Day 1

Nothing Hidden

What a privilege to daily dive into the Word of God. Scripture is *God breathed, profitable for instruction, for conviction, for correction, for training in righteousness* [2 Tim 3:16]. It takes great humility both to receive and act upon all that the Holy Spirit reveals to us in the pages of Scripture. How amazing that the Father loves us so much that He wants us to rise up to our fullest potential and the most radiant representation of His nature!

Our time in the Word will change us. When we willingly come with hands open in surrender, hearts open to receive, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal truth and to change our hearts, He will! When we give Him full access to every ounce of who we are, He then equips us as His children to be prepared for the tasks He has for us.

Nothing is hidden from His sight. It’s comforting to know that we have a good and faithful God who will lovingly lead us to more of Him, making us more like Him in the process.

Over the duration of this reading plan, we will journey through a few of the key ways the Word of God impacts and changes us from the inside out. The value of choosing to allow the Word of God to have full sway in our lives is immeasurable. Nothing else compares to the riches that await us in the pages of Scripture!

From today’s Scripture, write down 2-3 characteristics of a person whose life is rooted in the Word.

Psalm 1vs 1-6

**Psalms 119:1-8**

Day 2

* [Psalms 119:17-18](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/2/segment/1)
* [Ephesians 1:18-19](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/2/segment/2)

#### Day 2

# New Vision

Throughout Scripture we see the fullness of God. We see His Son and His Spirit at work. We see His heart on beautiful display... His goodness, faithfulness, grace, mercy and love for us. Every page we read is an opportunity to know Him more and become more like Him.

There’s a heavenly exchange that takes place when we choose to diligently pursue God through the reading of the Word. The more we spend time with Him, the more we become like Him. As a result, we ultimately begin to see as He sees. We’ll see people and circumstances differently as our heart is changed, becoming more like Jesus.

Each day we have a decision to make; a commitment to seek God with our whole heart. It’s in the seeking - the breathing in of the heart and voice of God from Scripture - that our eyes are opened in wonder, we gain wisdom and understanding, and we hold fast to His way. This way of living directly influences how we see, love and respond to the world around us.

The Word of God is alive; a rich store of wisdom and discernment helping us to see, to have focused and clear sight, and as a result, a focused and clear heart and mind!

Ask God to help you see your life moment by moment through the lens of the Scriptures in today’s reading.

Day 3.

* [Psalms 119:33-37](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/3/segment/1)
* [Psalms 119:111-112](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/3/segment/2)
* [Psalms 139](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/3/segment/3)
* The Rhythm of Life
* *What you say goes, God, and stays, as permanent as the Heavens. Your truth never goes out off fashion; it’s as up-to-date as the earth when the sun comes up.*[Psalm 119:89-90, MSG]
* From ancient of days to the present, God’s Word is reliable and dependable. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever and we can always count on His Word to be perfect and timely for whatever season or circumstance we are currently in. From the first page of Scripture to the last, there is no mistaking the deep desire of our Father’s heart to be known by His children. He longs for intimacy and closeness. It is in the drawing near to Him that He draws near to us. With His very hands He forms us, He breathes life into our lungs, and sustains us. He gave us His Word so that we can know Him and align our lives with His heart – His best!
* God’s revelation becomes the cadence and rhythm of our lives. Whole and Holy, body and soul we find ourselves more in sync with Him the more we sit with Him. It’s a beautiful daily posture of surrender and listening, hearing and obeying. And as we do, His Word becomes the anchor, compass and constant in our hearts. He is faithful and trustworthy, now and always. It’s our privilege to respond through praise and honor with our*whole life one long, obedient response*[Psalm 119:40, MSG].
* Take some time today to incorporate this attitude into a response of praise and worship. Your life one long, obedient response!

Day 4

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/4/segment/0)
* [Psalms 36:9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/4/segment/1)
* [Psalms 119:105](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/4/segment/2)
* [Ephesians 5:8-10](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/4/segment/3)

#### Day 4

# Illuminate

Light. By it we can see the world around us. We see shapes, color, people, and the ground beneath our feet. We see the vastness of the sky or the depth of a canyon. We witness the power of the ocean and wind in the trees. It brings definition to what we behold and experience with our eyes and how we process what we're feeling in our heart and mind.

There’s another Light with even greater potential and purpose in our lives, while similarly bringing clarity and definition within our heart. Just as God commanded light to shine out of darkness, He also shines light in our hearts, seen and known in the person of Jesus, to bring transformation and knowledge of the Holy One.

The Word shines a refining light in our hearts revealing what still needs work. But it doesn’t stop there. It also gives light to the path before us so we know which steps to take next to more fully align our lives with God’s heart. In the same way as before, this light brings definition to what we behold and experience with our eyes and how we process what we're feeling in our heart and mind through the lens of Scripture.

From today’s Scriptures, ask God to bring to light anything that needs refinement and write out a prayer of commitment to allowing the Word to work and transform your heart!

Day 5

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/5/segment/0)
* [Psalms 119:129-130](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/5/segment/1)
* [Proverbs 2:1-8](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/5/segment/2)
* [Ephesians 1:17](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/15879-flourish-in-the-word/subscription/437698550/day/5/segment/3)

#### Day 5

# The Unfolding

Unfolding. Think about that word for moment. Maybe your initial thought relates to how you unfold a letter you receive in the mail, or the gradual unfolding of a dramatic story. But unfolding is also a beautiful picture of what happens within us as we immerse our hearts and minds with God’s Word.

In the process of unfolding, information is revealed and disclosed. The Word, living and active, reaches into the deepest places of our heart. Wisdom, insight, and understanding begin to blossom within and overflow into our daily life, as well as the lives of those around us.

The opening up of our hearts and souls to wisdom and understanding brings peace and rejoicing. It turns our heart toward God and away from empty pursuits and worldly satisfactions. It gives life to our entire existence. This is not for a small few. This unfolding of Truth is available to every heart hungry to know God and experience the power of the living, breathing Word of God in their lives.

As you continue to sit at the feet of Jesus, come with a heart of deep expectation for what the truths of Scripture can bring to life in your own heart and the transformation that will come as you openly receive what the Holy Spirit brings.

It’s all part of the invitation to FLOURISH!

[Hearing and Obeying His Word](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12668-hearing/subscription/437711918)

Day 2 of 5 • On Track!

* [James 1:22-25](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12668-hearing-and-obeying-his-word/subscription/437711918/day/2/segment/1).

We often say (or hear) that we want to know God’s will for our lives.

