God will speak to each of you personally as you spend daily devotional time with the Lord in His Word and in prayer. This Devotional Journal (DJ) has been designed to help you in this. We pray and trust that God will greatly bless you as you use this DJ daily, and His Spirit will guide and direct your prayers such that God will be pleased to answer them and display His glory in you and in our church for the advance of His Kingdom in Singapore and beyond.

**In Christ,**

***Rev Tony Yeo and Rev Tan Kay Kiong***

# GUIDE TO USING THIS DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

## **1** // *Prepare your heart in God's presence*

- Select a fixed time (preferably in the morning before you begin your day) and a quiet place where you can be alone and undisturbed.
- Observe a moment of silence as you acknowledge God's presence. Centre down.
- Begin with a song of worship. Meditate on the lyrics even if you are unfamiliar with the tune. (Refer to the list of worship songs provided.)
- Ask God to open your heart to hear Him.

*The English Standard Version (ESV) is the default Bible version translation unless otherwise specified.*

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### **SOMETHING TO PONDER...**

Examining your life is essential in your faith journey. Your redeemed life as a disciple of Christ deserves careful examining. May you take root and bear fruit in Him!

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## 2 // *Allow God to S.O.A.P. you with His Word and Spirit*

- **S**cripture – Take your time to meditate on the Scripture passage for the day. Pause and mull over words and phrases that stand out to you.
- **O**bservation – Jot down significant insights and reflections from the passage you have read. You may use the guiding questions provided. *The “Deeper Reflection” section is to aid your contemplation of the Scripture. It is not to replace your own observation, for the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scripture to you as you seek Him earnestly.*
- **A**pplication – Note down a specific and practical commitment to God’s Word for you. Is there a command to obey, a sin to avoid, an example to follow, or a principle to live out? Where appropriate, share your devotional entry with someone.
- **P**ray – Bring your heartfelt response to God in prayer.



### PRAYER POINTERS FOR 2018

*Prayer pointers for Pastors and Staff are included every Tuesday. On each Friday, there is a prayer pointer for Lay Leaders (e.g. Zone Mentors, CG Leaders, Assistant CG Leaders and Ministry Leaders). A prayer pointer for Church Board Members is included every Saturday. Please pray for each group as well as any specific individuals whom God may bring to your mind.*

# SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER WORSHIP SONGS

## GREAT ARE YOU LORD

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### Verse

You give life, You are love  
You bring light to the darkness  
You give hope, You restore  
Every heart that is broken  
And great are You, Lord

### Chorus

It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise  
We pour out our praise  
It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise to You only

### Bridge

And all the earth will shout Your praise  
Our hearts will cry, these bones will sing  
Great are You, Lord  
(Repeat)

David Leonard | Jason Ingram | Leslie Jordan

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## BE THOU MY VISION

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### Verse 1

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

### Verse 2

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son,  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

### Verse 3

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and always,  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

### Chorus

Oh, God, be my everything, be my delight  
Be, Jesus, my glory My soul's satisfied  
Oh, God, be my everything, be my delight  
Be, Jesus, my glory My soul's satisfied

### Verse 4

High King of heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Eleanor Henrietta Hull | Mary Elizabeth Byrne  
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## WHEN WE WALK WITH THE LORD (TRUST AND OBEY)

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### Verse 1

When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of His Word  
What a glory He sheds on our way  
While we do His good will  
He abides with us still  
And with all who will trust and obey

### Chorus

Trust and obey  
For there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus  
But to trust and obey

### Verse 2

Not a shadow can rise  
Not a cloud in the skies  
But His smile quickly drives it away  
Not a doubt nor a fear  
Not a sigh nor a tear  
Can abide while we trust and obey

### Verse 3

Not a burden we bear  
Not a sorrow we share  
But our toil He doth richly repay  
Not a grief nor a loss  
Not a frown nor a cross  
But is blest if we trust and obey

### Verse 4

But we never can prove  
The delights of His love  
Until all on the altar we lay  
For the favor He shows  
And the joy He bestows  
Are for those who will trust and obey

**Verse 5**

Then in fellowship sweet  
We will sit at His feet  
Or we'll walk by His side in the way  
What He says we will do  
Where He sends we will go  
Never fear, only trust and obey

Daniel Brink Towner | John Henry Sammis

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## 'TIS SO SWEET TO TRUST IN JESUS (TRUST IN JESUS)

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### Verse 1

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus  
Just to take Him at His word  
Just to rest upon His promise  
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"

### Chorus

Jesus Jesus how I trust Him  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er  
Jesus, Jesus precious Jesus!  
O, for grace to trust Him more!

### Verse 2

O how sweet to trust in Jesus  
Just to trust His cleansing blood  
Just in simple faith to plunge me  
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood

### Verse 3

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus  
Just from sin and self to cease  
Just from Jesus simply taking  
Life and rest, and joy and peace

### Verse 4

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee  
Precious Jesus, Savior Friend  
And I know that Thou art with me  
Wilt be with me to the end

Louisa M. R. Stead | William James Kirkpatrick

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## BUILD MY LIFE

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### Verse 1

Worthy of every song we could ever sing  
 Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring  
 Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
 We live for You

### Verse 2

Jesus, the name above every other name  
 Jesus, the only one who could ever save  
 Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
 We live for You  
 We live for You

### Chorus

Holy, there is no one like You  
 There is none besides You  
 Open up my eyes in wonder  
 Show me who You are and fill me  
 With Your heart and lead me  
 In Your love to those around me

### Bridge

I will build my life upon Your love  
 It is a firm foundation  
 I will put my trust in You alone  
 And I will not be shaken

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## WHO YOU SAY I AM

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### Verse 1

Who am I that the highest King  
Would welcome me  
I was lost but He brought me in  
Oh His love for me  
Oh His love for me

### Chorus 1

Who the Son sets free  
Oh is free indeed  
I'm a child of God  
Yes I am

### Verse 2

Free at last  
He has ransomed me  
His grace runs deep  
While I was a slave to sin  
Jesus died for me  
Yes He died for me

### Chorus 2

In my Father's house  
There's a place for me  
I'm a child of God  
Yes I am

### Bridge

I am chosen, not forsaken  
I am who You say I am  
You are for me, not against me  
I am who You say I am  
(Repeat)  
Oh yes I am who You say I am

Ben Fielding | Reuben Morgan

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## PREPARE THE WAY

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### Verse 1

He has come to bring light into the darkness  
He has come to bring freedom to the captives  
He has come to restore the brokenhearted  
It's time to proclaim the year of the Lord

### Chorus

Prepare the way  
Prepare the way for our Redeemer  
Prepare the way  
Prepare the way for our Restorer

Make ready your heart  
Make ready your home  
Make ready the people of God  
Prepare the way

### Verse 2

He has come to bring hope to the hopeless  
He has come to comfort all who mourn  
He has come to heal our every sickness  
It's time to proclaim the year of the Lord

Darrell Evans | Eric Nuzum

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## ANCIENT OF DAYS

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### Verse

Blessing and honour, glory and power  
Be unto the Ancient of days  
From every nation, all of creation  
Bow before the Ancient of days

### Chorus

Every tongue in heaven and earth shall declare Your glory  
Every knee shall bow at your throne in worship  
You will be exalted, O God  
And Your Kingdom shall not pass away  
Oh, Ancient of days

### Bridge

Your kingdom shall reign over all the earth  
Sing unto the Ancient of days  
For none can compare to Your matchless worth  
Sing unto the Ancient of days

