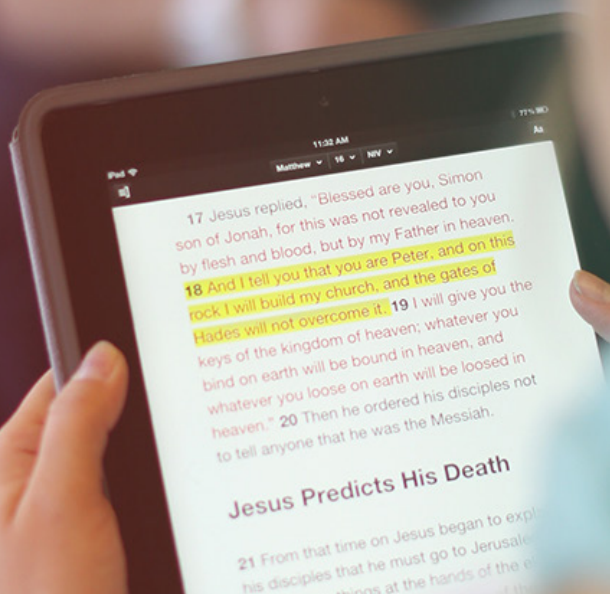


WORD.

DAILY VERSED



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YouVersion®

SPIRITUAL LIFE

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan

The devotionals that accompany the daily scripture readings were written by Oklahoma Christian University students, faculty, and staff members.

Also available as a daily electronic plan through the YouVersion Bible app.

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



www.oc.edu/youversion

- DAY/ 1** – Matthew 1 Matthew 2, Matthew 3, Matthew 4
- DAY/ 2** – Matthew 5, Matthew 5, Matthew 6, Matthew 7
- DAY/ 3** – Matthew 10, Matthew 11, Matthew 12, Matthew 13
- DAY/ 4** – Matthew 14, Matthew 15, Matthew 16, Matthew 17, Matthew 18, Matthew 19
- DAY/ 5** – Matthew 20, Matthew 21, Matthew 22, Matthew 23, Matthew 24
- DAY/ 6** – Matthew 25, Matthew 26, Matthew 27, Matthew 28
- DAY/ 7** – Acts 1, Acts 2, Acts 3, Acts 4, Acts 5
- DAY/ 8** – Acts 6, Acts 7, Acts 8, Acts 9, Acts 10
- DAY/ 9** – Acts 11, Acts 12, Acts 13, Acts 14, Acts 15
- DAY/ 10** – Acts 16, Acts 17, Acts 18, Acts 19, Acts 20
- DAY/ 11** – Acts 21, Acts 22, Acts 23, Acts 24, Acts 25
- DAY/ 12** – Acts 26, Acts 27, Acts 28
- DAY/ 13** – Mark 1, Mark 2, Mark 3, Mark 4, Mark 5
- DAY/ 14** – Mark 6, Mark 7, Mark 8, Mark 9, Mark 10, Mark 11
- DAY/ 15** – Psalm 121
- DAY/ 16** – Mark 12, Mark 13, Mark 14, Mark 15, Mark 16
- DAY/ 17** – Romans 1, Romans 2, Romans 3, Romans 4
- DAY/ 18** – Romans 5, Romans 6, Romans 7, Romans 8, Romans 9, Romans 10
- DAY/ 19** – Romans 11, Romans 12, Romans 13, Romans 14, Romans 15, Romans 16
- DAY/ 20** – Luke 1, Luke 2, Luke 3, Luke 4
- DAY/ 21** – Luke 5, Luke 6, Luke 7, Luke 8, Luke 9, Luke 10
- DAY/ 22** – Luke 11, Luke 12, Luke 13, Luke 14, Luke 15, Luke 16
- DAY/ 23** – Luke 17, Luke 18, Luke 18, Luke 19, Luke 20
- DAY/ 24** – Luke 21, Luke 22, Luke 23, Luke 24
- DAY/ 25** – I Corinthians 1, I Corinthians 2, I Corinthians 3, I Corinthians 4
- DAY/ 26** – I Corinthians 5, I Corinthians 6, I Corinthians 7, I Corinthians 8, I Corinthians 9, I Corinthians 10
- DAY/ 27** – I Corinthians 11, I Corinthians 12, I Corinthians 13, I Corinthians 14, I Corinthians 15, I Corinthians 16
- DAY/ 28** – II Corinthians 1, II Corinthians 2, II Corinthians 3, II Corinthians 4, II Corinthians 5
- DAY/ 29** – II Corinthians 6, II Corinthians 7, II Corinthians 8, II Corinthians 9, II Corinthians 10
- DAY/ 30** – Psalm 1
- DAY/ 31** – II Corinthians 11, II Corinthians 12, II Corinthians 13
- DAY/ 32** – Galatians 1, Galatians 2, Galatians 3, Galatians 4, Galatians 5, Galatians 6
- DAY/ 33** – Ephesians 1, Ephesians 2, Ephesians 3, Ephesians 4, Ephesians 5, Ephesians 6
- DAY/ 34** – Philippians 1, Philippians 2, Philippians 3, Philippians 4
- DAY/ 35** – Colossians 1, Colossians 2, Colossians 3, Colossians 4
- DAY/ 36** – I Thessalonians 1, I Thessalonians 2, I Thessalonians 3, I Thessalonians 4, I Thessalonians 5
- DAY/ 37** – II Thessalonians 1, II Thessalonians 2, II Thessalonians 3
- DAY/ 38** – I Timothy 1, I Timothy 2, I Timothy 3, I Timothy 4, I Timothy 5, I Timothy 6
- DAY/ 39** – II Timothy 1, II Timothy 2, II Timothy 3, II Timothy 4
- DAY/ 40** – Titus 1, Titus 2, Titus 3
- DAY/ 41** – Philemon 1
- DAY/ 42** – Hebrews 1, Hebrews 2, Hebrews 3, Hebrews 4, Hebrews 5
- DAY/ 43** – Hebrews 6, Hebrews 7, Hebrews 8, Hebrews 9
- DAY/ 44** – Hebrews 10, Hebrews 11, Hebrews 12, Hebrews 13
- DAY/ 45** – James 1, James 2, James 3, James 4, James 5
- DAY/ 46** – I Peter 1, I Peter 2, I Peter 3, I Peter 4, I Peter 5
- DAY/ 47** – Psalm 47
- DAY/ 48** – II Peter 1, II Peter 2, II Peter 3
- DAY/ 49** – I John 1, I John 2, I John 3, I John 4, I John 5
- DAY/ 50** – II John 1
- DAY/ 51** – III John 1
- DAY/ 52** – Jude 1
- DAY/ 53** – John 1, John 2, John 3, John 4, John 5
- DAY/ 54** – John 6, John 7, John 8, John 9, John 10
- DAY/ 55** – John 11, John 12, John 13, John 14, John 15
- DAY/ 56** – John 16, John 17, John 18, John 19, John 20, John 21
- DAY/ 57** – Revelation 1, Revelation 2, Revelation 3, Revelation 4, Revelation 5
- DAY/ 58** – Revelation 6, Revelation 7, Revelation 8, Revelation 9, Revelation 10, Revelation 11
- DAY/ 59** – Revelation 12, Revelation 13, Revelation 14, Revelation 15, Revelation 16, Revelation 17
- DAY/ 60** – Revelation 18, Revelation 19, Revelation 20, Revelation 21, Revelation 22

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 1

Jesus Knows Where You've Been and He Wants to Help You Get to Where You're Going

Matthew is a book about the life of Jesus. For some, Jesus may seem like a person that you can't relate to at all. He lived forever ago, He never screwed up his life like you or I have, and He allowed himself to die a painful and cruel death when He didn't have to.

However, when I read the first 4 chapters in Matthew, I am struck by how relatable this man is. He was born into a humble family. His parents weren't even married when He was conceived and He comes from a long line of questionable characters – a couple of prostitutes and a murderer just to name a few. Satan attacked Him and continuously tempted Him, and there is no doubt He understood what it felt like to be overworked and exhausted.

Put simply, He was human.

But what makes Him remarkable, what makes Him God in the flesh, is that He stayed the course. He never wavered from the plan for His life. He put one foot in front of the other and He kept going. I'm inspired by this.

As you travel through this difficult and complicated life remember that Jesus did too. When you feel like you can't take another step, know that He felt the exact same way.

And because He's been there, He's desperate to help you through it. All you have to do is let Him.

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Matthew 1
Matthew 2
Matthew 3
Matthew 4

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 2

Jesus Sets Us Up For Success

When I read the Sermon on the Mount, it just makes me so thankful that we have a God who is so thoughtful. In chapter 5, He told us, "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose." And in chapter 6, he teaches us how to give to the needy and how to pray and fast. In chapter 7, he warns us about judging others.

I love that Jesus came down to earth and was taking the time to explain things to us. It just makes me all the more certain that he wants to be involved in our lives, and that he has set us up for success, not failure.

**WRITTEN BY VIVIAN EDMONDSON
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Matthew 5
Matthew 5
Matthew 6
Matthew 7

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 3

God's Kingdom - A Real Home

These are chapters of encouragement for me. First, God wants me to trust his way even when my natural instinct pushes me in the other direction. "Whoever finds his life will lose it and whoever loses his life (because of Jesus) will find it." (10:39) What? The world tells me just the opposite – look out for myself and take care of me first. God's way sounds scary in light of the world's view, but the reality is that deep down I really am attracted to a selfless life that is all in for Jesus. Now, if I just lived that way all the time!

Second, God loves me despite my doubts and wonders. Matthew 11 – the one and only John the Baptist actually wonders aloud if Jesus is The One even after the Jordan River baptism, the voice from heaven, and the spirit like a dove. And Jesus' answer – talk about patience and depth. Jesus didn't just say – "Yes, I am The One," instead he said look at the evidence, it points to the truth. It's always easier to talk the talk than to walk the walk. Oh, and rather than being impatient or dismissive of John's questions, Jesus said – he is the greatest that has ever been ... except for all of us in the Kingdom of God.