* But how often do we think about *doing*God’s will? Is *knowing* the same as *doing*?
* We’d be deceiving ourselves if we thought so. There’s a bridge that needs to be crossed between these two points and it’s called: obedience.
* God’s will is not hidden from us. His perfect law is revealed in the Scriptures that millions of people own today and can access from around the globe. He speaks to us and urges us to heed this law. But how often do we walk away from it, satisfied with the new insights we’ve gleaned from our study of the Bible, but fail to make any tangible changes to our lives?
* I was once in a serious, long-term relationship with a guy whose faith stood at odds with mine. There was a chasm between our views of God, which I dismissed as inconsequential. Over the years, however, God sent numerous people to confront me about it. I also personally received His Word from 2 Corinthians 6:14 on several occasions; it says, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”
* Though it was clear from His Word that this relationship was putting my relationship with Jesus at risk, I didn’t want to listen. I questioned God’s wisdom and refused to obey.
* My response then was like that of the man James described in verse 23: he looked at himself in the mirror and saw all his imperfections, but walked away without making a single effort to change anything about himself.
* In the end, I suffered the consequences of insisting on doing what I wanted. I couldn’t pray, read the bible, go to church, or even talk about God to him. There was also a constant tug-of-war when it came to deciding where to go for spiritual needs. We ended up fighting often about God and even my call to the mission field. While I eventually ended that relationship, I carry the scars that resulted out of it.
* The Word of God acts like a mirror to our true selves. It reflects what we look like from the inside. It reveals to us the true condition of our hearts, and tells us what we need to do to realign it to God’s heart. It doesn't matter how much we’ve heard or understood; what matters is that we obey what we’ve heard.
* The second person James describes in verse 25 not only listens to and understands God’s word, but also lives it out. This person sees his spiritual imperfections in the light of God’s word, and as a result, takes actual practical steps to obey God’s word. He keeps listening and doing continuously. And in doing so, he is blessed.
* James says that we are to be doers of the word and not hearers only.
* Let us examine our own lives and act on the truths that we hear (vv. 22-25).

Day 3 .

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12668-hearing-and-obeying-his-word/subscription/437711918/day/3/segment/0)
* [James 1:26-27](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12668-hearing-and-obeying-his-word/subscription/437711918/day/3/segment/1)

At some point in our lives, we have all said something we wish we hadn’t.

For some of us, this has happened more often than we’d like to admit. It could be something as embarrassing as uttering a social faux pas, or something as hurtful as lashing out against a friend or loved one. In the social media age, it could take the form of an offensive joke, or an angry, unfiltered comment in a Facebook post.

In a society growing increasingly hostile to Christianity, the instruction James gives to believers to keep a tight rein on their tongues (v. 26) is more relevant and needful than ever. It is crucial that the love of Christ be evident in the way we talk to others—especially on social media.

In fact, James goes so far as to say that if we’re outwardly religious—for instance, attend church, pray, fast, serve in ministries—but fail to control our speech, we’re merely deceiving ourselves and that our “religion is worthless” (v. 26).

Instead, what God considers as pure and faultless religion involves*both* our speech and our deeds. In verse 27, James tells us—on top of keeping a tight rein on our tongues—to care for “orphans and widows” and to keep ourselves from becoming polluted by the world.

The orphans and widows of James’ day were the most powerless and had the lowest status in society. In today’s context, James would be instructing us to look out for the marginalized groups—for example, the homeless, mentally ill, poor. We are called to look beyond our social circles, to serve and care for those in need. This point ties in with a recurring theme throughout the book of James where a Christian’s faith and deeds should work hand-in-hand.

On top of that, James adds another piece of instruction: to not let the sinful behaviors of the world corrupt our actions (v. 27). As we go about our daily lives, especially in the area of performing good deeds in the name of Jesus, we need to be consistently on guard against subtle temptations and influences. When we allow these things to creep into the area of service (such as dishonesty about finances or impure motivations in our acts of charity), we undermine the positive actions that we make and jeopardize the good name of Jesus.

This task is not an easy one. However, as we control our tongue, care for the marginalized, and guard our motives and methods from worldly corruption, the world will take notice and wonder why Christians behave in this way. Then we can share the goodness of Christ’s love that we have experienced and invite them to become a part of the family of God.

**Questions for reflection**

1. In what ways have I failed to “keep a tight rein” on my tongue?

1. What practical steps can I take to help the powerless in my community?

1. How can I guard against becoming “polluted by the world” (v. 27), particularly in the area of service?

Day 4

* [James 2:18-26](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12668-hearing-and-obeying-his-word/subscription/437711918/day/5/segment/1)

“I can’t believe they did that to you, especially because they’re Christians. They should know better!”

I can’t tell you how many times I have heard people relay stories of how Christians have hurt them, let them down or said unkind words. You’ve probably heard a story too. Maybe you’ve even experienced it yourself.

While the world may not believe in God, there is the unspoken expectation that Christians should be held to a higher standard. They expect us to live out our faith. And that is not an unreasonable demand, because, as James tells us, our actions should demonstrate to the world that we have a transformational faith.

As we profess that Jesus is Lord, we must demonstrate it through our acts of obedience to God, or in other words “good fruit” (Matthew 7:16-21). In James 2:18-26, the passage talks about how faith unaccompanied by deeds is “dead” or “useless”. What the author is inferring here is that it’s entirely possible to claim we have a saving faith when, in reality, we don’t have faith at all. Merely reciting God’s Word without practical, visible actions of obedience to God is pointless. Even the demons believe in God, James tells us.

So how do we know if we have true faith?

Real faith is more than a mental assent to the truth—it involves living action.

James goes on to talk about how faith and deeds are inseparable, as Abraham and Rahab demonstrated in their lives. Their works showed that their faith was in good working order.

In summary, faith produces good fruit. It’s exactly what Jesus says in Matthew chapter 7. “Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.” (Matthew 7:17-18).

Friend, the more I follow Jesus, the more I realize just how wonderful He is. Just how life-giving and freedom-bringing He is. If I want my friends to follow Jesus too, then I need to “show” them Jesus through my actions. How I live my life will speak louder than any Christian cliché I can mutter. We are ambassadors for Christ. Therefore, let our lives be an expression of freedom and love that can only be found in real relationship with Him.

**Questions for reflection**

1. What can you do this week that would demonstrate your faith and the love of Jesus?

1. What steps can you take to strengthen your own faith, for instance, spend more time reading the Bible; pray more regularly, share the gospel with people who don’t believe in God?

February Love Letter.

* 1. **Something Great is About to Happen!**

“​I know where you are going. And when I have tested you, you will come out as pure gold.” (Job 23:10)

I remember when I had just been through an emotionally life-changing experience. I complained and wailed a lot. ‘Why me? What did I do wrong?’ At that time, my mother said something to me that was pivotal to changing my perspective. She turned to me and said ‘God is the potter, you are clay. You cannot dictate where He is taking you, but you can​ ​cooperate with him as He takes you through process’. Those words were the beginning of a healing process. It was a reminder that total surrender was needed for God to take control. Knowing that God wants to mold us and that this life we live is not our own is liberating. When we let this truth settle in our hearts, we move from fighting the reality of our experiences to participating with God and with His purpose for our lives. As someone famously said- ‘life is 20% what happens and 80% what we make of it’. Sometimes, life’s unexpected turns bring out the motives of our hearts and the substance that we are made of. Instead of running into a self-pity corner or attracting woe-is-me parties, use this time to draw closer to God.

The book of Job talks about God testing us so that we may come forth as gold; but a lot of times we do not realise that these ‘tests' will not be rosy. It could even make us question God and his methods of testing. God is the potter, we are just the clay! The clay should not dictate how or what it is being made into. We forget that when we say we surrender our lives to God, we are truly giving Him freedom to mold us. That means God can use methods that are not exactly comfortable for us. This is the beauty of surrender: allowing God to do so much more than we could imagine. It is always a better deal when God takes over, because the end is always better! We can allow God to use this time to make us and shape us! Herein lies the start of a beautiful journey: getting to know God deeper through our brokenness, and coming out stronger. There is a divine exchange that is about to happen- His glory and His strength to discover and walk in for ourselves. It’s time to go deeper! 