Gary Sadler | Jamie Harvill

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## YOUR NAME

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### Verse 1

As morning dawns and evening fades  
You inspire songs of praise  
That rise from earth to touch Your heart  
And glorify Your Name

### Chorus

Your Name is a strong and mighty tower  
Your Name is a shelter like no other  
Your Name, let the nations sing it louder  
'Cause nothing has the power to save  
But Your Name

### Verse 2

Jesus, in Your Name we pray  
Come and fill our hearts today  
Lord, give us strength to live for You  
And glorify Your Name

Glenn Packiam | Paul Baloche

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## HALLELUJAH TO THE LAMB

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### Verse 1

Lord, I stand in the midst of a multitude  
Of those from every tribe and tongue  
We are Your people, redeemed by Your blood  
Rescued from death by Your love

There are no words good enough to thank You  
There are no words to express my praise  
But I will lift up my voice and sing from my heart  
With all of my strength

### Chorus

Hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah to the Lamb  
Hallelujah hallelujah by the blood of Christ we stand  
Every tongue, every tribe,  
Every people, every land  
Giving glory, giving honour  
Giving praise unto the Lamb of God

### Verse 2

Lord, we stand by grace in Your presence  
Cleansed by the blood of the Lamb  
We are Your children, called by Your name  
Humbly we bow and we pray

Release Your power to work in us and through us  
Till we are changed to be more like You  
Then all the nations will see Your glory revealed  
And worship You

### Bridge

Every knee shall bow  
Every tongue confess  
That You are Lord of all

### Ending

Giving praise unto the Lamb of God  
Giving praise unto the Lamb of God  
Jesus Christ, Lamb of God!





## Receiving the Word in Much Tribulation

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-7

### ■ OBSERVATION

What significant observations can you make about the Thessalonians and Paul's ministry to them (1 Thess 1:1-7)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**FROM PHILIPPI** (Acts 16:11-40), Paul went to Thessalonica (v.1), where there were the familiar three missionary work movements in Acts: proclamation (vv.2-3), conversion (v.4) and opposition (vv.5-8). The Thessalonians “received the word in much tribulation” but “with the joy of the Holy Spirit” (1 Thess 1:6). Mark the word “much”. Biblical Christian faith is characterised by “through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). Before Paul was forced to leave Thessalonica abruptly (v.10), he “kept telling” his new converts “in advance that we were going to suffer affliction” (1 Thess 3:4). Suffering in following Jesus must be a core curriculum in disciplinemaking. In such adverse circumstances, the Word of God was proclaimed and received “in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (1 Thess 1:5a). This was characterised by “just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you” (1 Thess 1:5b). The Gospel was seen and heard. “Full conviction” is “a deep inward persuasion of the truth of the gospel, a token of the Holy Spirit’s work in their hearts, more impressive and more lasting than the persuasion produced by spectacular or miraculous signs”<sup>1</sup>.





## "God Is Witness", "You Are Witnesses"

### ■ SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

### ■ OBSERVATION

What significant observations can you make about Paul's discipling ministry among the Thessalonians?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PAUL DISCIPLED** the Thessalonians with a fundamental twofold orientation. **Godward Orientation:** In relating and ministering to those we are discipling, we must be **authentic before God**. Our ministry should be without error, impure motives, deceit (v.3), flattery, greed (v.5), self-glorification or dominance (v.6). Our ministry must be **approved by God**. For we are stewards of God "entrusted with the gospel", seeking the satisfaction of God, "not to please men, but God" and under the scrutiny of God "who examines our hearts" (v.4). **Manward Orientation:** Paul disciplined the Thessalonians **as a caring mother**, gently and tenderly nurturing them "with fond affection" as his "own children" (vv.7-8a). True discipling is imparting both "the gospel of God" truthfully and "our own lives" sacrificially (v.8b-9). Paul disciplined them **as an exemplary father**, both visibly and verbally. Visibly, he lived his life "devoutly, uprightly and blamelessly" before them (v.10). Verbally, he was "exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you", individually and personally (v.12). In our lives and ministry, can we say with humble boldness, "God is witness" (v.5) and "You are witnesses" (v.10)?

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make with regard to Godward orientation and manward orientation in my life and ministry?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for pastors and staff:  
To shepherd the church with caring and exemplary leadership
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## How Do You Receive a Teaching?

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:10-12

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about how the Bereans received Paul's preaching of the Word of God?

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### Deeper Reflection

**HOW THE BEREANS RECEIVED** Paul's preaching of the Word (v.11) has come to be known as "Berean Bible Study"<sup>3</sup> – studying the Scriptures "with impartiality and care"<sup>4</sup>. **Their Attitude:** The Bereans were "more open-minded than those in Thessalonica" (v.11, NLT) when they listened to Paul's preaching. They "received the word with great **eagerness**", "with all readiness of mind"<sup>5</sup>. **Their Action:** Their commendable attitude did not mean they just thoughtlessly and uncritically followed and swallowed everything that Paul said. Instead, they "**examined** the Scriptures **every day**" (not merely on the Sabbath), "to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth" (v.11, NLT). The Greek word for "examine" "is used of judicial investigations, as of Herod examining Jesus (Lk 23:14-15)"<sup>6</sup>. They "tested the truth of Paul's message by the touchstone of Scripture"<sup>7</sup>. "Many of them believed" (v.12): This was "no mere emotional response...but one based on intellectual conviction"<sup>8</sup>. We need critical teachability anchored in accurate understanding of Scripture (cf. 2 Tim 2:15). Teachability without criticalness can be mere gullibility, and criticalness without teachability is sheer arrogance.

## ■ APPLICATION

How do I make sure I do not listen to any teaching and preaching of the Bible thoughtlessly and uncritically?

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## ■ PRAYER

Lord, sanctify me by the truth; Your Word is truth.<sup>9</sup>

Let Your perfect Word revive and restore my soul. Teach me wisdom through Your trustworthy Word, which makes wise the simple. Make Your Word clear to me, that I may be instructed and enlightened by the Spirit of truth and be able to discern what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong. Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>3</sup> Daniel P. Fuller, *The Unity of the Bible: Unifying God's Plan for Humanity* (Zondervan, 1992), 105

<sup>4</sup> John Stott, *The Message of Acts*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (IVP, 1990), 274

<sup>5</sup> E. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Eerdmans, 1983), 346

<sup>6</sup> John Stott, 274

<sup>7</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *The Acts of the Apostles*, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Vol. 9* (Zondervan, 1981), 471

<sup>8</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (IVP, 1980), 280

<sup>9</sup> John 17:17

THURSDAY

04

OCTOBER

## Disciplemaking Is Engaging in Spiritual Warfare

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:5-16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13 – 3:10

### ■ OBSERVATION

What characterises spiritual warfare in disciplemaking according to 1 Thessalonians 2:13 – 3:10?

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### Deeper Reflection

**DISCIPLEMAKING IS ENGAGING** in spiritual warfare on two battlefronts: **disciplemaking battlefront** (on Paul’s side) and **discipleship battlefront** (on the Thessalonians’ side). Paul was separated from the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:17) due to the strong opposition from the Jews in Thessalonica (vv.5-9) and Berea (vv.10-14). Then, he went to Athens and remained there (vv.15-16a). Paul had a “fear” concerning the Thessalonian new converts, that “the **tempter** might have **tempted**” them in their “sufferings at the hand of” their “own countrymen” (1 Thess 2:14; 3:3-5). He feared that his “labor would be in vain” (1 Thess 3:5). He made attempts to return to Thessalonica, but “**Satan hindered**” him (1 Thess 2:18). But he spent “night and day” “praying most earnestly” that he might see them and “complete what” was “lacking in” their “faith” (1 Thess 3:10). It is critical that new converts are adequately equipped to stand firm in their faith in times of trials. Failing to follow-up young believers leaves them as easy prey for the enemy. Paul never stopped at conversion. He did his “best” within all the constraints by sending Timothy to the Thessalonians to “strengthen and encourage” them (1 Thess 3:1-2).