Third, I love the parable of the sower. I remember vividly the first time I heard this parable being used in a small group bible study in an effective, evangelistic way. I want to be the good soil. Often, I'm not.

Finally, Jesus' example that the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed is special to me. As I little boy, I remember my dad – a naval combat aviator – possessing a tiny mustard seed in acrylic. Seeing that little seed made me feel like I could understand one lesson from Jesus' teaching – God's Kingdom starts small in one's life, but with time it can grow and become a place of security and safety – a real home.

WRITTEN BY JOHN DESTIEGUER
PRESIDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Matthew 10
Matthew 11
Matthew 12
Matthew 13

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DAY/ 4

Take a Chance on Jesus

"Who is this man?" Right after Jesus explains that the secret to the Kingdom of God is found in small hidden ways, his disciples, and for that matter the readers of this gospel, are confronted that question. And this question becomes THE question everyone must answer when examining the words and life of Jesus.

Jesus appears to be the one who can quiet the waters in the storm. In ancient times, the sea represented a powerful and chaotic force to reckon with. At any time, the sea could rage, giving those who sail on her no control of their circumstance. Here we see Jesus sleeping through the storm as if there is nothing to fear. We see him speak the storm into submission.

We see Jesus as a great healer. He is not concerned only with sin, but the effects of sin and its power over people's lives. He came to save and heal and this promise is mark by a great multitude of people coming to him.

Not only is Jesus powerful enough to heal, he is also compassionate towards them, displaying an

eagerness to heal as well. A disciple would take comfort in knowing both of those characteristics – power and compassion – are found in Jesus.

So when Jesus asks Peter, "Who do YOU say I am?" Peter answers him, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." But how can he know for sure?

Who is Jesus? Everyone must do something with Jesus, but Peter's answer doesn't come from blind faith or even blind hope. Peter doesn't hear about Jesus through stories or teaching. No. Peter is convinced in his heart that Jesus is the Son of the living God because Peter has experienced the power of God in his own life. He has seen and touched. He has stories and testimony. Only through experiencing the power of God in our own lives, can we answer that question with assurance.

If your faith is as small as a mustard seed, that's all the faith you need right now. Take a chance on Jesus.

**WRITTEN BY CHANCE VANOVER
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Matthew 14
Matthew 15
Matthew 16

Matthew 17
Matthew 18
Matthew 19

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DAY/ 5

God's Love is Unconditional

Ironically enough, after reading Matthew 20-24, the first and last paragraphs stood out to me the most. The first paragraph is about the parable of workers in the vineyard. The landowner goes and finds workers and regardless of how many hours they worked, he paid them a denarius. After the days work, the workers who had worked longer were frustrated with the amount of pay everyone received. I think this is such a beautiful bit of scripture because it is so true for us today. We are very concerned with what others are doing and we often base what we do off of others. It ties into the last paragraph about not having a clue when the Lord will return. He could come back at anytime so we should be focusing on what is important, not what others are doing. That is certainly something that challenges me regularly.

I am inspired by the faithfulness of Jesus. He loves all of us and values us for the unique characteristics and abilities that He gave us. He doesn't compare me to anyone else. He doesn't measure my successes by what others are accomplishing. His love for me is unconditional.

May we all learn to love like that.

**WRITTEN BY KENDALL MAYES
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Matthew 20

Matthew 21

Matthew 22

Matthew 23

Matthew 24

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DAY/ 6

Do You Love “The Least of These?”

Matthew 25 contains three familiar word pictures concerning the final judgment: The parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), and the parable of the “sheep and the goats” (Matthew 25:31-46). The first picture emphasizes one’s readiness for Jesus’ return, the second picture a portrait of how one has used one’s resources during one’s lifetime, and the last a depiction of the final separation between those entering the kingdom and those who will not. In the story of the sheep and the goats, it is noteworthy that the basis of separation is not how well one understands dogmas, church practices, or the finer points of theology, but on how one’s attitude and actions is formed towards those on the margins of society: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and imprisoned.

Those who notice and then acts to minister to the “least of these brothers of mine,” are invited into the prepared kingdom, while those who do not notice and do not act are not. As we reflect upon daily life, let us be instructed by this parable. Let us have eyes to see those around us who are suffering and seek to help them as we are able. As Jesus says, “Truly, I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it unto me.”

WRITTEN BY DR. CHARLES RIX
BIBLE PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Matthew 25

Matthew 26

Matthew 27

Matthew 28

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 7

How to Live in Real Community

The beginnings of Acts are beautiful chapters filled with truths about what following Christ and clinging to community should truly look like. You see, after Jesus ascended into Heaven, the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit. With this, the only thing that they could do was proclaim the name of Jesus. They were compelled. The apostles continued to be fervent, and their intentional words given by God led countless others to believe as well. Miracles were preformed, bread was broken, community was had, Jesus was proclaimed, and persecution occurred. This is how Christians lived day by day, and how we as a church should strive to be.

What really gets to me is the idea of fellowship that the author so deliberately focuses on. In our culture, I believe that we are entirely too independent.

Independent from Christ. Independent from each other. I never seem to find my self completely relying on the Word. Reliance is a continual action of giving up control; continual humility for God's sake.

According to Acts, followers of Jesus (those who repented and accepted the truth that Jesus' sacrifice saved them) were completely active in adhering to Jesus' commands in the Great Commission (Mathew 28:18-20). These people, growing in number by the thousands. They were pursuing the kingdom of heaven with everything they had.

This is how community should be today. As Christians, we should be transparent with our community, sharing in our triumphs and our struggles; sacrificing even our livelihood for each other's well being. Acts 5 reminds me that trials are so relevant; but no matter, we must persist on. The kingdom of heaven is near so we must cling to what we are called to be, and called to do. Let us become radicle servants that mimic the openness, humbleness, the intentional hearts, and the acceptance of persecution that the early church sets as an example.

**WRITTEN BY KRISTIN BURAL
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Acts 1
Acts 2
Acts 3
Acts 4
Acts 5

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DAY/ 8

No Regrets

Paul, formerly known as Saul, may be the second most influential person in the entire New Testament. Without him, we would be missing 13 of the 27 New Testament books.

In this passage, Saul is miraculously converted. When a light from heaven strikes you blind, it's kind of hard to deny that God is trying to get your attention. Unfortunately, it's not always that clear for the rest of us. However, just because our calling doesn't come to us in as noticeable a way, doesn't mean that God doesn't have a very clear and specific calling for our lives too.

As you read the story of Paul's conversion do not miss the way he wastes no time getting right to work, living out God's purpose for his life. He doesn't make a pros and cons list, he doesn't ask all of his

friends what they think he should do, and he doesn't try and talk God out of it. He simply takes the Creator of the Universe at His word and goes about living out his part in God's plan.

Chances are your calling from God will not be revealed to you the way Paul's was, but there is no doubt that you have just as important a purpose in God's plan as Paul did. Don't waste any more time wavering, throw out your list of reasons why this isn't a good time, don't count on your friends to know what you should do, just allow the Holy Spirit to move in your life and get busy.

Chances are, like Paul, you won't regret it.

WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Acts 6

Acts 7

Acts 8

Acts 9

Acts 10

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DAY/ 9

Christian Is a Way of Life

As we look back we remember Jesus' final command to his disciples was to "Go" into the entire world teaching them about Jesus and his Gospel. Up to this point in Acts, the gospel message is primarily a Jewish movement. However, things are about to change for the church. This whole section of scripture captures the surprising events that God is up to something new. God's people are no longer distinguished by race and obedience to an external law, but now, by faith alone in Jesus. Anyone who puts their complete trust in Christ, whether they are Jewish or Gentile, will belong to the family of God.

This is where we discover the church in Antioch. It was here that for the first time, the disciples were called Christians. Up to this point, disciples of Jesus belonged to "the Way," but here, they are called

a name that will hold up for 2,000 years. Why? Because the Antioch church was filled with Jews and Gentiles living out their new identity in Christ, no longer separated by walls. They were no longer called Jews or Greeks, male or female, slave or free. They were just called Christians.

I believe that the best display of the Gospel for a watching world is when people separated by race, gender, and statuses come together as one family. And when this type of love and unity occurs among people, the most appropriate descriptive to capture this particular way of life is simply one word- Christian.

WRITTEN BY CHANCE VANOVER
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Acts 11

Acts 12

Acts 13

Acts 14

Acts 15

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DAY/ 10

Paul's Missionary Journey: The Spirit Runs the Show

The power of the Holy Spirit is made so clear in passages like Acts 16-20. It's, like, alive and active and can't be denied. At times I read passages like these, where the Holy Spirit is changing lives, saving lives, directing the paths of missionaries, keeping people from dangerous situations, and causing people to make complete 180s almost instantly, and I feel bummed.

Why don't I ever see the Spirit working like that today?

And then, once again, I reason it away in all sorts of ridiculous ways: "The Christians in those times needed the protection of the Spirit more than I do," or, "The Spirit was just different then."

Honestly, I don't think that's the case at all. Maybe I just don't take the time to recognize it. To wait in eager anticipation for the Spirit to work, and then to allow it to transform me.

I encourage you to read the story of Paul's missionary journey and be amazed and inspired at the way the Holy Spirit of God runs the show. It leads, directs, protects, and intercedes. And then I encourage you to recognize that the exact same Spirit lives in Christians today – in you and me.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make itself known to you in new and amazing ways and then don't forget to allow it to run the show.

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Acts 16

Acts 17

Acts 18

Acts 19

Acts 20

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 11

There is No Legalism When We are Free in Christ

Acts is an incredible book that allows readers, centuries later, an inside look at Paul's life and the early church. It's a book of history and a continuation of the beauty that is found in the gospel. In chapters 21-25 we find Paul struck by adversity due to his neglect of what many Jews considered to be the correct form of upholding the law of Moses.