PRAYER/CONFESSION: Heavenly father, I know that the plans you have for me are far better than my plans. You know the path I take and when I am through I will come out gold. You have restored to me everything that was lost. I am eternally grateful that you have never left my side. That still, small voice is there to comfort, to encourage, to give me a glimpse of my glorious future. Lord, you are the potter, I am the clay. I surrender to you all over again. I remember that though there's pain in the offering and sacrifice, you are my Heavenly Father, and you have the best for me!

Dear Lord, I commit every situation I am going through into your hands. I may not know or understand all that is going on, but I trust in your promises. I believe that the plans you have for me are for good and not evil. I trust you God that you will take everything I commit into your hands, and bring out the best in everything.

2.

**God is Near the Broken-Hearted**

“​I am close to the brokenhearted; I rescue those whose spirits are crushed” Psalm 34: 18

The most comforting thing is knowing that the God we serve is near the broken-hearted. Most of us either have been or know someone who has been through a tough time recently. It is okay to admit our state of brokeness. Why? Because that is where God meets us, that is where we experience true comfort from the Holy Spirit. After all, that is one of the roles of the Holy Spirit!

There are several promises in the Bible regarding comforting the brokenhearted. God will not promise us what He cannot provide, or what we do not need. There is wisdom in drawing strength and comfort from the right source. When we go through this process of exchanging our weakness and distress for God’s strength and courage, we position ourselves to start or continue a deeper journey of faith. If we do this in our own strength, we are bound to burn out fast. It is only in God that we receive the comfort that satisfies the soul and does not run dry; because it is available to us whenever we need it.

In such a times of brokenness we can also glorify God and share our testimony of God's comfort and love. In the world, people look to relationships, social status, and other material things to find comfort. The comfort and love they yearn for, no one but God can give in a perfect and whole way. What joy it is to have a personal relationship with the One who gives true and unending comfort and joy to those who need it!

PRAYER/CONFESSION: God I thank you because your Word says you care for me. So I cast all my cares on you! I thank you that you hear me always and you will deliver me. I receive a new heart and a new perspective; help me to see my situation the way you see it. I know that you have great things in store for me and I choose to be comforted and uplifted by your Word.

3.

[Psalms 18:1-3](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/1)

* [Psalms 3:3-4](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/2)
* [Psalms 16:7-8](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/3)
* [Psalms 18:31-34](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/4)
* [2 Corinthians 12:9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/5)
* [Ephesians 3:16-19](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/3/segment/6).

**The Fortress: Our Place of Strength and Protection**

* “I am your shield, the power that saves you, and your place of safety” - Psalm 18:31
* (a) We cannot do it alone!
* The moment we realize that we are not alone in any season of life, hope rises up on our inside! People may abandon or reject us, but God promises to never leave us. There are so many scriptures in the Psalms that refer to God being our rock; our shield; our fortress; etc. These words all describe strength. We are not offered strength if we do not have need for it. It is inevitable that we will face times of weakness.  At such moments, God does not intend for us to be our own rock. He knows that we need help! In fact, we cannot do without God’s help- we will only run out of steam in our own strength.
* (b) Find refuge and security in God
* Running to God is the most rewarding thing. We may not be in a war zone facing fiery darts, but life certainly throws darts at us that we cannot always control or stir in the direction we want them to go in. In such times, we can take on the shield of faith, and secure ourselves in God’s promises. He is not a man, therefore He cannot lie about what He has promised to do.

* PRAYER/CONFESSION: Lord I receive strength for the new journey ahead. I put my faith in your power and strength to carry me in this time. Whenever I am led to rely on my strength and my understanding, please remind me that your strength is made perfect in my weakness. I have faith in your ability to strengthen me; and I celebrate my new found strength in you Lord
* 4. [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/4/segment/0)
* [Isaiah 43:18-20](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/4/segment/1)
* [Psalms 126:1-6](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/4/segment/2)
* **The Dry Times are the Best Times!**
* “ I will make a pathway for you through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.” Isaiah 43:19c
* The wilderness: an opportunity for God to do what He alone can do. Every season has a purpose! When we realise this, we can gain the right perspective. For example, dry times can actually be an adventure. We do not know what is going to happen next; God takes full control. In dry seasons we do not rely on our strength, or our works, we rely on someone MUCH GREATER- our heavenly Father. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, He knows the end from the beginning.
* The 'wilderness' is also known as the waiting season; when times are hard, lonely, and dry. It is easy to turn to complaining and comparing ourselves to something or someone we wish to be. Sometimes we fail to realise the power and purpose of the season we are in. One powerful lesson to take from the wilderness season is the great amount of free time to turn our attention to (or back to) God! In this season we can sow the seeds we want to reproduce in our lives; sow kindness to reap kindness, sow love to reap love. In this time, fall in love with God all over again! As we wait on Him, we experience new and deeper facets of our creator, and we are bound to increase in our love and awe of Him. As we wait on Him, we feed into our soul and spirit with His promises, and they become more real and alive in our hearts.
* So, enjoy the dry season, because it does not last forever- it's the making of an awesome future. [Isaiah 43:19]. It is a time to turn our story into a testimony, where God gets ALL the glory. How amazing is it, that our story can be used to show God's power?

* PRAYER/CONFESSION: Dear Lord, I ask you to lead me in this time of seeking you. I desire to hear from you and be led by you; guide me in this season. I thank you for the new hope that you have given me; I trust in you Lord and I believe that you are leading me to my promise land. As I eagerly seek your will and your voice, I choose not to be distracted. I put my faith fully in your promises for me!

5.

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/0)
* [Hebrews 6:10-12](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/1)
* [Psalms 16:7-9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/2)
* [Proverbs 3:5-6](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/3)
* [Isaiah 30:20-21](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/4)
* [Hebrews 11:6](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/5/segment/5)
* Devotional
* **Seeking and Serving**
* “I am fair, and I will remember all the work you have done. I will remember that you showed your love to me ”  (Hebrews 6:10a)
* Seeking God in dry times is a journey that involves (amongst other things) waiting, praying and doing. Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 14) realised that their action was required to take them to the Promise Land. If they were passive, they would not have realised  that it was their faith and courage that qualified them to enter the Promise Land. The wilderness was the final destination for some the Israelites! Even though God promised them something, He needed them to cooperate​ ​with and obey Him. Joshua and Caleb’s step of faith and obedience served the purpose of establishing God’s plan for the future of His chosen people.
* Our service to God is also important. When serving God, we turn our attention to hear Him closely and grow spiritually as we go through process. We turn away from distractions and things that may waste our energy. If we are only asking God for things but fail to ask how we can be of service in His Kingdom, we may be depriving ourselves of all that God has for us in the next chapter in life.
* In scriptures, we see that seeking God can involve receiving instructions from Him (Psalm 16:7-9). Sometimes, for us to reach that place that we desire, there may be a step of obedience required. This may involve serving God and/or others. When we ask God for help, He can guide us and give us the grace to hear and do what He is asking of us in this season.