## ■ APPLICATION

What does it mean for me to recognise that discipling is engaging in spiritual warfare?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
  
- Pray for self:



## A City Wholly Given to Idolatry

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:16-22

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Paul's encounter with the idols in Athens in verses 16 to 22?

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### Deeper Reflection

**WHEN PAUL WAS IN ATHENS**, he did not walk around the city as a tourist (as we would probably have done), admiring its unrivalled grand buildings and monuments. But rather, he observed a city which was not just physically “full of idols”, but spiritually “wholly given to idolatry” (v.16, KJV). It was said that it was “easier to find a god there [in Athens] than a man”<sup>10</sup>. These idols were made “not only of stone and brass, but of gold, silver, ivory and marble, and they had been elegantly fashioned by the finest Greek sculptors”<sup>11</sup>. Such idolatrous beauty and glamour can be metaphorically said of the things of the world, which are so attractive that we desire and pursue them. John's exhortation, “guard yourselves from idols” (1 Jn 5:21) is the same as “do not love the world” (1 Jn 2:15). The “things of the world” (1 Jn 2:16) are: “unholy desire for things one has not and unholy pride in things one has”<sup>12</sup>, “base desires, false values and egoism”<sup>13</sup>. Worldliness is “the tendency to be captivated by the outward show of things, without enquiring into their true value”<sup>14</sup>. Do we see an idolatrous world and feel “deeply troubled” (v.16, NLT), or a glamorous world that we delight greatly in it?

## ■ APPLICATION

How do I feel about the idolatrous beauty and glamour of the world and how do I live in such a world?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for lay leaders:  
To be kept from conforming to the world
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>10</sup> John Stott, *Acts*, 277

<sup>11</sup> John Stott, *Acts*, 277

<sup>12</sup> John Stott, *The Letters of John, Revised Edition*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (IVP, 1964, 1988), 105 – citing George G. Findlay

<sup>13</sup> John Stott, *The Letters of John*, 105 – citing C. H. Dodd

<sup>14</sup> John Stott, *The Letters of John*, 105 – citing C. H. Dodd



## How Do We View Pagan Religiosity?

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 17:16, 22-34

### ■ OBSERVATION

How did Paul reach out to idolatrous pagans with the Gospel?

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### Deeper Reflection

**WE OUGHT TO FEEL** “greatly distressed”, like Paul did, when seeing people worshiping images of God’s creation (v.16). But we can learn from Paul about reaching out to idolatrous pagans with the Gospel. While troubled by the extensive idolatry, Paul’s response to the attitude of the worshippers was one of **affirmation**: “I observe that you are very religious in all aspects” (v.22). There was no judgement or condemnation. While he obviously objected to the objects of their worship, he affirmed the spirit of their worship, their religiosity. He associated the Athenians’ “An Unknown God” with the one true God (v.23). He used the Greeks’ view of themselves as “the children of God” to identify it with the one true God (vv.28-29). It might appear that Paul was compromising the truth. But Paul was using the pagans’ terms to point them to the one true God. After the affirmation, Paul made a **redirection**. He sought to enlighten them on **what God is not**: He “does not dwell in temples” nor is He “served by human hands” (vv.24b-25); and on **what God truly is**: He is the creator of all things (vv.24a, 26), and He is near us (v.27) and personal with us, “In Him we live and move and exist” (v.28).

## ■ APPLICATION

How can I reach out to unbelievers who are very devoted to worshipping idols?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for church board:  
To have sensitive wisdom in reaching out to idolatrous unbelievers
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

SUNDAY  
**07**  
OCTOBER

# Sunday Journal

■ **S**CRPTURE

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■ **O**BSERVATION

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■ **A**PPPLICATION

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■ **P**RAYER

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## THE PAST WEEK

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### Review

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

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What gave me life and what drained me?

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How was the Spirit of God at work?

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**Reflect**

What is one key thing that God said to me this week in light of what has happened?

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**Respond**

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?  
COMMIT IN PRAYER.

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## HOW CAN WE OBEY GOD?\*

When we know God's Word, we will know how to obey Him.

*Scripture: Luke 2:41-52*

### ACTIVITY BITE

Start by having someone in your family say: "I was packing for my vacation but I forgot "\_\_\_\_\_". Then get the person beside him or her to repeat the item that the first player forgot and then add another item to it. The next person must remember the first two items and add another item to the list. Continue adding items until everyone has had a turn.

### CHAT TIME

- Q1: Have you ever forgotten to pack something for your vacation? How did you feel?
- Q2: Would it be worse if you realised you left something behind after returning from your vacation? Why or why not?
- Q3: How will writing a list of items to pack help you prepare for your vacation?

### LEARNING POINT

We learn in Luke 2:41-52 that Jesus stayed behind at the Temple because He wanted to learn more about what God says in the Scriptures. The Bible says that He became wiser and stronger and more pleasing to God and the people. When we learn what God says in His Word, we will also become stronger and wiser in our faith and friendships. That's because what God says is the most important thing to know. Knowledge is learning something new so that we can become better at what we do. We want to know more about God, so that we will know what He says and how to obey Him.

### ACTION POINT

Say this prayer whenever you face difficult choices: "I want to know what You say, God, so that I will know how to obey You."

### FAMILY PRAYER POINTS

Pray that we will know what God says and to live the way that He wants us to.

\* Adapted from First Look, January 2017. [www.ThinkOrange.com](http://www.ThinkOrange.com)



## How Paul Viewed Working

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

### ■ OBSERVATION

How did Paul view working (vv.1-5; 2 Thess 3:6-12)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PAUL LEFT ATHENS** and went to Corinth where he met Aquila and Priscilla (vv.1-2). He lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers like him (v.3). He worked on weekdays and preached the Word on the Sabbath (v.4). “By Jewish practice, every rabbi was encouraged to learn a trade along with his more strictly religious duties”<sup>15</sup>. Paul was clear about his calling: to be “devoting himself completely to the Word” (v.5). He also knew that “the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel” (1 Cor 9:13-14; cf. Gal 6:6). However, at times Paul worked, and for different reasons. Being an itinerant preacher with no regular source of income, he worked to supply his own needs (Acts 20:34). Denying his right for support, he worked so as not to burden the Thessalonians and to model for them the responsibility and necessity of working (2 Thess 3:6-12). For Paul, working to supply his needs was secondary. He found his security and sufficiency in his God who would supply all his needs (Phil 4:19) and who also allowed him to suffer needs (Phil 4:11-12). Like Paul, we ought to look at working, whatever our vocation is, in terms of what is **primary** and what is **secondary**.

## ■ APPLICATION

What is primary and secondary for me in my vocation?

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## ■ PRAYER

Creator King, You have created human beings with a calling to work and to work as worship to You. I trust in You that whatever I do and wherever I am in my work, it is You who took me and put me there. So, each day I will consecrate my work to You. Grant me and increase in me the consciousness of fellowship with You and worship to You as I work.

Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## In Weakness, Fear and Trembling

### ■ SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

### ■ OBSERVATION

What significant observations can you make about Paul regarding his arrival and ministry in Corinth?