These chapters made me think of several things: First, how awesome was it that Paul and his friends traveled from place to place only depending on the hospitality of others? He traveled from Cos, to Rhodes, to Caesarea and beyond. All the while, accepting the hospitality given to them by their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. While this is not the bulk of the story, nor the point, I think it is important to observe the way in which Paul traveled and depended on his community. An interesting thought to remember the next time you travel perhaps?

Second, wasn't the Jewish peoples' legalism at the heart of the adversity for Paul? Maybe that legalism stemmed from pride, or some other selfish ambition, but were they not unwilling to forgive Paul because of his irreverence for the laws of Moses? Paul was practicing a faith that had been freed by Jesus's blood on the cross, yet he was condemned, imprisoned, and even wanted dead for his beliefs. How does that strike you?

These chapters remind me of times when I've been so fired up about this, that, or the other that I feel completely unwilling to compromise. When have I thought whatever I was doing was so right that any other option was absolutely wrong. Pride. Legalism. Selfishness. I don't want any of that.

**WRITTEN BY KATELYN JACKSON
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Acts 21
Acts 22
Acts 23
Acts 24
Acts 25

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DAY/ 12

Trust Him on Your Journey

Paul was radical. Crazy, even. "... content whatever the circumstance" (remember that extreme statement Paul writes in Philippians 4:11?). Really, Paul? Content "whatever" the circumstances? What about laying your soul bare before a Governor and a King? How did that feel? Or what about that hunger in the midst of the fiercest of storms, Paul? And how did you find the strength to lead when the ship went down – the "stern ... broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf?" And all that happened on the way to Rome. A place thousands of miles away from your home, Paul. A place you didn't really have to go to in the first place. If only you hadn't appealed to Caesar ...

But that's what happens when Jesus grabs your heart and soul and won't let go. You get crazy. You get radical. You appeal to Caesar knowing that what lies ahead isn't pretty or pleasant. You appeal to Caesar because God called you to. And you answered His call. And so through shipwreck and hunger and embarrassing public speaking engagements, you find contentment. You find peace. Because God is taking you to your version of Paul's Rome – whatever that means for you. Your Father is right beside you all the way. And Rome is right where you are supposed to be.

Trust Him on your journey. Even when it's hard.
Especially when it's hard.

WRITTEN BY RISA FORRESTER
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Acts 26

Acts 27

Acts 28

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 13

Trust Him on Your Journey

In Mark 1-5, Jesus has just begun his ministry; he is teaching, he is preaching, and he is healing. In chapter 1, we read that Jesus just had a long day of ministry. He taught in the synagogue, drove out an evil spirit, and then healed Simon's mother-in-law. I can only assume that after a day like that, Jesus was ready to sit and enjoy the meal that had been prepared for him, enjoy a little rest after a long day.

BUT, 1:33 "The whole town gathered at the door." The sick, the demon possessed, the hopeless and hurting gathered at the door, because they knew that behind that door was healing, behind that door

was help, behind that door was someone who cared, behind that door was hope. And Jesus went out and healed them.

Why do people gather at your door? Do they know you as a place to find help, hope and peace? Is there a village at your door? If not, maybe you need to take a play from Jesus' playbook: love your neighbor, bless the broken and help meet the needs of others around you.

**WRITTEN BY HUDSON HUTCHISON
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- Mark 1
- Mark 2
- Mark 3
- Mark 4
- Mark 5

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 14

Mark, The Master Storyteller

Mark's Gospel is narrative, it is story. Describing the Gospel as "story" does not imply that it is fiction; it does, however, require us to pay attention to its literary features, its structure, images, characters, and allusions to other stories. Mark is a masterful storyteller! And at this turn in this story, we find ourselves reliving the experience of God's prophets; they are despised, rejected, misunderstood, and murdered, as witnessed in the gruesome tale of John the Baptizer's beheading.

Jesus also is a prophet like the prophets of old; he is like Elisha in providing food for the multitudes; he is like Moses, shepherd of the people. But Jesus is more than a prophet; in this story, his divinity is revealed as he walks on water and heals the sick and the deaf mute!

Despite the story's flashing signs that Jesus is a prophet, divine in power and identity, fulfilling God's redemptive purposes, the disciples don't fully understand Jesus as Messiah. At this turn, we readers encounter a very interesting feature of this story, the "bookends" formed by two episodes in which Jesus heals a blind person (8:22-26 and 10:46-52). These bookends help us realize the meaning of the series of little stories told in between.

Between the bookends, we find a repeating pattern of stories in which Jesus predicts his impending death coupled with his disciples' wrong thinking about his identity. These stories culminate with the request of James and John for positions of power and honor, places on his right and left which, ironically, have been reserved for the robbers crucified alongside him! Here, the nature of Jesus' Messiahship is fully revealed: the Messiah will utterly abandon power in willing sacrifice of self for the sake of others.

Jesus points to "his cup" and to "his baptism," which in the ears of those early hearers of this story evoked the significance of eucharist (Lord's Supper) and gave meaning to their own baptism. Then, the story here is fulfilled as the second blind man receives full sight (a symbol of full understanding) and follows Jesus on the way to the cross! In these chapters, Mark, the master storyteller, opens the eyes of his readers to the identity of Jesus and the nature of true discipleship.

WRITTEN BY CHRIS ROSSER
LIBRARY FACULTY, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Mark 6
Mark 7

Mark 8
Mark 9

Mark 10
Mark 11

WORD. OC's 60-Day
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DAY/ 15

Take a break. Use this day to reflect on what God is revealing to you through your time in His word.

READ
Psalm 121

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



www.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 16

Why We Live

I love chapters 12-13 because they shed light on Jesus' role as a teacher. The chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders asked Jesus questions and challenged his credibility. Yet, each time, Jesus graciously and patiently answered their questions with parables and Biblical instruction.

I love reading the Last Supper passage in chapter 14 because it depicts Jesus in his most vulnerable state, the time before his death. Chapters 14-16 are

difficult to read given that they explain Jesus' death, pain and suffering. However, I think it is important for us to envision and try to grasp the sacrifice Jesus made for us. We then read that the stone was rolled away and Jesus had risen!

How cool that the entire reason why we live is because of what happened in chapters 15 and 16!

**WRITTEN BY DEVIN DOBSON
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Mark 12

Mark 13

Mark 14

Mark 15

Mark 16

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DAY/ 17

There's Good News and Bad News

The bad news is the entire human race stands condemned as sinners deserving God's wrath and punishment. And guess what? It doesn't matter if you are a religious law keeper or a God curser – we have ALL sinned. And because God is morally perfect and just, his condemnation of our sin is just and right.

But here's the good news!! Salvation is available from God. And this salvation is not a reward for being good, or for keeping all of the rules and regulations. "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (Romans 3:12). God provided a way for us to be saved through the death

of Jesus His son. Jesus' death paid the penalty for our sins. This salvation is available to everybody ... regardless of who you are or what you have done! The essence of Paul's message is summed up in Romans 1:16 ... "I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of god for the salvation of everyone who believes; first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For, in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith'" (1:16-17).

WRITTEN BY KENT ALLEN
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Romans 1
Romans 2
Romans 3
Romans 4

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DAY/ 18

Breaking The Chains

Sin is a complicated struggle. Paul describes the relationship we have with sin as slavery. We must break free from the incarceration of sin and openly become slaves to Christ. I understand this imagery; it's simple enough to grasp. And yet, becoming a slave to Christ and a slave to righteousness does not free you from the temptation and struggle with sin. It is a continual daily battle to cast off those chains and replace sin with righteousness.

Paul states he wouldn't know what sin was if it weren't for the law telling him not to covet. So while the law protects us, it also brings a mental awareness and acknowledgment of sin into our lives. Tread carefully. Ultimately Christ's laws of righteousness overcome others. However, it takes conscious action and honesty to remain righteous.

These two areas of righteousness further complicate the struggle: by the law and by faith. Righteousness by the law can be easily measured.

It involves outward action or inaction that cannot be denied. Righteousness by faith requires intensive action within the self and in turn also demands introspection, honesty, and accountability. Paul addresses Moses's concerns with these issues as he questions the ability to call on one that is not believed in.

If we do not become slaves to Christ and continually strive for righteousness, then we will not be fulfilling our faith and have no right to call on Christ for aid. However, by grace, we may continually strive forward in hopes of one day fully breaking the chains of sin with eternal life.

**WRITTEN BY JESS TUCKER
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Romans 5

Romans 6

Romans 7

Romans 8

Romans 9

Romans 10

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DAY/ 19

Our Spiritual Act of Worship

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, Paul makes it abundantly clear: God is faithful. Throughout the book of Romans, Paul has affirmed that we are all in the same boat. No one can claim dibs on any special favors from God because of whom we are or what we claim to do for Him. We all suffer from the life-sucking effects of sin in the world and we are all destined for the same end, death. Unequivocal, it is God's decision to be faithful to his creation that makes all the difference. His faithfulness is pure gift expressed through mercy. "Oh the depth of riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God" (11:33). In spite of the disobedience of some and ignorance of others, God continues to be merciful to his creation and to make his faithfulness known.

Up to this point in Romans, Paul has gone to great lengths to proclaim God's faithfulness expressed through mercy. He then makes a move from theology to worship. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship" (12:1). True theology should always end in worship. In other words, when

we recognize the depths of God's faithfulness and mercy to his creation, the only appropriate response is worship. This kind of worship is not simply the use of our voice singing praises, but includes our whole bodies. "In view of God's mercy," we are to offer our bodies as living sacrifices. For Paul, worship and ethics go together, they cannot be separated.