* PRAYER/CONFESSION: Lord, I choose to serve you wholeheartedly. I am not consumed with my own problems and needs, instead I choose to give of my time, talents and resources to further your kingdom. I choose to find joy in seeking you; and I have faith that you will meet me in my time of service. Open my eyes to see the needs of those around me, and in the local body of Christ, and grant me the ability to be a blessing to others.

6.

Day 6

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/0)
* [Ephesians 3:20](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/1)
* [Jeremiah 1:11-12](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/2)
* [Matthew 21:21-22](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/3)
* [Philippians 4:6-7](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/4)
* [1 John 5:14-15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/5)
* [Luke 11:11-13](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/6/segment/6)

Devotional

**Make Your Requests Known**

“I am able, through my mighty power at work within you, to accomplish infinitely more than you might ask or think.” Ephesians 3:20

Reflect: What do you want from God? Do you make your requests known to Him, or do you avoid or shy away from asking? The Bible gives great examples of those who made specific requests to God and received answers to their prayers; see the story of Hannah and Elisha (1 Samuel 1:9-18). If God is our heavenly Father, then we should know that He wants good things for us as His children (Matthew 7:11).

Why do we need to ask? After all, God already knows what we need before we ask. However, Philippians 4, amongst other scriptures, tells us to ask! Here is what asking does: (a) it builds up our faith and knowledge in God’s Word concerning what we have asked for- it is an opportunity to settle down and commit to quiet times with God and go deep in His Word; (b) it builds up our prayer life because we open up dialogue with God. As we ask, we can also receive instructions from Him.

So ask freely!

PRAYER/CONFESSION: Lord, I thank you for the privilege to approach your throne of grace and ask you for what I need. I believe in your ability to meet all my needs, even beyond all I could ever imagine! I put my faith behind all my requests, because I know that you care about everything that concerns me and you are providing for all my needs!

7.

Day 7 of 10 • On Track!

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/0)
* [Romans 10:9-10](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/1)
* [Jeremiah 1:9-10](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/2)
* [Revelation 12:11](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/3)
* [Psalms 3:3-6](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/4)
* [Psalms 18:1-3](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/5)
* [Psalms 55:22](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/6)
* [Isaiah 55:8-11](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/7)
* [Romans 8:28](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/8)
* [Philippians 4:6-7](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/7/segment/9)
* Devotional
* **Change Your Confession**
* ‘By believing in your heart, you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved’. Romans 10:10 (NLT)
* It is very easy to leave the place of prayer and go about our daily lives speaking words contrary to what we are trusting God for. Our words locate where and what our faith is in. Are our words filled with faith? Do our words show that we are putting our trust in God? We need to make a habit of using our confessions to fuel our faith. Words carry power and form our reality- after all, in Genesis Chapter 1, God spoke the earth into being and it was was formed.
* Meditation can involve repetition and vividly imagining what you are trusting God for. When we allow God’s Word to consume our thoughts and imagination on a consistent basis, we make it more real than our circumstances!
* Here are some of my favorite scriptures which I recommend for daily meditation.
* Note: You can use all the scriptures listed in the rest of this devotional as part of your daily confessions. I also recommend simply going through the Psalms and reciting the praises and promises of God over your life.
* PRAYER/CONFESSION: Lord, I ask you to forgive me for any time I have used my words to negate what I am trusting you for. I know there is power in my words, and I choose to use them to glorify you and confess your promises over my life. Please help me to identify any areas where my words do not align with my faith. Thank you Lord for teaching me and guiding me in this area.

Day 8

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/8/segment/0)
* [James 1:6-8](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/8/segment/1)
* [Psalms 37:5-7](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/8/segment/2)
* [Matthew 14:22-33](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/8/segment/3)

[Hebrews 10:35](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/12091-love-letters/subscription/437735045/day/8/segment/4). Devotional

**Stay Focused**

“But when you ask, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.” James 1:6

Let us keep our eyes on God’s promises, not on the storms.  
As we walk with God, it is certain that we will experience both rays of sunshine, and cloudy days. During the cloudy days, our eyes must constantly stay on Jesus, and on the promises in the Word. We are not promised that we will only have good times. John 16:33 tells us that as long as we are in this world, there will be tribulations; but there’s hope- in Jesus we have peace and victory! God does not promise rosy times 24/7, but He does promise that He will never leave us (Hebrews 13:5). There are times when we have prayed and prayed, and things seem to go from bad to worse. But we must keep our focus on God and on what He has promised - we cannot let what we see in the natural discourage us. When we lose focus on God, discouragement comes in; and the most natural thing to do is put focus back on ourselves or on something other than God.

Any time we step out in faith, our focus should be on God and His promises. Peter knew that he was about to take on a humanly impossible task by walking on water- but he obeyed Jesus’ Words to ‘come’, and he stepped out on the water in faith (Matthew 14:22-33). Peter then did the natural thing- he looked around him and probably thought- ‘what am I doing walking on water?’ The storms took his focus away from Jesus and he began to sink. Many of us have walked in Peter’s shoes. When we allow the circumstances of life to affect us, we take our focus away from Jesus.

Every time we choose to uphold God’s promises in our lips and hearts despite contrary circumstances, we are exercising our faith; we are calling the enemy’s bluff; we are giving God room to do what only HE can do! Discouragement is bound to lurk around, but we can resist it by focusing on God’s Word and allowing it to take root deep down in our hearts so that nothing else takes our attention.

PRAYER/CONFESSION: Dear Lord, I know that there are many things around me that can cause me to be distracted and discouraged. Help me to keep my eyes on you, even if things around me do not look like they are going right. I ask you to give me the eyes of faith; so that I can see what you see, and make your promises a reality in my life. You reward those who trust in you, and this is what I choose to do.

### Starting The Journey

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/1/segment/0)
* [Matthew 1:1-3](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/1/segment/1)
* [Genesis 22:15-18](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/1/segment/2).

Devotional

**God chooses strange forbearers for His Son**(Part 1)

This is history of Jesus’ family.  It is a very interesting history as well.  Today we see three of the best parts.  First, God starts the history at Abraham.  We see God’s promise to Abraham over 2000 years before Jesus was born – that is a long time before Jesus was born!!  So everyone we see in this family history was chosen by God Himself.  Second, in the first 4 generations, none of them are the firstborn child – that is amazing because the first born was always considered the one who should get this blessing.  God decided otherwise.

Not Ishmael – but Isaac

Not Esau – but Jacob

Not Reuben, Levi or Simeon – but Judah

Not Zerah – but Perez

Finally, we see the first woman in the line of Jesus mentioned.  There are 4 women mentioned – and Tamar is the first.  She was a foreigner, she acted wrongly in getting pregnant by Judah – and yet God chose here to be in the line of Jesus.  God can redeem anyone!!

**Time to Pray**

Father, if we could pick our parents and family history, I know I would not pick some of the people You did for Your Son Jesus.  You bypassed strong and gifted men – and chose their brothers.  You bypassed firstborn children.  You picked a woman like Tamar who got pregnant by Judah out of marriage.

There is hope for me.  You can use me too.  I am not the firstborn.  I am not the most gifted in my family.  I have many faults – and You promise to bless me.  Help everyone of us to see ourselves here – blessed by You regardless of our failures and weaknesses.  In Jesus’ name, Amen. 

2.