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### Deeper Reflection

**CORINTH BOASTED** of “its wealth and culture” and “its political prestige as the capital of provincial Achaia”<sup>16</sup>. It was a prosperous and licentious city “where only the tough survive”<sup>17</sup>. It was marked by “intellectual arrogance”<sup>18</sup>, where “the only way one could make a difference in the world was by Roman strength and Greek education”<sup>19</sup>. Hence, Paul arrived at Corinth “in weakness and in fear and in much trembling” (v.3). How do we face an intimidating world like Corinth? Let “**Jesus Christ, even Him crucified**” (v.2) be our **lifestyle** and **message**. Christ crucified was weakness, lowness and foolishness to the Corinth-world with its “drive to compete and to succeed” and a “self-promotion alone” culture.<sup>20</sup> The Gospel of a humiliated, crucified Christ is an affront to people who cherish success and love winners. Paul did not come to Corinth “with high-sounding rhetoric or a display of cleverness”<sup>21</sup> (v.1) or “persuasive words of wisdom” (v.4). But Corinth’s “consumer-oriented culture wanted precisely what Paul refused to give”<sup>22</sup>. Paul’s only selling point was the one thing that nobody would want – the crucified Christ. But Christ crucified is “the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:23-24).

## ■ APPLICATION

What does Jesus Christ, even Him crucified, mean to me personally?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for pastors and staff:  
To serve and lead in knowing Christ crucified
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>16</sup> John Stott, *Acts*, 295

<sup>17</sup> Bruce Milne, 364 – citing Roman poet, Horace

<sup>18</sup> John Stott, *Acts*, 295

<sup>19</sup> Rodney Reeves, *Spirituality According to Paul: Imitating the Apostle of Christ* (IVP Academic, 2011), 42

<sup>20</sup> Anthony Thiselton, *1 Corinthians, A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2006), 7

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Thiselton, 8 – his translation

<sup>22</sup> Anthony Thiselton, 8



## God's "Do Not Fear" Encouragement

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:5-18

### ■ OBSERVATION

What is the significance of Luke telling the story of the Jews bringing Paul before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia (vv.12-17)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**IN CORINTH**, when the Jews resisted and rejected the Gospel, Paul turned his focus on preaching to the Gentiles (v.6). The result was “many of the Corinthians believed and were baptised” (v.8). It seems rather strange that after an effective and fruitful ministry, the divine word “**Do not be afraid**” came to Paul (v.9). Why? The Jews’ strong opposition against Paul continued. Paul arrived at Corinth with fear (1 Cor 2:3) and now he was fearful again. God knows that His faithful servants need much of His “do not fear” encouragement, like Joshua (Josh 1:6, 9), Jeremiah (Jer 1:8) and Israel – His servant in exile (Isa 41:9-10). The Lord called Paul to have **perseverance**, to “go on speaking and do not be silent” (v.9). Note the double emphasis of “go on” and “do not be”. The Lord’s **presence** – “I am with you” (v.10a) – and His **protection** – “no man will attack you to harm you” (v.10b) – enable us to persevere. God’s presence with us is a covenant presence, whether we feel it or not. When the Jews “made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal”, Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia showed no concern for their accusations (vv.12-17). God kept His promise of protection. God is faithful.

## ■ APPLICATION

In what ways is the divine “do not fear” encouragement relevant to me?

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## ■ PRAYER

God, You are my God, who created and formed me, called me by my name and redeemed me in Christ through His blood, that I may be Yours. You say to me, “do not fear,” because You are with me when I go through the waters of difficulty and they will not sweep over me and drown me; and when I walk through the fire, the flames will not set me ablaze.<sup>23</sup>  
Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>23</sup> Isaiah 43:1-2



## Paul Taught God's Word Ineffectively?

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about spiritual growth in Paul's ministry to the Corinthians?

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### Deeper Reflection

**THE LORD'S REASON** for His “do not fear” encouragement to Paul was “I have many people in this city” (vv.9-10). Before this, “many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized” (v.8). It looks like a good many Corinthians became believers when Paul was there. It is one thing for people come to know Christ, but quite another to nurture them to maturity. Paul stayed in Corinth for “a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them” (v.11). How were the Corinthians doing in their spiritual growth? They were still “infants in Christ” who were “not yet able” to receive “solid food”; they could only drink “milk” (1 Cor 3:1-2). There was “jealousy”, “strife” and divisions in the church (1 Cor 3:3-4; cf. 1 Cor 1:10-13). This was the result despite Paul having spent 18 months with them “teaching the Word of God”. Wasn't Paul the finest teacher of the Word? Or was he ineffective? Or did he use wrong teaching methods? Did he not teach the Word “in demonstration of the Spirit and power” (1 Cor 2:4)? Quality teachers and teaching do not guarantee spiritual growth in their recipients.

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my understanding and attitude regarding spiritual growth?

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## ■ PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank You for Your grace and love. Change my heart, O Lord, and make it ever true. Help me see how poor and broken I am and how undeserving I am of Your grace and love, and in the process, create in me a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, that I may love You with all my heart, and with all my soul and with all my mind. Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## Divine Design of Spiritual Growth

### ■ SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

### ■ OBSERVATION

What significant observations can you make about spiritual growth in verses 1 to 9?

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### Deeper Reflection

**IN CONFRONTING THE CORINTHIANS** about their spiritual immaturity, Paul presented the divine design of spiritual growth, in which “God who causes the growth” (vv. 6-7) is central. Paul placed side by side the fact that the Corinthians were not growing (vv.1-4), with the truth that “God was causing the growth” (vv.5-9). From this juxtaposition, one may argue that the Corinthians were not growing because God was not causing their growth, since all growth comes only from God. Paul did not see it that way. But rather, he held the Corinthians responsible for their own spiritual immaturity (vv.1-4). We grow in spiritual maturity when our lives are transformed. “Be transformed” (Rom 12:2a) is in the passive voice, indicating that transformation is the work of God. But it is a command to be obeyed: “Be transformed by God”. Commitment and effort is required of us. Later in his letter, Paul exhorted the Corinthians to grow up and particularly, “in your thinking be mature” (1 Cor 14:20). Our behaviour is shaped by and shows our beliefs. We are transformed by the “renewing of” our “mind” (Rom 12:2b): when our thinking is formed by and conformed to the Word of God. And to be mature is a choice.

## ■ APPLICATION

In what ways do I need to be mature in my thinking?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for lay leaders:  
To keep growing with intentionality and diligence
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
  
- Pray for self:



## If It Is God's Will

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:18-23

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about the will of God in Paul's trip to Ephesus?

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### Deeper Reflection

**AFTER HIS LONG STAY** in Corinth, Paul set sail for “Syria” (v.18), presumably intending to report to the church in Antioch which had sent him out<sup>24</sup> (Acts 13:1-3; 14:1-28; 15:35-36). When he reached Ephesus, he “entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews” (v.19). Paul’s ministry was so much more acceptable to the Jews in Ephesus than in Corinth (which contrasts with Acts 18:6, 12-17) that “they asked him to stay for a longer time” (v.20a). But Paul “did not consent” (v.20b). Here was a door widely open to the Gospel, but Paul turned down a golden opportunity. He left these truth seekers by saying, “I will return to you again if God wills” (v.21). This implied that it wasn’t God’s will for Paul to “stay for a longer time” in Ephesus. What seemed to be God’s will was not. This Paul who said “no” was a man who would “do all things for the sake of the gospel” (1 Cor 9:23) and this God who said “no” is the God “who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4, NIV). We see here the divine sovereignty and divine mystery in the divine will. “My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa 55:8-9).