We cannot make the world right through our own feeble attempts. God is the one who is making the world right and reconciling all things to Him. This is God's gift to the world; it is God's gift to us. God has composed the song to which we are now invited to sing. God has written the script to which we are now urged to act out. God has drawn up the play to which we are called to execute. "In view of God's mercy," we are urged to live into the reality that God has already created, a "gospelled" world. This is our spiritual act of worship.

WRITTEN BY BEN LANGFORD
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Romans 11
Romans 12
Romans 13
Romans 14
Romans 15
Romans 16

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DAY/ 20

This Changes Everything

In Luke 1, the image of (embryo) John the Baptist leaping at the presence of the unborn Jesus stands out as a beautiful image for the new world order that comes with Jesus. John comes from a priestly line, and even in the womb fulfills the priestly role of recognizing the new king of Israel. (Luke even makes sure to include Jesus' ancestral connection to David, the great king of Israel.) Only this time the king looks different and so does his kingdom. The pre-infant priest does not find the king not winning battles or even tending sheep, but sitting in the womb of a virgin.

At the time of Jesus' birth, the Israelites were looking for a new king that was more like a super-version of their old kings, commanding with military authority and bringing glory and riches to all of the Israelites. Countless times, I find myself looking for a king that brings glory, riches, and power, but that is simply not the kind of kingship that John recognized in Jesus.

John trades his father's robes in for animal skin and he points others to the new king, warning them of the errors of their ways, and then physically anoints Jesus by baptizing him. Instead of inheriting an army, Jesus the new king received the Holy Spirit at his anointing.

Throughout the first four chapters of Luke 4, you can see many hints of the blueprint for God's plan for the world. With Jesus, God offers better gifts and better promises than his old covenant. God sends a new priest to anoint a new King to rule a new kingdom. Reading Luke 1-4 makes it hard not to catch the excitement of the Good News Jesus preached: God came to Earth as King, and this changes everything.

**WRITTEN BY QUINN FIELDS
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Luke 1

Luke 2

Luke 3

Luke 4

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DAY/ 21

Teaching and Miracles

Luke 5-10 can be divided into two major parts: Jesus's teaching and Jesus's miracles.

Jesus teaches in a way that isn't too earth shattering, but it was shattering for that time. The religious leaders of the time had gone far to one extreme. Jesus tries to reorient the people to a focus on God. He teaches how hypocrites do good things for the recognition. Jesus calls us to put our focus and the glory on God. Jesus also teaches his disciples about the cost of being His disciple.

The miracles that Jesus performs demonstrates His authority over everything on Earth. He has dominion over sickness, death, weather, demons, and food.

All of the signs and miracles attest to the fact of Jesus's Christhood. This is why John the Baptizer sends his disciples to talk to Jesus. He wants to know if Jesus is the Christ. Peter makes the great confession that Jesus is.

The teachings and miracles of Jesus witness to His Christhood.

**WRITTEN BY KYLE KEESEE
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Luke 5
Luke 6
Luke 7
Luke 8
Luke 9
Luke 10

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DAY/ 22

God Loves the Lost

There are a number of “big” stories and parables in these chapters that are some of the most well known in the gospels. But for me, it is a few of the little things (that are easy to slip right past) that really inspire me in this section.

Right off the bat, in 11:1-4, Jesus is teaching us how to pray. I know that prayer is not always easy and we all get stuck in a prayer-rut at times, but I know it helps me to remember what Jesus shows us by example. We need to remember that prayer is not just a laundry list of our wants and needs but that we should also be praising God for the blessings he has given us.

We are taught in these chapters about persistence, being humble, helping others, not to worry, and being ready for Christ. These are big lessons that are not always easy to remember each day. I think

it is important to keep in mind that Christ does not expect us to be perfect but to keep striving for him.

In chapter 15, he is giving us parable after parable telling us about the rejoicing in heaven over one sinner. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, Luke tells us that even the Pharisees noticed that Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. The Pharisees meant this as a strike against Jesus' spirituality but I think it's important for me to ask myself if I am welcoming sinners and providing a loving example for them or turning them away because I am uncomfortable with their choices.

Remember God is always looking for his lost sheep, or lost coin, and so should we.

WRITTEN BY TERESA DEBOARD
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Luke 11

Luke 12

Luke 13

Luke 14

Luke 15

Luke 16

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DAY/ 23

How to Pray Like a Tax Collector

In the time of Jesus, a servant had no rights as a citizen. They worked and worked with no expectation of praise or recognition. Jesus is our Lord, Master, and Savior. He has called us to follow and serve him. Of course the incredible blessing that Christ provides is that when we come to him as a servant, he welcomes us as a sister or brother, and friend.

As you read Luke 18, hopefully you came across a couple of elements that are found in your prayers. The first is persistence based on the character of God in verses 1-8. Second, we must come forward to God with a sense of penitence. The Pharisee was prideful and in no way admitted that he was sinful in the sight of God. The tax collector, however, knew he was a sinner and asked for God's mercy. When we pray we can't simply be persistent or only occasionally asking for God's forgiveness. It must be a continual balance of both.

This example of prayer says a lot about the motives that can drive us. Luke 17 spoke to the motivations that spur us on to serve God. Although we receive a reward someday in heaven, that recognition comes after our initial servant response. Our motivation to prayer must come from a place of humility, because even sacred activities such as prayer are subject to impure motives. Every act, even the most pious, can be ruined by our sin.

May God give us the humility in our prayer life and the grace that He gave this tax collector. And may God deliver us from the pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisee.

**WRITTEN BY NATALIE HOWARD
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Luke 17

Luke 18

Luke 18

Luke 19

Luke 20

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DAY/ 24

The Cost of Discipleship

If you need a reminder of what Jesus Christ has done for you, and examples of how believers have responded to Christ's love, try chapters 21-24 of Luke. What is the cost of being a disciple of Christ? Luke starts chapter 21 as some of the disciples were discussing the beauty of the temple. Jesus uses this opportunity to point out to them the sacrifice of a poor widow as she gave all she had to live on while the rich only gave out of their wealth. Why did Jesus use this context to illustrate her story? The rest of Chapter 21 is an explanation Jesus gave the disciples of the true cost of their discipleship. How would you have responded to Jesus as a disciple in the first century hearing the words of chapter 21?

Chapter 22 continues with the final Passover meal Jesus had with his disciples. Jesus then transitions from explaining the cost of their discipleship to describing what Jesus himself would have to sacrifice because of His love for the world. Jesus fulfilled his promise of love through suffering and death in chapter 23, and then resurrects himself from the dead in chapter 24.

After reading chapters 23 and 24 about the cost that Jesus paid for you and the entire world, does the cost of being his disciple as described in chapters 21 and 22 still seem so heavy?

**WRITTEN BY ERIC PHELPS
BIOLOGY PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Luke 21

Luke 22

Luke 23

Luke 24

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DAY/ 25

Do My Actions Reflect the Spirit Living in Me?

As a speaker, sometimes you put pressure on yourself by spending time trying to figure out the perfect thing to say that will convince somebody to let Christ into his or her heart. Even those of us who aren't speakers might wonder how we could ever find the right words that will allow us to properly share our faith. The truth is, our words are powerless, and all of the power in our speech comes from the cross of Christ. If we talk about what he has done for us, our words will have power, but we're not the ones who give the words the power. It all goes back to what Christ has done for us.

Does the spirit of Christ really live in me? And if so, does the way that I live my life reflect that spirit that I have living inside of me? It's a high honor to have the spirit of Christ living with you and working through you, and I think that should challenge us to carefully consider our thoughts, words, and actions, to make sure that they reflect that Spirit's presence with us. I challenge you to ask yourself that same question as you read through this text today - do my actions reflect the presence of the Spirit inside me?

**WRITTEN BY BRADY ROSS
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- I Corinthians 1
- I Corinthians 2
- I Corinthians 3
- I Corinthians 4

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DAY/ 26

How Does Love Act?

I have heard it said that freedom is not the right to do whatever we want, but the opportunity to do what's right.

I have a tendency to avoid tough passages that don't apply directly to my everyday life but, rather, I choose to focus on the more encouraging parts of scripture so I can digest happy thoughts as I go about my day. With that said, this particular passage was challenging to read at times. I found myself telling Paul that I thought he was being a little harsh. You want me to hand someone over to Satan (5:5), judge others (5:3), not get married unless I BURN with passion (7:8), or try to be like you and attempt to be all things to all people (9:22)? Wait a minute, I thought. Some of these suggestions seem counterintuitive to my Christian inner monologue. After some time, and a little soul-searching, I remembered that my freedom in Christ is not my right to do what I feel is best, but my opportunity to be more like Jesus, which is best, even when it's tough.

Paul was writing directly to Christians in this passage, and I believe he was setting guidelines for what it means to be free in Christ in light of some tough, everyday trials. Sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage, idols, judgment of fellow Christians; how do believers face these challenges in a culture that demands we fight for numero uno? Paul answers this in 10:31 when he says that in all we do, "do it all for the glory of God."

As difficult as this may feel at times, these passages tell me that if I have a friend struggling with sexual immorality, to have enough compassion not to judge them; if a sister has charged me with wrongdoing, to have enough humility to reconcile at my own expense; and if my peer has interpreted scripture differently from me, and he or she is sincere in their belief, to have enough respect to build a relationship with them anyway. Essentially, I need to put others first, because that's how love acts.

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY PRUGH
MATH PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

I Corinthians 5
I Corinthians 6
I Corinthians 7
I Corinthians 8
I Corinthians 9
I Corinthians 10

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DAY/ 27

I'm Significant

I love how these passages talk about the different kinds of gifts the Lord gives us and how each of them is important. There is no reason for me to wish to be anyone other than who I am, because God created me for a reason. We were all created for a purpose and, in order for the body of Christ to be functioning; all of the parts are necessary.