Day 2

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/2/segment/0)
* [Matthew 1:4-11](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/2/segment/1)
* Devotional
* **God chooses strange forbearers for His Son** (Part 2)
* These are the names that lead up to King David – and then all the kings of Israel that came from David.  God promised David that he would always have a king to rule his throne and eventually the Messiah.  Some of these kings were good – but some were bad (even VERY bad).  God just keeps His promises.  This was a promise that the people of Israel just held on to very tightly.  They were looking for the Messiah to be the king that would rule and set them free from the Romans.
* Again we have three more women.  A prostitute who changed and followed God (Rahab).  A foreigner who was a nobody (Ruth) and a lady who had an affair with king David while married to another man(Bathsheba).  Would you put these people in your family?  God did!  He then broadcast this information to the whole world so that everyone knows it.
* **Time to Pray**
* Father, these people are just names to us.  We do not know them except for a few stories about them.  You chose them to be in the lineage of Jesus.  They are good people, bad people, simple people, famous people.  They all make it in this list.  Many of us could see ourselves here too.  The most important thing is that You kept Your promises.  Through all of the challenges of the years, You kept Your promise to us.  When life is difficult and we wonder if You will keep a promise You made to us – help us look at this list of people and trust You.  In Jesus’ name, Amen.

3.

Day 3

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/3/segment/0)
* [Matthew 1:11-17](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/3/segment/1)

Devotional

**God chooses strange forbearers for His Son** (Part 3)

These people in Jesus’ lineage are different.  We know nothing about most of them and very little of a few others.  They are the people who God knew – and chose to be in Jesus’ family, but we do not.  This is like most of the people in history.  We know nothing about them, but God knows.  It will be the same for most (maybe all) of us.  This world will not remember us, but God has special plans and He works it out in our lives.

Also, we see that this is the lineage of Joseph – Jesus’ step-father.  That is the way the Jewish people always determine lineage.  So the Jews understood what Matthew was doing in giving the names of people coming to Joseph.

Finally, 14-14-14 (this is the breakdown of the number of names in the lineage).  To the Jewish people this was significant as well.  2\*7 (3 times).  “Seven” and “Three” represent completion and they see the picture that these numbers represent.  It is not intended to be a complete genealogy of Jesus – just a picture that Jesus came at the perfect time in history.

**Time to Pray**

Father, You fill out the line of Jesus with simple people.  I am so thankful.  You have a place in Your great plan for simple people.  The world around us may quickly forget us, but You do not.  Your promises are fulfilled by simple people.  Thank you.

Finally, Jesus came at just the right time.  The timing was perfect.  Father, that is the way You do things – at the perfect time.  So today as I ask for things, and call on You to fulfil Your promises, help me to remember that they will be answered in the perfect time – Yours.  In Jesus’ name, Amen.

4.

Day 4

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/4/segment/0)
* [Matthew 1:18-25](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/4/segment/1)
* Devotional
* **The Picture of a “good man”**
* Men, this is what a good man looks like.  Joseph was a person of integrity and was going to divorce Mary (for Jewish people, this level of pre-marriage commitment required a divorce).  He could have shamed her publicly or done it quietly – he chose to do it quietly.  He heard God speak – and then walked in 100% obedience.  Finally, he publicly took the shame; by taking Mary as his wife, he was saying to everyone around him that he was the father of the child.
* Men, this is how God wants us to act.
* God gave them the name for the baby – Jesus and Immanuel.  Both of these names come from the Old Testament where God gave a prophetic announcement of these names for the Messiah.  These names have special meaning for the Jewish people.  That is why it is recorded here.
* **Time to Pray**
* Father, Joseph is such a great example to me.  I want to be a man who listens so closely to You.  I want to protect people rather than expose their failures.  I want to listen so well to You, that when You ask me to carry the shame of others – I will do it.  God, I am not sure how I can be that man – but if You can help Joseph do it, then You can help me.  So strengthen me today to be Your man.  In Jesus’ name, Amen.
* 5.

Day 5

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/5/segment/0)
* [Matthew 2:1-12](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/5/segment/1)
* Devotional
* **Birth Announcements – God’s version**
* Matthew addresses the birth of Jesus – and it is about the birth of the King, the King of the Jews.
* **Matthew:**
* Compares Jesus with Herod the earthly king – no comparison.
* Describes the people coming to honor Jesus – wise men from the nations bring gifts.
* Shows how heaven predicts Jesus’ birth – the stars declare it.
* Shows God protecting Jesus – Herod cannot kill Him.
* Shows Jesus living in a simple, unassuming family.
* Stop.  Think about how God announces the birth of His Son, Jesus.
* Now, take a moment and realize that we are adopted children of God.  Do not forget this – even when we find ourselves in simple circumstances.  A day is coming when God will declare it, and He will do a great job announcing His children.
* **Time to Pray**
* Father, You made the announcement of Jesus’ birth in a  simple and yet special way.  The stars proclaimed it, wise men came from other nations to bless Jesus, Your people were told it, kings were told of it, and today we hear it.  I want to take time today and worship you for this special event – You sent Jesus.  I know ­­you placed Jesus in a simple home, and that encourages me.  When we think that you should treat us differently, it reminds me that you know what You are doing with my life.  Most of us have simple lives – but we are your adopted children and one day…. Yes, one day you will bring us out and the world will see how you honour your children.  I look forward to that day.  In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**Day 6.**

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/6/segment/0)
* [Matthew 2:13-18](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/8814-starting-the-journey-disciple-makers-series/subscription/437760349/day/6/segment/1).
* Devotional
* **Answers to old Unresolved Questions**
* Here are three things that the Jewish people understood.  First, God protecting His people by giving them a dream to go to Egypt.  Before Egypt put Israel into slavery and bondage, it was a place of protection.  Israel never forgot that.  So going to Egypt for protection was something they expected God would do.  Second, God fulfils two prophecies in this passage.  The Jewish people knew about these prophecies and that God would fulfil them with the Messiah.  Third, they now have a reason for a terrible massacre of little children.  We often ask God “Why did You allow this to happen?”  In this case, the people finally find out.  It was years later, but God gave them the answer.
* Are you waiting for answers?  Let God reveal it in His time.  He will.  Do you need direction from God?  Keep a close ear to His voice – He will give it.
* **Time to Pray**
* Father, sometimes I pray for direction and answers but struggle with what you give.  Help me today to listen carefully to You and Your Word.  Help me to respond quickly just as Joseph did, even if it is difficult and may not make sense to me.  Father, I understand that some prayers take a long time to get an answer or some things do not make sense.  I wait and wait for You to reveal why You allow things – and I do not understand why.  Help me to learn from this passage that You will give us the answer in due time.  Keep me walking by faith until that time.  In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**Day 7.**

Day 7

[Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/1/segment/0)

* [Genesis 12:1-9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/1/segment/1)
* [Matthew 13:10-15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/1/segment/2)
* Devotional
* In Genesis 12:1-9, Abram is invited on a new life journey with God. God promises him new land, empowerment, provision, a great name, protection and more. But the promises God made to Abram were just teasers to the real reward. God's intensions toward Abram were bigger than anything Abram could measure.
* It's like being invited to the party of a very generous host. On the invitation it may say things like, "Music, Food & Fun," but when you get there, you find out that music, food and fun aren't the only benefits. There are free gifts, people to meet and much more.
* God's invitation to Abram in Genesis 12 is just that: an invitation. As Abram follows the voice of God and journeys away from everything he has known, he finds out that there is way more to God's party than what  the invitation hinted to.
* In this devotional, we're going to discover what Abram found out about the uniqueness of God's invitations.