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my understanding of the will of God?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for church board:  
To walk faithfully and wisely  
in God's will
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



# Sunday Journal

## ■ SCRIPTURE

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## ■ OBSERVATION

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## ■ APPLICATION

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## ■ PRAYER

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## THE PAST WEEK

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### Review

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

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What gave me life and what drained me?

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How was the Spirit of God at work?

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**Reflect**

What is one key thing that God said to me this week in light of what has happened?

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**Respond**

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?  
COMMIT IN PRAYER.

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# HOW CAN I FOLLOW JESUS?\*

Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus.

*Scripture: John 8:31; 10:27*

## ACTIVITY BITE

Get a dice and four small cards. Write "Left", "Right", "Front" and "Back" separately on each of the cards. Have your family gather in the middle of a room and face the same wall. Ask someone to start by picking a card and throwing the dice. The card shows the direction he or she has to walk, while the dice indicates the number of steps to take, with each step being one foot-length.

## CHAT TIME

- Q1: How did you feel when you had to walk in random directions?
- Q2: Would you prefer it if everyone could reach the wall with the least number of steps?
- Q3: How can you follow Jesus better?

## LEARNING POINT

Our church pastors have taught us that following Jesus every day is the best decision we can make in our lives. But how do we know the way to follow Jesus? The answer is found in the Bible. God's Word is full of wise teachings that tell us who He is and the right way to follow Him. There is no other way that leads to the truth. So, knowing what God says in the Bible will help us know how we can follow Him every day.

## ACTION POINT

Share a Bible verse with someone and encourage him or her to do what it says this week.

## FAMILY PRAYER POINTS

Pray that God will speak to us when we read the Bible so that we can know how to follow Him every day.

\*Adapted from First Look, January 2017. [www.ThinkOrange.com](http://www.ThinkOrange.com)



## Mighty in the Scriptures

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:24

### ■ OBSERVATION

What does Apollos was “mighty in the Scriptures” mean?

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### Deeper Reflection

**APOLLOS, WHO WOULD GO TO MINISTER** in Corinth (Acts 19:1), was “mighty in the Scriptures” (v.24). It means that he was “well-versed” (NRSV) and “competent” (ESV) in the Scriptures, “powerful” (HSCB) in explaining biblical texts and effective in using them.<sup>25</sup> Can all Christians grow to be “mighty in the Scriptures”, having “a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures” (v.24, NIV)? The answer is “yes”. It is a growth that comes from the Holy Spirit as a gift of God’s grace. But it also depends on how much we want to have that. When people ask me how to get deep into the Word of God, my usual answer is “Time”. And two kinds of time. **Devotion of time:** the amount of time **we give** to reading the Scriptures. So, how much time do I want to give? **Duration of time:** the length of time **it takes** for growth in understanding the Scriptures. But this is relative, as it varies from individual to individual. However, the duration of time does also depend on the devotion of time. John Bunyan, the author of “Pilgrim’s Progress”, was an illiterate metal worker when he became a Christian. But he pursued to acquire literacy so that he could read and understand the Bible. He was that hungry for the Word.

## ■ APPLICATION

How hungry am I for the Word of God that I seek to grow to be “mighty in the Scriptures”?

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## ■ PRAYER

O Living God, You have given us the Scriptures, Your living Word, in which You have revealed Yourself that we may know You, Your heart and Your will. Grant me to see that Your Word is more desirable than fine gold. Grant me to taste Your Word as sweeter than honey. Grant me to hunger for Your Word, for it is the bread of life which I cannot live without. Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## Share What You Know

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:24-26

### ■ OBSERVATION

What can you learn from Apollos' experience of speaking and teaching the things concerning Jesus when there was a need for him to understand "God's way" more accurately?

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### Deeper Reflection

**WHAT APOLLOS WAS WELL-VERSED** in the Scriptures (v.24) was probably his understanding of how the Scriptures make promises about the Messiah,<sup>26</sup> as implied in his "speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus" (v.25). He "had been instructed in the way of the Lord" (v.25): truths concerning "the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus as Israel's Messiah and Saviour"<sup>27</sup>. However, his knowledge about Jesus was largely limited to his "being acquainted only with the baptism of John" (v.25). This meant that Apollos's grasp of the truths concerning Jesus was "minimal"<sup>28</sup>. Later on, Priscilla and Aquila "explained to him the way of God more accurately" (v.26b). There were things in Apollos's understanding and teaching that were deficient and defective. Nevertheless, he was speaking out boldly about Jesus (v.26a). We don't have to, as we cannot, wait until we've got all our theology right, before sharing the Word of God with fellow believers, younger believers and unbelievers. Share what you know, like Apollos, even though there may be deficiencies and defects. What is most important is that as we share what we know, we learn, unlearn and relearn.

## ■ APPLICATION

What actions would I want to take in sharing with others what I know of the Bible?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for pastors and staff:  
To handle the Word of truth accurately
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>26</sup> Darrell L. Bock, Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Baker, 2007), 591

<sup>27</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, 784

<sup>28</sup> John Stott, Acts, 302



## Learning Truths in Community

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:24-26

### ■ OBSERVATION

What can you learn about learning truths in community from the encounter between Apollos and Priscilla and Aquila?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PRISCILLA AND AQUILA** “heard” Apollos speaking and teaching about Jesus with a concern for **accuracy** in understanding of truths. They detected certain deficiencies and defects in Apollos’ understanding and teaching, so “they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately” (v.26). This must be our concern both at the personal and community level, for we are to “handle accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). This is a critical necessity. For ignoring and neglecting this will result in us being “tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine”, not being discerning, but deceived (Eph 4:14). What Priscilla and Aquila did showed their sense of **responsibility**, both for the truth and a fellow believer’s learning and understanding of the truth. They did not leave Apollos alone in his deficient and defective understanding. However, we need wisdom to know when and how to fulfil such responsibility. It can also be that a better person to do that is not ourselves, but someone else. While we may know the truth “accurately” (v.25), we ought to have the **humility** and **teachability** to be open to understand it “more accurately” (v.26).

## ■ APPLICATION

What does it mean for me to emphasise on handling the Word of truth accurately?

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## ■ PRAYER

Teach me Your Word, O Lord, that I may follow it to the end. Give me understanding through the Spirit of truth that I may keep Your Word and obey it with all my heart.

Turn my heart towards Your Word and make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for there I find true delight. Let Your Word produce the fear of God in me. Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

THURSDAY

18

OCTOBER

## Passion in Serving God

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:24-28

### ■ OBSERVATION

What significant observations can you make about how Apollos served the Lord?

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### Deeper Reflection

**LUKE'S DETAILED DESCRIPTION** of Apollos in just five verses showed Apollos' passion in serving God. What marks such a passion? **Christ is the centre**, in both life and ministry. What was predominant in Apollos was “the way of **the Lord**” (v.25), “the things concerning **Jesus**” (v.25), and “that **Jesus** was the **Christ**” (v. 28). It was the Lord Jesus Christ from the beginning (v.25) to the end (v.28). **Fervent in the Spirit**<sup>29</sup> (v.25): It is burning enthusiasm, ardent commitment and a heart full of devotion to God in a life empowered by the Holy Spirit. Paul teaches that “not lagging behind in diligence” and being “fervent in the Spirit” should characterise our “serving the Lord” (Rom 12:11). **Desire to serve others:** Having learned “the way of God more accurately” (v.26), Apollos “**wanted** to go across to Achaia” to serve “those who had believed” there (v.27) with his gift of teaching the Word. The result was he “greatly helped” them (v.27). When we help others, let us seek to be a great help. **Powerful in the Word:** This short narrative of Apollos began and ended with “the Scriptures” – beginning with “mighty in the Scriptures” (v.24) and ending with “demonstrating by the Scriptures” (v.28).