1 Corinthians 13 is one of my favorite Bible passages. Isn't it incredible to know that this is the definition of Godly love? God's love for us is patient and kind. He keeps no record of wrongs! His love never fails us. God loves us when we are unworthy of love. He loves us and has chosen us to be a significant part of his creation.

**WRITTEN BY ELLYN REID
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- I Corinthians 11
- I Corinthians 12
- I Corinthians 13
- I Corinthians 14
- I Corinthians 15
- I Corinthians 16

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DAY/ 28

God Gives the Ultimate Comfort

These five chapters have come to mean a great deal to me over the past year. In the spring my wife and I found out that our unborn son had Down Syndrome. For any parent an unexpected diagnosis can be a faith-rocking event. The wind was taken out of my sails for sure. But, I am continually inspired as I read this passage. Paul starts the letter off talking about comfort, a truly amazing comfort that only comes from being in the presence of God. This comfort brings peace and understanding of what life in a covenant relationship with God is like.

By the time we get to chapter 4, Paul has laid the ground work for us to recognize that comfort in the

midst of anything that life has throw at us; though we are hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, or struck down we are not crushed, in despair, abandoned, nor destroyed. No matter what the diagnosis we find comfort in fixing our eyes on Christ. And then Paul ends this section with a beautiful discourse on the new body awaiting each of us. No sickness, no abnormality, no nakedness, no flesh that can be destroyed. Only confidence that he who reconciles us with our creator is also the author of our ultimate comfort!

**WRITTEN BY BOBBY KERN
PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

READ

- II Corinthians 1
- II Corinthians 2
- II Corinthians 3
- II Corinthians 4
- II Corinthians 5

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DAY/ 29

Saved By Grace

In 1 Corinthians, we are given a picture of the church in Corinth. The Corinthian church at the time of Paul's first letter was involved in so many different types of vile sin. Paul's first letter clearly brought many of the Corinthians to their knees before God in repentance.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul continues to speak harshly with them, but lovingly. He then follows up his admonishing with great encouragement and speaking about how he and his helpers boast to other churches about the generosity of the Corinthians. This is such a profound way to handle sin. Paul does not treat their sin lightly, he speaks very clear and

direct with them, but even with all the Corinthians flaws, he does not just leave them feeling shameful. He finds the good things and praises them for it. We can learn so much from this approach. It's important not to turn a blind eye to anyone's sin. If we do how can we help them? Instead we must help them deal with that sin and often times that requires us to be blunt, especially when the sin is blunt. But this can be done lovingly and we can show that love by finding the good in everyone no matter what their crime against God. After all, we are all sinners, and we are all only saved by His amazing grace.

**WRITTEN BY TRAVIS PAULEY
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

II Corinthians 6
II Corinthians 7
II Corinthians 8
II Corinthians 9
II Corinthians 10

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DAY/ 30

Take a break. Use this day to reflect on what God is revealing to you through your time in His word.

READ
Psalm 1

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DAY/ 31

His Grace is Enough

The reason I love Paul so much is because the man made some pretty huge mistakes in his life and never once used them as an excuse not to lead. And he didn't just struggle before his miraculous conversion. He battled with sin and Satan for his entire life.

In this section of second Corinthians Paul admits that he has "a thorn in the flesh." He begs God multiple times to take it away but the Lord has other plans. I kind of think that God knew this struggle would keep Paul humble and remind him that he would never make a lasting impact on the church unless he had complete reliance on God.

There have been a couple of times in my life when I started to think that I was kind of a big deal. And every single time this has happened to me - when I've spent more time thinking about myself than anyone else - the Lord has brought me back down to reality. I've usually been embarrassed, disappointed, and angry. I have always been humbled.

Paul was smart enough to recognize his need for a Savior, and was wise enough to accept that God's grace was enough. Imagine how freeing that must have been?

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

II Corinthians 11

II Corinthians 12

II Corinthians 13

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DAY/ 32

Jesus Wants Our Hearts

It's easy to let rules and laws take over our lives. We often want to be sure we're doing exactly the right thing all the time, especially when it comes to our faith. We ask: Am I serving enough? Am I worshipping the right way? Am I doing this right?

In the end, none of that stuff really matters; it's our hearts that Christ really cares about. In Galatians, Paul is telling the people to stop worrying so much about what the law says, and to do what the Spirit is telling them to do. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value.

The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." Circumcision was the law, and it was all people really cared about. Paul was telling the people to forget the law and focus on their hearts.

Whether we follow the rules or not isn't going to get us into heaven, we are saved by God's grace through faith, and it's the act of showing that faith to others through love that really matters.

**WRITTEN BY LORYN HAMMER
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- Galatians 1
- Galatians 2
- Galatians 3
- Galatians 4
- Galatians 5
- Galatians 6

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 33

Ten Truths To Live By

The book of Ephesians is, in all honesty, a quite remarkable book. This letter was written to Roman civilization, yet has a profound amount of truths, which apply to us today. While other letters written by Paul deal with specific problems or address certain issues, the letter written to the Ephesians deals with the whole sweep of truth; the great canvas of God's painting of reality.

In this letter I have stumbled upon 10 truths that I would like to share with you in this devotion. Truths that are valid today as they were at the time this letter was read aloud.

- 1) In the sight of God I am considered holy and blameless. Ephesians 1:4
- 2) God has chosen me and has a plan for me. Ephesians 1:11
- 3) I was raised up by God, from my death in sin to life in Christ, so that God may show the riches of his grace. Ephesians 2:6-7
- 4) I have been called by the grace of God to be a servant. Though I am least, I will proudly preach about the boundless riches of Christ. Ephesians 3:7-8
- 5) Sin can longer separate me from God, for through faith I may approach him. Ephesians 3:12
- 6) I have been given as a gift from God to equip God's people. Ephesians, 4:11-12
- 7) Practice wisdom and do not waste an opportunity. Ephesians 5:15-17
- 8) I will not declare war against other, but rather against the evil spiritual forces that surround me. Ephesians 6:12
- 9) I must be prepared, when the forces of evil come, to stand my ground. Ephesians 6:13
- 10) I shall declare the gospel fearlessly. Ephesians 6:20

**WRITTEN BY PAYTON MINZENMAYER
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Ephesians 1
Ephesians 2
Ephesians 3
Ephesians 4
Ephesians 5
Ephesians 6

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DAY/ 34

God's Kingdom - A Real Home

My wife's father passed away almost 20 years ago and since then there have been so many times when we have remembered how much joy he took in every good choice we made and in every success we enjoyed. We often remember him and know that he would be proud of something one of the members of our family accomplished or experienced.

It's in that framework that I read the book of Philippians. I see Paul, who is in prison and can't see personally to his children in the faith in Philippi, caring for them as a father does. The entire book can be read in light of a worried father who loves his children, takes great joy in their lives, knows they are enduring trials, and wants to encourage them to keep walking in the faith! From the first chapter's

encouragement to them that God is working in them until the end when he reminds them that God will supply all of their needs in Christ Jesus Paul is building them up.

As you read the book keep this context in the back of your mind and see how forward looking Paul is, how encouraging he is, how often he speaks of building them up in spite of his or their hardships. It is one of the greatest books for Christians because it is a book of hope and encouragement, one that looks forward with expectation about both this life and the life to come. One that is written by a proud father to children he loves!

**WRITTEN BY PAT SMITH
COMPUTER ENGINEERING PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Philippians 1

Philippians 2

Philippians 3

Philippians 4

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DAY/ 35

You Can't Believe Everything You Hear; However, You Can Always Believe the Bible.

If I were to list my top five favorite books of the New Testament, Colossians would definitely be one of them. I LOVE it! One of my favorite things about it is how direct and up front Paul is in this book. He basically says, "This is what you must do to live a pure Christian life and this is how you are going to do it." There is no beating around the bush in Colossians.

In Colossians you will see the importance of the church emphasized. I love the imagery used in Chapter 1, verse 18: Christ is the head of the body, the church. It makes me wonder, how can one be connected to the head if they are not a part of the body? I am not sure that they can.

Colossians is full of warnings that are just as applicable today as they were then – the Bible is the only truth that we can trust. People will try and convince us otherwise, the world will tell us that its ways are good enough. But the world's ways will leave us broken and empty, searching for more.

Here is the good news: There is so much more! Colossians reminds me that there is really only one thing that I can trust and it's all I need. The bible is called The Book of Life for a reason, if we allow it, it will give us a new and complete life. It truly is everything we need.

**WRITTEN BY KARA LITSKOW
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Colossians 1
Colossians 2
Colossians 3
Colossians 4

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DAY/ 36

Sometimes You Have To Encourage Yourself

In Paul's first letter to the church in Thessalonica, he seems to be very focused on one centralized theme – encouragement. In the first few chapters of the book, Paul discusses how he, Silas, and Timothy came into contact with the believers there. He talks about how encouraged he was by how the people of Thessalonica accepted the gospel. He mentions how they were able to live together, how they were living with the attitude of Christ, and how it all made him desire to be with them again. All of Paul's writings, in the earlier parts of this letter, pointed back to encouraging them through his own encouragement.

The part that encourages me most is chapter 4:13-18. It reminds me of a song by Donald Lawrence, called "Encourage Yourself." The song says, "Sometimes you have to encourage yourself. Sometimes you have to speak victory during the

test!" Some of the darkest days in my life have come as I mourned the loss of loved ones. I've found that in my darkest moments, I need the greatest dosage of encouragement – and I think that's what Paul provides here. He helps them to see that sometimes encouragement won't come from people, but rather from the inner peace in knowing Jesus Christ. He reaches deep and tells the believers in Thessalonica that there is hope in those who died in the Lord. He tells them that they shouldn't live life as those who have no hope – simply because who Jesus was, what He did, and who He is. I love the way he ends chapter 4. He finishes it all up, looks back at them and says, "Encourage one another with these words."