Day 8,

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/2/segment/0)
* [Genesis 15:1](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/2/segment/1)
* [John 5:39](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/2/segment/2)

Devotional

As Abram journeyed with God, he learned that God knows how to keep His promises. As their friendship deepened, God revealed to Abram the true reason for His initial invitation: Companionship.

He tells Abram in Genesis 15:1 (KJV) "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield , your exceedingly great reward." In other words, the real prize is ME!

I have often missed the real prize in my own life, thinking that studying scriptures and hearing the Word of God was all about rehearsing and memorizing. I realized that it is possible to know a ton of verses without knowing God Himself. I searched God's promises and declared them over my life on a daily basis but I still couldn't pay my bills at the end of the month and my physical ailments worsened. I had a decision to make. Either I was going to decide that God's Word isn't true or I was going to find out where the shortage was within myself.

Searching the Bible is a good thing, but I had to ask myself this question: What exactly am I searching for? My answer is not in a Bible verse. My answer is in the One Who breathed the inspiration into the writers of the Bible verse.

Giving the proper attention to scripture is vital. Scripture is God's proven wisdom. But when I take scripture in, I must understand that every part of God's Word is to show me the intensions of His heart and to give me an invitation to the real prize: Companionship with Him.

Day 9

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/3/segment/0)
* [John 17:3](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/3/segment/1)
* [Matthew 13:10-15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/16738-understanding-with-the-heart/subscription/437777176/day/3/segment/2)
* Devotional
* Companionship with God is the true definition of eternal life. To know God, to Love Him and to receive His Love and knowledge of you is the most fulfilling experience in life. Every addictive behavior and every compulsion is screaming for that fulfillment.
* As I searched the scriptures, trying to figure out the formula for God's promises to manifest in my life, I discovered the formula is not just in *what* I know; it is in *Who* I know.
* If I need to be healed, I'd rather know the Healer than the formula for healing. If I need provision, I'd rather know the Provider than the formula for provision. There may be some situations in my life where my formulas don't work. That's when I need to know the One who goes beyond formulas and creates whatever needs to be created at any given moment.
* Formulas are understood with the head. Companionship is understanding with the heart.

APRIL \_JUNE 2020.

Devotional

Week 1st [1 John 4:19](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/1/segment/1)

**[Finding Your Way Back To God.](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding/subscription/438796254)**

There’s Got to Be More

Do you ever have the feeling that you are chasing something in life that won’t fully satisfy you? Pay attention to that feeling. It’s from God.

We’re not just talking about substance abuse issues, although drinking and pursuing other addictions are certainly ways of chasing something futile. But we’ve also known a lot of “good church people” who sit in a service every week—or who preach from a pulpit to those people—who feel themselves to be far from God. They’re “successful” or “put together” or “righteous” on the outside, but they’re missing God on the inside. They keep busy with religious practices and work, school, or family, but it just isn’t enough. They long for God to feel real to them.

That longing is the first spiritual awakening for all of us finding our way back to God: “There’s got to be more.”

When you long for a love that is deep and satisfying, when you want to give yourself to something that will truly make a difference, or when you seek answers to life’s most difficult questions, you are looking for God. You’ve really got two options: you can keep searching to fill these longings on your own, or you can look to the One who gave you those longings in the first place.

Our longing for real love goes all the way back to how the human race was made in the first place. God intended that we experience his love both directly from him and through others we relate to in a healthy way. What we long for, God doesn’t just have but actually God is. He is love and he pursues us with love.

We’ve heard it said that every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is really looking for God. If you are knocking on the door of some self-destructive behavior or relationship, you might actually have arrived at an important point in your journey back to God. Why? Because the disappointment you inevitably feel in cheap substitutes will make you wonder where you can find real love. Will you open yourself up to letting God fill your longing to love and be loved?

*What do your activities this week suggest about what you think will satisfy you?*

* [**Devotional**](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/2/segment/0)
* [**Hosea 2:15**](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/2/segment/1)
* Devotional
* **I Wish I Could Start Over**
* The next in our breakthroughs in our journey back to God we call the awakening to regret. You look at your life one morning and realize that, for all your best efforts, you’ve made a mess of things. You’re filled with disappointment and remorse. And now that you see things more clearly, you’d love another chance. But you’re not sure you have it coming.
* Come to think of it, why would you?
* But stay with us.
* Inside each of us is the conviction that we came from goodness and love and that we’re made for more of it. When we hit bottom and realize what a mess we have made of this life, and what a mess life has made of us, our reaction is to say, “I wish I could start over.”
* The beautiful thing is, you can start over. Your intuition about your origins in goodness and love is absolutely correct. God allows you to start over again.
* Most of us, when we’re ready to start over, simply want to go back to the life we had before everything went south. But God has other ideas. He doesn’t just want to help us get back to that better life as we imagine it. He wants us to experience a different kind of life altogether. It’s not just your future that changes when you find your way back to God but your past and your present as well.
* Are you ready to be done with living out a string of days with pain from the past, no purpose in your present, and no confidence about your future? Your journey away from regret and toward your home in God also takes you toward a deeper, truer life—the kind of life that invites you to start over today and begin living the way God always dreamed you could live . . . forever.
* *What would it look like to believe that God allows you to start over again today? How would your thoughts about the future change?*
* Week 2nd [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/3/segment/0)
* [Acts 3:19](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/3/segment/1)

**I Can’t Do This on My Own**

* No matter where we may be on our journey of finding our way back to God, we all have stuff in our lives that we are still holding on to. For some, it’s a secret activity or habit that nobody else knows about. For others, it’s pretty obvious what we’re still chasing.
* What is it for you? What do you need to let go of? God rarely puts something new in your life until you let go of something old and broken.
* That’s why the next step beyond awakening to regret is awakening to help. This third awakening moves us a giant step closer to God because we realize we can’t do it alone. What happens next?
* We make a call. We have that conversation. We walk into a support group. We find ourselves sliding into the back row at church We fall on our knees and cry out, “God, if you’re real . . . !”
* Turning away from destructive choices and seeking help is a part of repentance. To repent is to go home, returning to where you came from and where you belong. Going home is about being forgiven and receiving assurance of life after this life, but it’s also about finding new meaning and direction for life that you can’t find anywhere else. It’s about having a relationship with God. It’s about redirecting your life and returning to where you’ve come from and where you belong. When you repent, God changes you. You are different. The Bible says that God’s Spirit comes to live inside you, and that results in a recognizable and ongoing transformation.
* Keep in mind that repentance doesn’t mean feeling bad. As a matter of fact, the Bible says true repentance leads to “times of refreshing” from the Lord. Repentance is about starting over and admitting, “I need help.” This call to repent, to turn away from our sin and return home to God, is for everyone.
* This could be the day you go home. Get up from where you are and come home to where you belong. It does not matter what poor decisions you have made in the past. God is saying to you, “Whatever you have done, whatever you have become, it doesn’t matter. Just come home.”
* *What do you need to repent of today? How might repenting lead you to “times of refreshing” with God*
* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/4/segment/0)
* [Jeremiah 31:3](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/4/segment/1)

Devotional

God Loves Me Deeply After All

In the swirl of your new life with the Father, the next awakening may feel more like a step backward than a step forward. God is offering you something you want and need—a welcome home. But something inside you may want to resist. Being welcomed home by your heavenly Father and received into the family—no questions asked—may seem totally unrealistic for someone who has wandered so far and so long.