## ■ APPLICATION

How will I evaluate my passion in serving the Lord?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## What Then Is Apollos?

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:24, 27-28; 19:1; 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

### ■ OBSERVATION

What did Paul seek to communicate in his question, “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul?”, in 1 Corinthians 3:5?

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### Deeper Reflection

**APOLLOS WAS A VERY GIFTED MAN.** He was “an Alexandrian by birth” (v.24). Alexandria was the Roman seat in Egypt, which was well known for its educational opportunities and as a place of philosophical reflection.<sup>30</sup> Not surprising then that Apollos was a learned and eloquent man (v.24). And furthermore, he was “mighty in the Scriptures” (v.24). When Apollos was in Corinth (Acts 19:1), a personality cult over Apollos and Paul arose in the church, resulting in serious divisions (1 Cor 1:10-12; 3:1-4). Rhetorics was worshipped in Corinth. And this was largely the reason for the “I follow Apollos” party (see 1 Cor 3:1, 4). It was against this backdrop that Paul asked the question, “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul?” (1 Cor 3:5). And the answer according to Paul? Nothing! This is an important perspective for us who disciple others to influence them for Christ to guard against pride and self-importance. When we disciple others, we only plant and water (1 Cor 3:6-7), as opportunities given to each one by God (1 Cor 3:5). It is “God who causes the growth” (1 Cor 3:6-7) and not us. God will “reward” us “each ... according to his own labour” (1 Cor 3:8). Faithfulness is our responsibility, fruitfulness is up to God.

## ■ APPLICATION

How will I guard against pride and self-importance in my service to God?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for lay leaders:  
To be humble faithful stewards of what God has given them
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## A Couple Serving God

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Aquila and Priscilla as a couple?

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### Deeper Reflection

**AQUILA AND PRISCILLA** were a remarkable couple serving the Lord together. Paul befriended them at Corinth, where he subsequently stayed and worked with them as tentmakers (vv.1-3). They joined Paul in his missionary work when he left Corinth (vv.18-19). They were his “fellow workers in Christ Jesus” who “risked their lives” for him (Rom 16:3-4). In Ephesus, they had a “church” meeting “in their house” (1 Cor 16:19). It is of significance that of the five times this couple was mentioned by name in the New Testament, they were referred to four times as “Priscilla and Aquila” (vv.18, 26; Rom 16:3; 2 Tim 4:19) and once as “Aquila and Prisca” (1 Cor 16:19). In Greek, word order shows emphasis. That Priscilla was more frequently named before her husband suggests that she was the more prominent figure from a Christian point of view,<sup>31</sup> “due to her superior ability and zeal”<sup>32</sup>. Priscilla was taking the lead in explaining to Apollos “the way of God more accurately” (v.26), assuming she knew the Scriptures better than Aquila. This couple was humble and secure in the Lord to serve Him together to be often known as “Priscilla and Aquila”. And this has nothing to do with “Wives, submit to your husbands”<sup>33</sup>.

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my perspective and attitude regarding gender in Christian ministry?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for church board:  
To have God work mightily through them with their spouses
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>31</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (IVR, 1980), 292

<sup>32</sup> D. E. Hiebert, Priscilla, *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible, Revised, Full Color Edition, Volume 4*, Merrill C. Tenney, general editor / Moises Silva, revision editor (Zondervan, 2009), 986

<sup>33</sup> Ephesians 5:22

SUNDAY  
**21**  
OCTOBER

## Sunday Journal

### ■ SCRIPTURE

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### ■ OBSERVATION

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### ■ APPLICATION

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### ■ PRAYER

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## THE PAST WEEK

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### Review

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

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What gave me life and what drained me?

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How was the Spirit of God at work?

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**Reflect**

What is one key thing that God said to me this week in light of what has happened?

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**Respond**

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?  
COMMIT IN PRAYER.

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## HOW DO I MAKE WISE CHOICES?\*

Discovering what God says helps you make wise choices.

*Scripture: Luke 4:1-13; Psalm 119:105*

### ACTIVITY BITE

Tape a few pieces of piece of paper together to form a long sheet. Draw a path on it. Write or draw the temptations that Jesus faced on the path. Share with your family members about the times when you were tempted to make unwise choices and include them on the path. In the centre of the path, use colourful markers to write: "Discovering what God says helps you make wise choices". Lay the sheet on the floor and walk along the path.

### CHAT TIME

- Q1: In Luke 4:1-13, how did Jesus know how to resist the devil?  
Q2: Have you ever come close to making an unwise choice that would hurt your relationship with God or others? If so, how did God's Word help you overcome it?  
Q3: How do you discover what God says?

### LEARNING POINT

Jesus didn't give in or take the easy way out. He made the wise choice because He knew what God said. God gave Jesus all He needed to withstand the devil's temptations in His Word. Similarly, God has given us all we need to make wise choices and they are found in the Bible. God tells us what we need to know, so we just need to discover what that is. Let's find out what God says to us!

### ACTION POINT

Memorising bible verses helps us discover what God says. Read Psalm 119:105 as a family before breakfast throughout the week. Challenge your parents to see who can memorise the verse faster.

### FAMILY PRAYER POINTS

Thank God for His Word which gives us all we need to make wise choices in our lives. Pray for God's help to keep discovering what He says and put them into action.

\* Adapted from First Look, January 2017. [www.ThinkOrange.com](http://www.ThinkOrange.com)



## There Are No Uniform Ways of Conversion

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:1-7; 8:14-18; 35-39; 16:31-34

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about the various conversion experiences in Acts (vv.1-7; Acts 8:14-18; 35-39; 16:31-34)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PAUL CAME TO EPHESUS** the second time (v.1; see Acts 18:19-21), where he would stay for three years (Acts 20:31). He met 12 “disciples” who had received John’s baptism, but did not understand the purpose of John’s mission of “telling the people to believe in Him [Jesus]” (vv.2-4). They were not yet believers. But now they believed and “were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus” (v.5). Then, Paul “laid hands upon them” and “the Holy Spirit came on them”, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied (v.6). After the Samaritans’ conversion, they received the Holy Spirit through the laying of hands, but it was not accompanied by speaking in tongues, although apparently there were some unspecified manifestations (Acts 8:14-18). When Cornelius believed, the Holy Spirit fell upon him without hands being laid on him and he spoke in tongues (Acts 10:44-46). It is clear from other conversion stories in Acts (8:35-39; 13:48, 52; 16:14, 31-34; 18:8) that such manifestations took place spasmodically and were not the general rule when those who believed received the gift of the Holy Spirit as promised (Acts 2:38-39). There are no uniform ways of conversion. It is all as the sovereign God wills.

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in my thinking and understanding regarding unbelievers receiving Christ as their Lord and Saviour?

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## ■ PRAYER

God, You desire all people to be saved and to come to know the truth.<sup>34</sup> I pray for my pre-believing family members, relatives and friends, that You will save them. Draw them to the Saviour, for no one can come to Christ unless You draw them to Him.<sup>35</sup> Open their eyes to see the truth and open their hearts to respond to You<sup>36</sup> that You may save them. Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>34</sup> 1 Timothy 2:4

<sup>35</sup> John 6:44

<sup>36</sup> Acts 16:14



## Responding to Openness and Opposition

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:8-10

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Paul's response to openness and opposition to the Gospel?