WRITTEN BY GARY JONES
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

- I Thessalonians 1
- I Thessalonians 2
- I Thessalonians 3
- I Thessalonians 4
- I Thessalonians 5

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DAY/ 37

Stand Firm and Hold Fast

It is possible for the reader of 2 Thessalonians to come to some epic eschatological conclusions. Chapter 2:1-12 sounds like the premise of Hollywood's next billion-dollar flop. It describes destruction, a "Man of Lawlessness," and rebellion. Even though these dramatic themes are eye catching and mysterious, they are not the message behind the letter.

Christians living in Thessalonica were being persecuted and the author wrote this letter to encourage them. The author warns the audience against "hanging out" with Christians who are "living in idleness". However, before this exhortation, the author encourages these Christians with some simple words of truth. The writer reminds the audience that they are chosen as first fruits by God, that they are sanctified by the Spirit, and they may

obtain the glory of Jesus Christ (2:13-14). The author then inspires them, saying "stand firm and hold fast to the traditions we taught you" (2:15).

Though many of us are not persecuted today in the same manner as the Church in Thessalonica, we are still afflicted. We are beaten down by the stresses of our jobs. We are victims of broken families. We look in the mirror and hate what we see. We are still in pain. However, the same words of truth apply. God chose us as first fruits, the Spirit perpetually sanctifies us, and we dwell in the glory of Jesus Christ right now. It is a part of human nature to doubt when we are in pain, but I would say, "Stand firm and hold fast to that truth."

**WRITTEN BY KEITH ELLINGSON
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- II Thessalonians 1
- II Thessalonians 2
- II Thessalonians .3

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DAY/ 38

Prayer and Character

The book of 1st Timothy is rich and multi-layered, but the verses that really speak to me at the moment are tied to prayer and character. In 1 Timothy 2:2, Paul encourages Timothy to pray for kings and all those in authority in order to live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and holiness. To be honest, I don't pray for those in authority very often. Judging from casual conversations and Facebook posts, I'm not sure that many of my friends have spent a lot of time praying for President Obama and others in authority, either. But Paul doesn't say pray for kings if you agree with them or if they belong to your political party or if you think they're good leaders – he just says to pray for those in authority. 1 Timothy 2:2 is a vivid reminder that the leaders of my country, state, city, church, and place of employment all need my prayers to deal with problems that I'm not even aware of.

Paul also uses much of this letter to talk about character; for example, he encourages Timothy to train himself to be godly (4:7), to set an example in speech, life, love, faith, and purity (4:12), and

to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness (6:11). Paul's words make it pretty clear that character is not something that just happens, but something that we have to "pursue."

Finally, 1 Timothy 6:18 (where Paul talks about how the rich should do good, be rich in good deeds, be generous and willing to share) seems aimed directly at me. If you look at the entire population of the world, I'm pretty sure I'm one of the rich people. Generosity does not come naturally to me, which means that I have to plan to share, because otherwise it's not just going to happen.

Ultimately, for me, living out all of these verses boils down to being intentional: intentional about praying for leaders, intentional about pursuing godliness on a daily basis, intentional about showing love in times of conflict, and intentional about sharing my physical possessions with those in need.

WRITTEN BY LEEANN PARIS
FACULTY MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

- I Timothy 1
- I Timothy 2
- I Timothy 3
- I Timothy 4
- I Timothy 5
- I Timothy 6

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 39

The Gift of Mentorship

2 Timothy is a letter written from mentor to mentee. It's a letter from Paul to Timothy, and when I read it, I can picture the faces of my mentors who have raised me up and offered both advice and straightforward discipline to me in both the tough and the easy times. These wizened, kind faces offer the same encouragement that Paul offers to Timothy. "Fan into flame the gift of God... the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." (1:6,7) The letter is emboldening. It calls for readers to seek after God closely, even to seek after the suffering that God calls for us to brave.

It is truly amazing, the message that 2 Timothy gives us, the encouragement and the warning:

"Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." (2:1) "Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace" (2:22). When I read this epistle, I am thankful for the encouraging mentorship that Paul is still able to offer us today and the incredible living mentors that I have who offer similar messages to strengthen my walk. I pray that as a mentor myself in years to come I can be the same way, and that as one being mentored, I truly will follow after the lives of those who have mentored me.

**WRITTEN BY ZEKARIAH MCNEAL
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- II Timothy 1
- II Timothy 2
- II Timothy 3
- II Timothy 4

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 40

God Always Offers a Way Out

In the few short verses of Titus, the author provides us with one of the two major passages in the New Testament about the qualifications of elders. Since this passage has been taught over and over – especially when a church decides to appoint new elders – I'd like to introduce you to a minor character quoted later in this short letter.

Titus apparently had been left in Crete by Paul to strengthen churches in this island that was notorious for the debauched nature of its natives. He carried out this mission by appointing elders among those who love what is good and rebuking those who fail to do good. I find it interesting that the bad reputation of the citizens of Crete had lasted for centuries. In verse 12, Titus quotes an unnamed philosopher who said this of his countrymen: "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes and lazy gluttons" (NIV). We now know that the quote comes from the 6th or 7th Century philosopher Epimenides. Evidently, the phrase "Cretans, always liars" lived on for more than 700 years before Titus gave it a new lifetime by putting the condemnation in his epistle. Talk about a lasting reputation!

But I like the other Biblical quote by Epimenides that is found in Acts 17 in Paul's sermon in Athens after he found the altar to the "unknown god." Paul takes the opportunity to tell them about the one true God they had missed. Twice in this sermon, Paul, who had been classically educated before his conversion experience on the road to Damascus, turned to philosophers. And one of those philosophers was our friend Epimenides. This time, he provides us with one of the best descriptions of our relationship with God in all of scripture. In Acts 17:28 Paul quotes Epimenides saying "In Him we live and move and have our being." Though Epimenides was undoubtedly saying that about Zeus, it lives on today as one of the hallmarks of how man and God relate – without him we have no life at all. This early philosopher, teaching more than six centuries before Jesus, hits on two immortal topics – man is trapped by his own flaws, but God offers a way out.

**WRITTEN BY PHILIP PATTERSON
COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

READ

Titus 1

Titus 2

Titus 3

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DAY/ 41

Endless Grace

I am beyond blessed by God's endless grace.

Paul's letter to Philemon is a more intimate letter than the typical epistles Paul wrote to churches. In vs. 6, Paul says, "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ." The more active we are in our faith, the more understanding we'll have and the more answers will be revealed.

Since Onesimus suffered for Paul as his servant, Paul was not ashamed to call him his brother, just as Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers as we suffer as servants for Jesus. We are no longer slaves to sin when we accept the truth of Christ's

grace. In Hebrews 2:11, it says, "Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers." We are a body of Christ, and Jesus sends us as parts of the Lord, forming a unity because of his faithfulness and our servitude to him. We form a bond to glorify God.

In vs. 3 and 25, Paul opens and closes his letter by saying "Grace to you and peace from God our father and Lord Jesus Christ." What better way is there to live our life than knowing we are filled with God's endless grace?

**WRITTEN BY ANNEMARIE MCNALLEY
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Philemon 1

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DAY/ 42

I Want To Rest

If we were to poll all of the people whose hearts have become hardened, how many of them do you suppose would already be aware of that condition in themselves? My suspicion is not many. How does this happen, that the very people of God begin to ignore His voice? Could we believe ourselves to be generally “good guys” and thus rarely stop for self-examination? Do we water down the truth of God’s exaltation of Jesus? Do we demand to still be spoon fed truth, when we could and should be out there using it to teach and nourish others?

I’m sure that you, like me, very much look forward to times of rest. There’s nothing like a good rest after work well done. After a long work out. After finals. After completing all the chores in the house after it looks like a sharknado has come through. And at the end of my (hopefully long and active) life, I. Want. To. Rest.

Lord, protect and warn me from places were my heart could grow hard and keep me from your rest!

**WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCELROY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- Hebrews 1
- Hebrews 2
- Hebrews 3
- Hebrews 4
- Hebrews 5

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 43

Now is the Time for Change

I like to think of myself as a person who likes change. Of course, the kind of changes that I like are things that do not inconvenience me at all and are completely on my terms – like changing the throw pillows on my couch or picking a new lipstick color.

But when it comes to real changes that will turn my comfortable world upside down, I find myself digging my in my heels and finding every excuse under the sun to get out of it.

I sense some frustration from the writer of Hebrews. It seems as though he was dealing with Christians with a similar attitude – they were struggling to change the way they believed about everything. And, really, I can't blame them.

Although I sympathize with these new and struggling Christians who were having to get used to the idea that this new King they had been waiting for was

not going to have a throne on earth, but in heaven, these passages serve as a warning to me that my stubbornness and resistance to change may cost me some of life's most blessed experiences.

If you have been resisting the nudge of the Holy Spirit to make some real, life changing decisions or to change your attitude and expectations about something, now is the time to give in. Do the thing that is scary. Dive into the unknown. Give up the things that are holding you back and open yourself up to God's true purpose for your life.

The Hebrew Christians eventually allowed the Holy Spirit to change them and they never looked back. I'm pretty sure we wouldn't regret it either.

WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Hebrews 6

Hebrews 7

Hebrews 8

Hebrews 9

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DAY/ 44

Christ is Coming and Will Not Delay

When I read through Hebrews chapters 10-13 I view it as a helpful guideline on how a Holy, God centered life should be lived. Each chapter offers different advice on how to live in order to honor our Creator.

Starting out with chapter 10, we get a clear picture as to why we should even try to live Godly lives, and that is because of the sacrifice our Lord made for us. Because of that sacrifice we are called to draw near to Him and preserve the faith. We are also called not to take advantage of God's forgiving nature.

Chapter 13 is my personal favorite because it gives a reason to why we have hardships in this life, and that is because God views hardship as discipline and

he disciplines the ones he loves. How reassuring, especially during hard times, to know that God loves you. He is the only constant, and the only thing we need.