We call this stage of your journey your *awakening to love*. At this point, we start by saying, “I don’t deserve this.” God’s acceptance is just too unbelievable. But what God says and does is so entirely *opposite* of what we think we deserve that we are moved to the most amazing realization: “God loves me deeply after all.”

You can see why we say that a spiritual tug of war accompanies our homecoming. We have one set of convictions about ourselves, and God has another. We look at our past filled with failure and shame, and he looks at who we are with love and compassion.

That’s why this awakening is a huge breakthrough. We are realizing, perhaps for the first time, that none of us deserve a second chance, none of us deserve to be forgiven, and we certainly don’t deserve to be loved unconditionally. But we are! You are! You don’t deserve it, but God gives it to you anyway.

If you’re like most of us, you know all about the soundtrack of shame. Shame whispers, “You don’t really matter” and “You are not lovable.” Shame shouts, “No more chances for you!” Shame brings self-condemnation, and when we first encounter grace, we find ourselves repeating, “I don’t deserve this.”

Do not let your past mistakes and failures define you. That is the voice of shame. You aren’t what you’ve done or not done. You are not what’s been done to you. You are who God says you are. His child.

*Do you feel a spiritual tug of war going on inside you? If so, how would you describe it?*

Week 3rd

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/5/segment/0)
* [2 Corinthians 5:17-21](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1677-finding-your-way-back-to-god/subscription/438796254/day/5/segment/1)

Devotional

Now this is living!

God has a dream for this world, and you’re invited to be a part of it. It is an irresistible dream that God has had for all eternity. It’s a dream for your life, your community, and the whole world.

God’s dream is that you would live each second of your existence with a confidence that he relentlessly and passionately loves you. His dream is that you would willingly risk loving others because you know God has risked everything in loving you.

That’s why the final awakening on the journey of finding your way back to God is the *awakening to life*. When we truly awaken to the new life God offers at home with him, we see the possibilities for our future completely differently. We exclaim, “Now *this* is living!” but we realize that “living” means something different now. It means living a life that is better, bigger, and more meaningful than ever before.

Your new, lifelong walk with Jesus is a journey you never need travel alone. You never need to live apart from your heavenly Father again. If you find yourself drifting into complacency, looking for substitutes, thinking you have all the answers you need for yourself . . . you know what to do.

Come back to the life that is really living! You know the way, and home is where you always belong.

Be prepared in the years ahead for a kind of life that’s different from anything you thought possible when you made a U-turn on the road that day and asked the Father for help. The awakening to life brings with it unexpected influence and opportunities. How can this be? It’s because Christ is alive in you, and that changes just about everything. Now you can bring hope where there has been discouragement. Now you can show prisoners the way to freedom. Now you can be light in the darkness.

And *that* is living!

Find your place in the community of other grateful sons and daughters of the Father. Connect, learn, and work alongside them to make a difference for good in marriages, homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Let’s keep helping others find their way back to God. That’s where the real celebration is waiting.

*As you look back on this five-day devotional, what “awakening” do you resonate with most? What next step do you believe God is calling you to?*

### Addicted To Busy: Recovery For The Rushed Soul

New series.

* [1 John 2:16](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1934-addicted-to-busy-recovery-for-the-rushed-soul/subscription/438798315/day/1/segment/1)
* [1 Peter 3:4](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1934-addicted-to-busy-recovery-for-the-rushed-soul/subscription/438798315/day/1/segment/2)

### Impression Management

* “Busyness serves as a kind of existential reassurance, a hedge against emptiness,” one author (Tim Kreider) wrote. “Obviously your life cannot possibly be silly or trivial or meaningless if you are so busy, completely booked, in demand every hour of the day.”
* We buy more house than we can afford, we elevate vacation stories to epic proportions, we proudly tout our stuffed-full schedules, and we refuse to let others see us rest. Oh, the things we do in the name of impression management. We all want to be important. We all want our little lives to count. And yet we’re going about it in entirely the wrong way. All the posing and posturing and performing may help you hit the quota, win the award, and be the guy who saves the day. But in terms of encouraging the stuff of righteousness? It won’t even get you to step one.
* Jesus said that all our boasting may get us some things, but it won’t get us the one thing we truly seek, which is the soul-filling love of our Father, the sense that we’re acceptable as we are. “Everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world” (1 John 2:16 NIV).
* In the gospel of Matthew, we are told not to be like the hypocrites, who love to pray to be seen by people, who love to flaunt their spirituality and their superiority, who love to devote themselves to trying to impress. No, instead, Jesus says we are to work on the inner self, spending our energies developing things such as a gentle spirit, which, according to 1 Peter 3:4, is “of great worth in God’s sight” (NIV).
* A gentle spirit—something we humans can’t cultivate on the go.
* Along the way, my family and I sort of institutionalized the practice of ditching impression management and working toward a quiet, gentle spirit instead. Once a week, we’d hole away for an entire day with nothing on the agenda and nobody to impress.

Week 4th

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1934-addicted-to-busy-recovery-for-the-rushed-soul/subscription/438798315/day/2/segment/0)
* [Matthew 11:28](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1934-addicted-to-busy-recovery-for-the-rushed-soul/subscription/438798315/day/2/segment/1)
* Devotional

### Distractions

* I’ll admit that all of my electronic gear is very, very cool. And it truly is. But here’s what I’m learning is not so cool: becoming more fascinated with my stuff than with God.
* This is a problem not because I say so, but because God does in Matthew 11:28.
* When God said that rest is found in him, he means that rest is found in him. Translation: real rest is found nowhere else. Recently I heard a pastor in Maryland talking about the difference between amusement and rest. We tend to do one better than the other, and the one we do well is not rest. Case in point: last year my family and I went to Disney World for a full week, and I came back more exhausted than before I left. And I was really tired when we took off. I may have escaped the stressors of daily life, but had I even rested at all? This is what God is hinting at here, that restfulness is tethered to the state of our souls.
* We acknowledge that a healthy heart rhythm is critical for maintaining good health. A steady heartbeat is kind of necessary, right? What we are slower to admit is that our souls require rhythm too. “All of us are aware that a healthy heart and regular daily and yearly rhythms are essential for health,” wrote Dr. Christine Sine. “We also know that if our heartbeat is irregular then we need to see a physician for a checkup. Most of us, however, are unaware of the spiritual rhythms that are just as crucial to our health and well-being. Since our lives are increasingly disconnected from the rhythms of God’s world, we do not hear the underlying whisper of God’s heartbeat that is meant to sustain us, and we are unaware of the symptoms that should alert us to our growing ill health”.
* So when God says to us, “Come to me, and I will give you rest,” we don’t respond.
* God tries again: “Lay your burdens down, children. Walk with me, and your walk will be burden-free.” Again, we don’t respond.
* God says, “I want you to be fascinated not with trinkets, but with me.” Still no response.
* Ever patient and ever persistent, God goes for it a fourth time: “Slow down. Look up. Linger here with me.”
* We think we hear something. Wait. Was that the voice of God? We glance skyward and say, “Huh? God? Was that you? What’s ‘linger’?”
* But before he has a chance to reply, we hear subtle dings from our phones—alerting us to new text messages. Then we can’t help but move our thumbs across our phones. Score one for the Enemy of our souls.
* Devotional