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### Deeper Reflection

**BOTH OPENNESS AND OPPOSITION** to the Gospel marked Paul's stay in Ephesus. **Responding to openness:** When the Jews were receptive to his ministry, Paul spoke freely and openly without fear (v.8)<sup>37</sup> about "the reality of the kingdom of God"<sup>38</sup> for as long as he could – "three months" (v.8). Paul used "reasoning", that is, conducting "instructional discourses on the gospel with question and answer sessions"<sup>39</sup>, and he was "forceful and convincing"<sup>40</sup> in his approach, and undoubtedly, in the power of the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 2:4). **Responding to opposition:** When some Jews opposed intensely, Paul "withdrew from them" (v.9a). At times Paul had to leave the place altogether, as in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 17:5-10, 13-15). But here he only withdrew from speaking in the synagogue. However, he was forced to leave Ephesus eventually (Acts 19:23-28; 20:1). **Responding to openness:** Paul was "reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus" for "two years" (vv.9b-10). He worked in the morning (Acts 20:34; 1 Cor 4:12) and ministered in the afternoon,<sup>41</sup> "in an off-peak time ... when people would be free to hear him"<sup>42</sup>. In preaching the Gospel, Paul did not simply bulldoze his way in whatever situation.

## ■ APPLICATION

What changes do I need to make in reaching out to unbelievers appropriately?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for pastors and staff:  
To have wisdom in reaching out to the unsaved appropriately
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>37</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, 790

<sup>38</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, 790

<sup>39</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, 790

<sup>40</sup> I. Howard Marshall, 308

<sup>41</sup> David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Pillar New Testament Commentaries (Apollos, 2009), 535

<sup>42</sup> Darrell L. Bock, 601



## The Lord Is Behind It All

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:11-20

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about “the name of the Lord Jesus” from the narrative in verses 11 to 20?

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### Deeper Reflection

**IN EPHESUS**, “God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul” (vv.11-20). Miracles themselves are extraordinary, but these miracles were extraordinarily extraordinary (vv.11-12), which implies that such miracles are rare. These “extraordinary miracles” led to a **misuse of the name of Jesus**. Some Jews attempted to tap the power they believed to be inherent in the name of Jesus, but with disastrous consequences (vv.13-16). There is power – healing and saving power – in the name of Jesus (e.g., Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10-12), but its efficacy is not mechanical or used second-hand. We can misuse the Lord’s name by wrongly or falsely attributing things to the Lord. A solemn reality is that prophesying, casting out demons, performing miracles in the Lord’s name does not necessarily mean that we are real and right before Him (Matt 7:21-23). But **the name of Jesus** can be **magnified** even when it is misused (v.17). God is sovereign. What happened (vv.13-16) led to the deliverance of “many” from occult practices and “the process of purification of Christian thinking from paganism”<sup>43</sup> (vv.18-19). Paul was not active in the narrative. Behind these events was the name and the Word of the Lord (vv.13, 17, 20).

## ■ APPLICATION

In what ways do I tend to misuse the name of the Lord and how can I guard against this?

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## ■ PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, may  
Your Name be kept holy.<sup>44</sup>  
You are the great King,  
whose Name is great and  
feared among the nations.<sup>45</sup>  
You do all things for the  
sake of Your own Name.<sup>46</sup>  
Keep us from taking  
Your Name in vain in our  
thoughts, our words and our  
actions.<sup>47</sup> Help us to revere  
You and stand in awe of  
Your holy Name, and seek to  
give honour to Your Name.<sup>48</sup>

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>43</sup> I. Howard Marshall, 312

<sup>44</sup> Matthew 6:9

<sup>45</sup> Malachi 1:11, 14

<sup>46</sup> Ezekiel 36:22

<sup>47</sup> Exodus 20:7

<sup>48</sup> Malachi 2:1, 5



## "Thereafter, I Must Also See Rome"

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:21; Romans 1:8-15; 15:18-28

### ■ OBSERVATION

How did Paul describe his moving towards fulfilling his vision of "I must also see Rome" (v.21) in his letter to the Romans (Rom 1:8-13; 15:18-28)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**TOWARDS THE END** of his third missionary journey, Paul set his sights on Rome (v.21). Paul "aspired to preach the gospel where Christ was not known" (Rom 15:20). As he was completing his work in Asia and Eastern Europe, he had a vision for "Spain" (Rom 15:23-24, 28) – the furthest point of Western Europe. He was thinking of shifting from Antioch, his sending base, to Rome for support in his new pioneering work in Western Europe, because Rome was nearer. One of Paul's purposes for writing the Letter to the Romans was "to be helped on my way there [Spain] by you" (Rom 15:23-24, 28). Through Paul's experience, we can learn about seeking and doing "**the will of God**" (Rom 1:10). In seeking God's will, Paul also "**planned**" (Rom 1:13). "The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Prov 16:9). Governing Paul's plan was **prayer**, "always in my prayers making request" (Rom 1:10). For Paul, prayerful seeking of God's will includes a "**perhaps**" – "if perhaps now at last" (Rom 1:10). Following Jesus does not mean that we are always sure of His will in specific areas of our lives. And God does lead and guide us through situations of being "**prevented** so far" (Rom 1:13).

## ■ APPLICATION

What challenges do I face in seeking and doing the will of God, and how will I deal with them?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## "No Small Disturbance Concerning the Way"

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:23-41

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about the believers and unbelievers from the “no small disturbance concerning the Way” (v.23) that occurred in Ephesus?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PAUL'S MINISTRY** in Ephesus resulted in “all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:9-10, 20). This did not imply that Paul personally proclaimed the Gospel in every city in the province, but rather, that the Gospel reached the entire province.<sup>49</sup> The impact of the Gospel can be so immense that “no small disturbance concerning the Way” can occur (v.23). **We do not intend to create disturbance** when we preach the Gospel. However, **we cannot stop unbelievers from feeling disturbed**. The silversmiths who “made silver shrines of Artemis” were losing business because many in the province believed in Jesus and stopped worshipping “the great goddess” (vv.24-27a). The negative economic effect was unintentional, but inevitable. Paul was held responsible for this and then a great riot was stirred up over Artemis, and Paul’s travelling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, were seized (vv.27b-29, 32-34). But the town clerk quieted the rowdy crowd and spoke in defence of the Christians that they were “neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess” (vv.35-37). **We may receive vindication for unfair charges** brought against us in preaching the Gospel.

## ■ APPLICATION

What does the possibility of unbelievers being greatly disturbed by the Gospel mean for me in reaching out to the unsaved with the Gospel?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for lay leaders:  
To face resistance to the Gospel with humble patience
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## Can Our God Be in Danger?

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 19:24-34; Daniel 1:1-2

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about deities facing the danger of being dethroned in verses 24 to 27 and Daniel 1:1-2?

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### Deeper Reflection

**ARTEMIS WAS A "GREAT GODDESS"** (v.27). In the story of the riot in Ephesus (vv.23-41), the word "great" is attributed to Artemis four times (vv.27, 28, 34, 35). She was "great" indeed, for she was worshipped by "all of Asia and the world" (v.27). But this "great goddess" was in "danger" (v.27), her temple could be "regarded as worthless" and she herself "will even be dethroned from her magnificence". This caused the riot, with her worshippers shouting for two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" (v.34). What god is this that was in danger of being dethroned? Can our God be in such "danger"? We will all say "No"! However, do know that our God does at times subject Himself to such "danger". When King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the Babylonians took "some of the vessels of the house of God" and "brought them" to "the house of his god" (Dan 1:1-2). In human eyes, and even that of the defeated and powerless people of God, "the God of gods" (Psa 136:2) was dethroned by the Babylonian god. But the reality was that "the Lord gave" the vessels into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar. This is the same God who subjected Himself to be crucified by His own creatures.