Lastly, we serve a Creator that sent His one and only Son to be the perfect sacrifice, and all he wants is for us to draw near to Him and have faith that He is coming back. Chapter 10 verse 37 says, "In just a little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay." I can't think of a more powerful thought!

My creator, the one who lets me live day to day is coming soon and I want to be ready.

**WRITTEN BY HANNAH LORENZ
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Hebrews 10

Hebrews 11

Hebrews 12

Hebrews 13

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DAY/ 45

James: Consistently Practical Christianity

The Bible's book of James addresses how first-century Christians were to live—and how succeeding Christians should live – amid anti-Christian cultures. Certainly, Christians who first received James' correspondence encountered hostile responses to their behavior and redemption message, just as did – and do – subsequent generations of Christians. Today's Christians – enmeshed in an increasingly post-modern/post-Christian culture – read James' message within a similar cultural context. Thus, James' Holy Spirit-inspired message is consistent throughout time; Christians – acting on faith – must live lives of obedience to God, not to the world. As a Christian, I not only read and study the Bible to learn God's story of creation and deliverance, but also to become aware of His expectations for a wisdom-directed life. Therefore, biblical wisdom literature such as Proverbs and Ecclesiastes attract me. James' book certainly continues the same theme of living wisely according to God, who is the source and provider of true wisdom. As a historian, my study of world history reveals humanity's failure to learn from its mistakes and its refusal to redirect itself to obedience to God. The Old Testament is replete with historical accounts of Israel's repetitive brief devotion to God and subsequent rebellion, His corrective discipline of His people, their pleas for deliverance from such punishment, and God's rescue of His chosen people.

Thus, just as James' letter applied directly to its recipients' first-century cultural realities, so does it remain applicable in the current societal setting. As an architect who not only designed numerous built structures, but also taught architectural history and design, I realize the importance of translating architectural design theory to reality. Theory means nothing without observable evidence: creative theory must result in appropriate practical application. Similarly, James instructs that, "... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." (James 2:17)

Thus, I look to James' book as a practical application manual for pleasing God with my thoughts, words, and actions. As the world continues to be inhospitable to Godly living, James contends that Christians – because of our faith in God and His Son – must be different. Reading his book convicts me to live out a faith-filled life consistently obedient to God. Consequently, the book of James reiterates the consistent biblical message that true faith in God requires our wise, active obedience, despite worldly pressures to abandon the Creator.

**WRITTEN BY GARY LINDSEY
HISTORY PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

James 1
James 2
James 3

James 4
James 5

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 46

Our Room is Being Prepared in Heaven

The book of 1 Peter is a passage of instruction and hope. Reading this passage is sort of a slap in the face to me. Peter speaks about obedience to God and faithful living. As I survey the two and a half years I have spent at Oklahoma Christian, I find myself incredibly humbled by the grace of God. Peter tells us to show respect to everyone, to fear God and to honor the king (2:17). Additionally, he instructs us to live in harmony with one another, to be sympathetic and to be compassionate and humble (3:8). Have I taken advantage of my time at OC to do these things? Has my life reflected the holiness of God? Am I putting forth my best effort to live in harmony with those around me?

Peter describes the faith that sets us free so beautifully in chapter 1, verses 8-9. "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are

filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls." The GOAL set before us is SALVATION in Jesus Christ. We have been blessed so richly on this earth, but this earth is not our home. While on this earth, we are to put our spiritual gifts in motion to serve others and show God's perfect grace (4:10). However, Peter is clear when saying that we are aliens and strangers in this world (2:11). Our room is being prepared in heaven, and we are to live in accordance with that ultimate goal in the front of every thought, word and deed. I am blessed to be a part of such an incredible community, but as a student my time here is short. What am I doing to show Jesus to the world around me?

WRITTEN BY LOGAN MCKEE
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

I Peter 1

I Peter 2

I Peter 3

I Peter 4

I Peter 5

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DAY/ 47

Take a break. Use this day to reflect on what God is revealing to you through your time in His word.

READ
Psalm 47

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 48

Interested in Having Less Negative Consequences in Your Life?

The book of Second Peter is a reminder to me that there are absolutes in this life, some are absolutely good and some are absolutely bad. This is Peter's second letter to these churches reminding them that right will always be right and wrong will always be wrong.

There have been so many times in my life when I wished that wrong was really right. In fact, I have wanted wrong to be right so much that I have justified wrong and reasoned my way into all sorts of situations with pretty serious consequences. I've muddied the waters for myself to the point that I've completely disguised wrong for right.

A good friend once told me that her father's best advice to her was, "Good choices have good consequences and bad choices have bad consequences." There is nothing complicated about these words of wisdom until you actually try to live by them.

I don't know about you, but I'm a miserable failure when I live by my own set of rules. If your own rules aren't working out that great for you at the moment, try living in the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. You really have nothing to lose but, perhaps, some pretty bad consequences.

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

II Peter 1

II Peter 2

II Peter 3

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DAY/ 49

Living in the Light

A lot of people think that if you are a Christian you must be completely without sin. We tend to keep score with ourselves, and even with others, and add a checkmark for each sin we commit. What I love about 1 John is that he seems to make the case that if we are viewing our relationship with Christ and His body as a list of checkmarks, then we have completely misunderstood the meaning of Christ's death, grace, and mercy.

John states in Chapter 1 that if a person says they follow God but they don't act that way, they do not live in the light. But, if a person lives in the light the same way Jesus did, then Christ's blood cleanses them from every sin. This made me realize that it's not about always getting everything perfect.

The book of John explains that wanting to live in the light truly means loving others and obeying God's

commands. It means that when we realize we have actually won the victory through Christ, we make that decision to continue, "winning the victory" everyday by recognizing other believers who are in need and helping them. That's the kind of love that God gave us. We might not live perfectly, but that's not the point. His mercy isn't so that we can keep on sinning, it's so we can show that same love and mercy to others.

My favorite part of this book is the last part of Chapter 2:14, "I've written to you, young people, because you are strong and God's Word lives in you. You have won the victory over the evil one."

**WRITTEN BY KAYLA COOK
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

- I John 1
- I John 2
- I John 3
- I John 4
- I John 5

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



www.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 50

Choose Love

The repeated phrase, “love one another” throughout the Bible, let alone in 2 John, might seem almost overstated, but I’m thankful God spoke through people like John for gentle, yet pointed reminders to in fact, yes, love one another! Find people living in this love, and you find them living in the truth. What joy to experience such truth through love, grace, mercy, and peace; either in giving or receiving!

Have you ever had an experience with any of those in such a way that reshaped who you are as a person? An easy response would be “Jesus! Of course!” and you would be right, but sometimes, because we are human, witnessing it through other

people’s actions allows us to comprehend those incredible gifts from our Savior in very tangible ways.

Show grace, mercy, peace, and love “... which come from God the Father and from Jesus Christ. Do not lose what we have worked so hard to achieve ... anyone who remains in the teaching of Christ has a relationship with both the Father and the Son.” (vs3, 8, 9b) Then joy will be made complete! Choose to love one another!

**WRITTEN BY AMY BEAUCHAMP
INTERIOR DESIGN PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

READ II John 1

WORD. OC's 60-Day
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DAY/ 51

You Can't Do It Alone

This letter reminds me of a father writing to his children. John gives encouragement, advice, and shows his love and admiration. And like a father might, he cuts the letter short as he decides to save the rest for the next time they are together in person.

As a parent myself, John's words are so true, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in truth." Nothing in this life matters more to me than to raise my kids to fall in love with Jesus. I can imagine John, like most parents, questioning whether he has done enough, lying awake at night praying for these particular Christians, and thinking about them throughout his day.

And, like most parents, I imagine that John was so thankful for the grace that Jesus promises all of us. We are never enough. We can never be good enough parents to save our children; we can never be good enough mentors and leaders to save others. We can, however, rest in the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that He is good enough to save our children, that He is a good enough mentor and leader to save our friends. He is the only thing we need.

I'm thankful that John was human, because I can relate to the love and tender care that he expresses in this letter. And I am so thankful that Jesus was so much more than human, because I can't do it alone. Praise God I don't have to.

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ
III John 1

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 52

Our God Will Fight For Us

“Tolerance” is a hot topic in today’s culture. Christians live in a constant tension between the Bible’s standards of morality and loving the lost. This tension jumps out in this short book of Jude. There are some pretty harsh words to describe those who are taking advantage of grace as well as what awaits them.

How do we reconcile these harsh words with our loving God? I think you can see the answer in the writer’s greeting to fellow Christians. He clearly

loves the Church deeply, praying mercy, peace, and love for his readers. I’m reminded that the need to identify and separate us from immorality is rooted in a desire to protect God’s beloved church. God dealt harshly with those who threatened to corrupt His children, and I hope that when we read Jude we can hear how strongly the Father and His disciples will fight to protect the gospel and its believers.

**WRITTEN BY SADA KNOWLES
PSYCHOLOGY AND FAMILY STUDIES PROFESSOR,
OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Jude 1

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 53

The Many Emotions of Jesus

The Gospel of John begins in a different way from the other Gospels. It does not detail Christ's birth, but instead we learn about Jesus being one with God and how He was with God since the beginning. Jesus became man and came to earth in order for us to know His grace and truth. What an amazing gift and sacrifice He made.

Early in the section, we are also introduced to the first followers of Jesus. Andrew hears about Jesus being nearby. He goes to find his brother Simon Peter and says, "We have found the Messiah." That must have been an exciting moment. They had heard about Jesus from John the Baptist, and now He was there in the flesh. We are also introduced to Philip and Nathanael. We see a little of Nathanael's true colors as he talks about Jesus and his birthplace saying, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Upon meeting Jesus, Nathanael soon realizes He is truly the Messiah.