## ■ APPLICATION

What does it mean to my faith in the Lord to have a God who at times allows Himself to be “dethroned” by other gods?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for church board:  
To grow in immovable trust in God's sovereignty
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



# Sunday Journal

## ■ SCRIPTURE

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## ■ OBSERVATION

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## ■ APPLICATION

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## ■ PRAYER

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## THE PAST WEEK

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### Review

What was my high point and my low point for the week?

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What gave me life and what drained me?

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How was the Spirit of God at work?

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**Reflect**

What is one key thing that God said to me this week in light of what has happened?

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**Respond**

What is one thing I need to do in light of what God is saying?  
COMMIT IN PRAYER.

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## DOES GOD WANT ME TO KNOW HIM?\*

When we know God's Word, we will want to know Him more.  
*Scripture: Matthew 11:1-6; James 1:5*

### ACTIVITY BITE

Write down on a piece of paper what Jesus told John's disciples in Matthew 11:4-6, but replace as many words as possible with emojis. Be creative and create your own emojis if needed.

### CHAT TIME

- Q1: What do you usually do when you don't understand something in the Bible?
- Q2: What is the most important question that you want to ask God? Why?
- Q3: James 1:5 says that if anyone needs wisdom, they should ask God for it. He will give it to everyone without finding fault. Is there anything you want to know, but don't dare ask God about?

### LEARNING POINT

When we read God's Word, we don't always understand what God is saying and why He is doing certain things in this world or in our lives. It's all right to ask God about the things you're wondering about, just like John asked Jesus for help when he didn't understand. Start with a prayer. Ask God directly about the questions you have. Read His Word or ask your pastors, parents and church leaders. You may not get an answer immediately, but trust that God will provide an answer when the time is right. He is happy that we want to know Him more.

### ACTION POINT

Write down your questions to God in a journal and leave some space for answers. Remember to share the answers with your family when you receive them.

### FAMILY PRAYER POINTS

Thank God that we can ask him questions when we don't understand certain things. He cares about our lives and our thoughts. Pray that God will help us to trust Him and wait for His answers so that we can know Him even more.

\*Adapted from First Look, January 2017. [www.ThinkOrange.com](http://www.ThinkOrange.com)



## Encouragement Through the Word

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 20:1-6

### ■ OBSERVATION

What did Paul do in Ephesus before he left and subsequently in Macedonia and Greece (vv.1-3)?

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### Deeper Reflection

**"AFTER THE UPROAR"** in Ephesus "had ceased" (see Acts 19:28-41), Paul "sent for the disciples" and **"encouraged"** them, after which he left for "Macedonia" (v.1). He revisited the disciples in the districts of Macedonia and gave them **"much encouragement"** (v.2). From Macedonia, he went to Greece, and "spent three months" with the disciples there. We can assume from the immediate context that Paul encouraged the disciples in Greece as he did in Ephesus and Macedonia. Paul's ministry was a Word-centred ministry. He encouraged the disciples with the Word of God, for **"everything that was written in the past** was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in **the Scriptures** and the **encouragement** they provide, we might have hope" (Rom 15:4, NIV). Christ-like character is developed through endurance, and endurance is developed through suffering, and what keeps us enduring is hope in God (Rom 5:3-5), even in "against all hope" situations (Rom 4:18). This is God's core curriculum for the disciples of His Son. And encouragement through the Scriptures and through "one another day after day" (Heb 3:12-13), enables us to press on and not give up, but to grow up.

## ■ APPLICATION

In what ways do I find the Scriptures giving me encouragement?

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## ■ PRAYER

I know, Lord, that Your Word is righteous and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. You are my hiding place and my shield, and my soul languishes for Your deliverance. I put my hope in Your Word. Let Your unfailing love be my comfort, according to Your Word to Your servant. Let Your compassion come to me that I may be revived, for Your Word is my delight.<sup>50</sup> Amen.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>50</sup> Psalm 119:75-77, 81, 114



## Eagerness for the Word

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 20:6-12

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Paul's teaching of the Word of God and the disciples' learning the Word?

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### Deeper Reflection

**PAUL STAYED "SEVEN DAYS"** in Troas (v.6). On the day before Paul left Troas, the disciples gathered on the Lord's Day to listen to him teaching the Word of God (v.7). They listened with **great eagerness**. As if it would be his last opportunity to minister in Troas, Paul "prolonged his message until midnight" (v.7). And after the midnight supper break, he continued for "a long while until daybreak" (v.11). The hungry disciples seized the **opportunity** to learn God's Word. And they stayed through "until daybreak". These disciples learned God's Word in an **uncomfortable** environment. "There were many lamps" in the place where they gathered (v.8). It was probably hot, stuffy and the people were perspiring profusely. But they stayed through "until daybreak". "As Paul kept on talking", a young man, Eutychus (which means "lucky"), "was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor" and died (v.9). But after Paul embraced him, he became alive, but remained unconscious (v.10). But the disciples were **undistracted** in learning God's Word, as they left Eutychus aside unconscious and continued to listen intently to Paul's long-winded teaching "until daybreak".

## ■ APPLICATION

How do I know if there is eagerness for the Word of God in me?

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## ■ PRAYER

Write a prayer to God as your response from your meditation on and application of the Scriptures.

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for pastors and staff:  
To have increasing eagerness in growing in the Word
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:



## "You Yourselfes Know"

### ■ SCRIPTURE

Acts 20:13-38

### ■ OBSERVATION

What observations can you make about Paul's disciplemaking ministry through his twice-repeated statement, "You yourselfes know", in verses 18 to 19 and 33 to 35?

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### Deeper Reflection

**FROM TROAS (ACTS 20:6-12)** Paul went to Miletus, where he sent for the "elders of the church" at Ephesus to say his parting words in view of his journey to Jerusalem (vv.15-17). In Paul's farewell speech, he mentioned twice "you yourselfes know" (vv.18, 34) – "You know how I lived my life the whole time I was with you". This is authentic discipleship in intentional disciplemaking. It is when **the life** of a leader and disciplemaker **can say**, "You know how I lived my life the whole time I was with you". This must also be true for parents. Fundamental in parenting in God's way is how parents live their lives personally, and in the relationship between husband and wife and with the children. The test of authentic discipleship is "You yourselfes know" – what people see in my life, that I am living out the Gospel, that it is indeed real. "You yourselfes know" is a statement of confidence and Paul was not presumptuous. It was presupposed that the Ephesians had affirmed Paul that his life was essentially imitating Christ (cf. 1 Cor 4:17; 11:1). And intentional disciplemaking out of authentic discipleship is marked by "in everything I showed you", to demonstrate "the words of the Lord Jesus" (v.35).

## ■ APPLICATION

How can I grow towards a life that I can say “You know how I lived my life the whole time I was with you”?

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## ■ PRAYER

Grant more of Your Spirit to all Your churches and servants in the world: that as our darkness, selfishness and imperfections have defiled, divided and weakened us, and made us scandalous before unbelievers; so may our knowledge of truth, self-denial and impartial love truly reform, unite and strengthen us, that we may shine as light to the unbelieving world.<sup>51</sup>

### Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks:
  
- Pray for leaders:
  
- Pray for significant people:
  
- Pray for those in need:
  
- Pray for self:

<sup>51</sup> Adapted from a prayer of Richard Baxter (1615-91), *The SPCK Book of Christian Prayer* (SPCK, 1995), 429









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