In chapter two, Jesus performs his first miracle, water to wine. I personally find this miracle very interesting. During Jesus' time, wine was a crucial component of wedding ceremonies. It would have

been horrible to run out of wine. Jesus, his mother and followers were all invited to the wedding. Mary became concerned when the family ran out of wine. Although Jesus had not performed any miracles, she knew what her son was capable of doing. She knew He was the Son of God. When she asked him, He declared that it was not time for him to begin his work. But, Jesus turned the water to wine anyway. It must have amazing to witness this first of many miracles.

During these chapters, we read about different emotions of Jesus. We see his anger in the temple, his compassion and power when healing the official's son and the lame man by the pool, and the seriousness when talking with the Jewish leaders. We see Jesus' sensitivity as He talks with the Samaritan woman by the well. As you read these chapters, visualize the situations. Think about the emotions and facial expressions people might have had. How did they respond to meeting and talking with Jesus? It must have been a wonderful experience to witness Jesus in this way.

WRITTEN BY AMY JANZEN
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

John 1
John 2
John 3
John 4
John 5

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DAY/ 54

Don't Put Your Faith in Anything Except Jesus, The Christ

These five chapters continue John's demonstration of the divinity of Jesus. Chapter 6 begins with two miracles of Jesus' creative power and control over nature. He first takes five barley loaves and two fish and uses them to feed 5,000 men. Then, he astonishes his disciples by walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. Back in Capernaum, he stuns the crowds by making the first of several "I am" statements in these chapters, claiming "I am the bread of life" in 6:35. Not only that, but he then asserts, "I am the bread that came down from heaven" (6:41). When Jesus insists that his audience must eat his flesh and drink his blood (v. 53), many disciples could not accept such an outlandish statement and stopped following him. Jesus asked

the Twelve, "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Doubtless the Twelve did not completely understand Jesus' words either, but Peter gives the great answer of faith: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (6:68-69). We, too, face situations in life with imperfect understanding – death of a loved one, heart disease, cancer, failed relationships, and many others. Some turn away from the Lord in these situations, but we should instead cling to the one who gives eternal life.

WRITTEN BY JOHN MAPLE
HISTORY PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

John 6
John 7
John 8
John 9
John 10

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New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 55

Only One Thing is Needed

The story of Mary and Martha has always made me cringe just a little. Mostly because I sympathize with Martha. She was working hard. She had every good intention in the world. For goodness sake, someone had to feed Jesus some dinner! But Jesus wasn't all that impressed with her. Listen to what he told Martha: He said, "Martha, Martha you are worried and upset about many things but only one thing is needed. Mary had chosen what is better and it will not be taken from her."

How interesting that He said only one thing is needed. You have to imagine that He was hungry. He was a man, yes, but He was also God in the flesh so He had to have known how much work it took to prepare a meal in those days. But He didn't seem concerned at all about his dinner. He was much more concerned about having intentional relationships with the people around Him.

So what would happen if we replaced the rules we have for ourselves with relationship? Personally, I

think I could learn to have peace in the midst of the chaos that is my life at any given moment. It seems like I am always waiting for the perfect circumstances to have peace. When the kids are tucked into their beds, when the house is perfectly clean, when I have exercised, had my quiet time, conversed with my husband, and taken a bubble bath then I will feel peace. Well, I need to get real. That's just never going to happen. If I consciously choose to live in grace I can feel peace when the dishes are dirty, when the kids are screaming and the husband is in a foul mood. I can have peace when money is tight. The research paper is due, and the kids are sick.

That idea doesn't come easy to very many people that I know. Mary actually got it. And I am determined to get it, too.

WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

John 11
John 12
John 13
John 14
John 15

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



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DAY/ 56

Jesus Knew All About Stress

I can't imagine what Jesus must have been feeling leading up to His death. How could He bear it? How could he remain so patient with his disciples when they were still so clueless?

Something that amazes me about the events leading up to the crucifixion is that Jesus never lost it. He never blew his top, came unglued, lost his cool, went off on someone. The Man was calm and focused the entire time.

I wager to bet that most of us have never been under the amount of stress and pressure that Jesus surely felt leading up to his death. I imagine that none of us has had so much riding on us. And I am certain that I have never been as scared as Jesus must have been before his death. Yet He never lashed out, He never became irrational. He was calm, and kind, and patient throughout the entire experience.

Just yesterday, I lost my patience because the line at Starbucks was too long. I also had a mini-panic attack about the giant laundry pile I needed to tackle, and then I spent a good 30-minutes stress eating to avoid dealing with a conflict at work.

Friends, we have no excuses. The next time we start to think that no one can be as busy or stressed or tired or overwhelmed as we are, let's re-read the events leading up to the crucifixion of Christ. When we begin to justify acting like a spoiled child when things get a little difficult, let's remind each other that Jesus had every excuse to freak out, yet He chose to be kind, and gentle, and full of grace.

What this world definitely does not need is more people losing it. What this world could use a lot more of are people that are kind, gentle, and full of grace.

**WRITTEN BY SUMMER LASHLEY
STAFF MEMBER, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

John 16

John 17

John 18

John 19

John 20

John 21

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DAY/ 57

Worship is Important to God

In this reading, we see the actual letters Jesus dictates to each of the seven churches. Imagine an elder getting up on Sunday morning about 90 AD to say to the church, "Jesus, who has been dead 60 years, has just written us a letter through our beloved John who was exiled on the Island of Patmos. John sent the message to us and I am now going to read it to you." In these letters, Jesus tells the strengths and weaknesses of each of the churches and closes each letter with a wonderful promise about heaven – which those who overcome will receive. From these letters we can learn much about what pleases Jesus and what does not.

In Chapter 4, the actual story line of the book begins by picturing the scene in heaven. God is on His throne and around him are four high-ranking angels, and around them 24 elders, and then 10,000 x 10,000 angels, and around them all created beings.

The scene is one of praise to God the Father going on continually.

In chapter 5, the story says that God has a scroll with 7 seals holding it from being open. The cry goes out for someone to break the seals and read what is inside, but no one is found worthy to do that. Then a lamb comes on the scene who had been killed and is alive again – clearly a reference to Jesus who has died, been raised, and now appears back in heaven. He takes the scroll and begins to open the seals. As Jesus opens each seal, a new part of the story is told – so chapters 6 through 11 tell what happens while Jesus opens each seal. From chapters 4 and 5, we learn that worship is very important and that we should be joining the heavenly hosts in regularly offering our praise to God.

**WRITTEN BY STAFFORD NORTH
BIBLE PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Revelation 1
Revelation 2
Revelation 3
Revelation 4
Revelation 5

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DAY/ 58

The One True King

To me, this set of verses is a bit unsettling and hard to understand. The symbolism and weighty content can be intimidating for the everyday reader. Thankfully, we have the power of the Holy Spirit to help us understand things when we sometimes don't. And this is what was revealed to me: The first section of this reading deals with God's wrath and judgment. Chapter seven was particularly beautiful to me. It paints a word picture of the twelve tribes of Israel, every person who has been washed with the blood of the Lamb, and all the angels singing praises to our God during the judgment. What an amazing thought to see every single person singing praises to God!

Chapter eight and nine at first seem unsettling to me because they describe what will happen to the earth on judgment day, think fire, smoke, and torture.

I would expect that this would be enough to get most peoples' attention. But, it says that after all of this has happened, there will still be people who do not repent and they will keep on sinning. This is just crazy to me! We are fallen people. We are sinners. And even when we are offered eternal life through Christ, we keep on sinning. However, when reading Revelations, there is no doubt that God will be triumphant in the end, He will bring his kingdom to Earth, and everyone will bow down and worship the one true King.

**WRITTEN BY EMILY KURT
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Revelation 6

Revelation 7

Revelation 8

Revelation 9

Revelation 10

Revelation 11

WORD. OC's 60-Day New Testament Reading Plan



www.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 59

This World Is Not Our Home

Passages found in Revelations are some of the hardest to decipher in the bible. A person could read and reread these passages several times and not understand what may be hidden within the symbology. I can hardly attempt to understand these scriptures without the help of scholars who's job it is to understand, but I like to see what the Holy Spirit reveals to me when I study this book without the insight and education that some scholars have.

It seems to me that these passages tell the story of the world. I read the interesting struggle between

the ultimate good and undeniably evil. Humanity seems to be stuck in the middle of this struggle. I read God's plan to claim those people who choose Him and His punishment for those who don't.

Because we will always be in a struggle between good and evil on this earth, it makes me that much more thankful that this world is not our home. It can't compare to the glory that awaits us in heaven.

**WRITTEN BY CHRIS RICH
STUDENT, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

READ

Revelation 12
Revelation 13
Revelation 14
Revelation 15
Revelation 16
Revelation 17

WORD. OC's 60-Day
New Testament Reading Planwww.oc.edu/youversion

DAY/ 60

The Good Guys Win

Sometimes in our lives it may seem everyone is against us. The book of Revelation portrays the government and their allies as aligned against the church and individual Christians. There are beasts, a huge red dragon and creatures that seem too big for the Christians to win the battle against. Things look bleak as it seems everyone is out to destroy the church and individual Christians. With all these forces aligned against the good guys, it seems they will go down in defeat. Sound familiar?

In an ending to the battle that has been building in the book of Revelation, the Apostle John shows all the big, bad, evil forces (huge red dragon, beasts, etc.) are totally defeated by a rider on a white horse.

The rider on the white horse was named: Faithful and True. The rider is also named: The Word of God and on his robe and his thigh this name was written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:11, 13 and 16). The book of Revelation dramatically finishes by showing that even though many times in history it appears the bad guys are going to win, the Lord Jesus Christ and his followers are going to be the ultimate victors. Read Revelation chapters 18-22 to see the blessings Christians receive for the victory we have in Jesus and to realize that through Jesus Christ, the good guys really do win.

WRITTEN BY KENT HARTMAN
BIBLE PROFESSOR, OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

READ

Revelation 18
Revelation 19
Revelation 20
Revelation 21
Revelation 22