### The Jesus Pace is Rhythmic

* We see Jesus withdrawing in order to work through tragic news, such as when he learns that his friend John the Baptist has died. He withdraws to gain insight on important decisions, such as which men to call to follow him. He withdraws so that he simply can pray. He withdraws to enjoy time with his closest companions. He withdraws as a means of teaching his disciples the unparalleled value of rest. He doesn’t wait until his mission is accomplished. He doesn’t wait until someone sanctions a few days off for him. He doesn’t’ even wait for an official “Sabbath” to dawn. When he senses it’s time to withdraw, he just goes.
* “Jesus obeyed a deeper rhythm,” wrote Wayne Muller. Absolutely, he does just that: engage, engage, engage, withdraw… engage, engage, engage, withdraw.
* Rhythmic—that’s how Jesus lived.
* It’s how we’re invited to live too.
* We’re invited to work hard and retreat frequently and trust that whatever falls through the cracks while we’re retreating will get tackled during our next working-hard time. The universe really will keep spinning, as I’ve promised you. Even in our absence, it goes around.
* I myself am not entirely convinced this is true, you understand. You’d pick up on this if you observed me for a few days. But credible people I know say it is so, including Senator Joe Lieberman, a guy pegged as unlikely to write a book on sacred rest. And yet he did. In it, he wrote, “None of us needs to work every day of the week. A lot of people think they are perpetually indispensable—to their families, to their co-workers, maybe even to the world. If I don’t go to work, my career will be ruined. If I don’t go shopping, my family will starve. If I don’t go to the gym, my body will atrophy.”
* There’s that ugly fear again, that if we don’t keep all the plates spinning, they might just crash to the floor. And, oh, the mess that would make. Secretly we’re afraid that if we don’t keep doing what we’ve always done, all of life will fall apart. We all think this is true.
* In our better, brighter moments, we see that of course this is not the case. We see that we are not the sum of our spinning plates. We see that we desperately need to rest.

APRIL 2020

**WHY EASTER.**

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/1/segment/0)
* [John 6:35](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/1/segment/1)
* **Why do we need Jesus?**
* You and I were created to live in a relationship with God. Until we find that relationship, there will always be something missing in our lives. As a result, we are often aware of a gap. One rock singer described it by saying: ‘I’ve got an emptiness deep inside.’
* A woman, in a letter to me, wrote of a ‘deep deep void.’ Another young girl spoke of ‘a chunk missing in her soul.’
* People try to fill this emptiness in various ways. Some try to close the gap with money, but that does not satisfy. Aristotle Onassis, who was one of the richest men in the world, said at the end of his life: ‘Millions do not always add up to what a man needs out of life.’
* Others try drugs or excess alcohol or sexual promiscuity. One girl said to me, ‘These things provide instant gratification but they leave you feeling hollow afterwards.’ Still others try hard work, music, sport or seek success. There may not be anything wrong with these in themselves, but they do not satisfy that hunger deep inside every human being.
* Even the closest human relationships, wonderful though they are, do not in themselves satisfy this ‘emptiness deep inside.’ Nothing will fill this gap except the relationship with God for which we were made.
* According to the New Testament, the reason for this emptiness is that men and woman have turned their backs on God.
* Jesus said, ‘I am the bread of life’ (John 6:35). He is the only one who can satisfy our deepest hunger because he is the one who makes it possible for our relationship with God to be restored.
* **a) He satisfies our hunger for meaning and purpose in life**
* Only in a relationship with our Creator do we find the true meaning and purpose of our lives.
* **b) He satisfies our hunger for life beyond death**
* Most people do not want to die. We long to survive beyond death. Only in Jesus Christ do we find eternal life.
* **c) He satisfies our hunger for forgiveness**
* If we are honest, we would have to admit that we all do things that we know are wrong. By his death on the cross, Jesus made it possible for us to be forgiven and brought back into a relationship with God.

Day 2

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/2/segment/0)
* [Mark 10:45](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/2/segment/1)
* [Galatians 2:20](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/2/segment/2)
* **Why did he come, and why did he die?**
* Jesus is the only man who has ever chosen to be born, and he is one of the few who has chosen to die. He said that the entire reason for his coming was to die for us. He came ‘to give his life as a ransom for many’ (Mark 10:45).
* Jesus said he died ‘for’ us. The word ‘for’ means ‘instead of.’ He did it because he loved us and did not want us to have to pay the penalty for all the things that we had done wrong. On the cross, he was effectively saying, ‘I will take all those things on myself.’ He did it for you, and he did it for me. If you or I had been the only person in the world, he would have done it for us. St. Paul wrote of ‘the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me’ (Galatians 2:20). It was out of love for us that he gave his life as a ransom.
* The word ‘ransom’ comes from the slave market. A kind person might buy a slave and set him free—but first the ransom price had to be paid. Jesus paid, by his blood on the cross, the ransom price to set us free.

.week 2nd

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/3/segment/0)
* [Romans 6:23](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/3/segment/1)
* [John 8:34](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/3/segment/2)
* [John 8:36](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/3/segment/3)
* [Hebrews 2:14-15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/3/segment/4)
* Devotional
* **Freedom from what?**

* Jesus paid, by his blood on the cross, the ransom price to set us free.

* **Freedom from guilt**

* Whether we feel guilty or not, we are all guilty before God because of the many times we have broken his laws in thought, word and deed. Just as when someone commits a crime there is a penalty to be paid, in the same way there is a penalty for breaking God’s law. ‘The wages of sin is death’ (Romans 6:23).

* The result of the things we do wrong is spiritual death—being cut off from God eternally. We all deserve to suffer that penalty. On the cross, Jesus took the penalty in our place so that we could be totally forgiven and our guilt could be taken away.

* **Freedom from addiction**
* Jesus said that ‘everyone who sins is a slave to sin’ (John 8:34). Jesus died to set us free from that slavery. On the cross, the power of this addiction was broken. Although we may still fall from time to time, the power of this addiction is broken when Jesus sets us free.

* **Freedom from fear**
* Jesus came so that ‘by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death’ (Hebrews 2:14-15). We need no longer fear death.

* Death is not the end for those whom Jesus has set free. Rather it is the gateway to heaven, where we will be free from even the presence of sin. When Jesus set us free from the fear of death, he also set us free from all other fears.
* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/5/segment/0)
* [John 3:16](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/14896-why-easter/subscription/438799415/day/5/segment/1)

Devotional

**What do we have to do?**

The New Testament makes it clear that we have to do something to accept the gift that God offers. This is an act of faith. John writes that ‘God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life’ (John 3:16).

Believing involves an act of faith, based on all that we know about Jesus. It is not blind faith. It is putting our trust in a Person. In some ways, it is like the step of faith taken by a bride or a bridegroom when they say, ‘I will’ on their wedding day.

The way people take this step of faith varies enormously, but I want to describe one way in which you can take this step of faith right now. It can be summarised by three very simple words:

**‘Sorry’**

You have to ask God to forgive you for all the things you have done wrong and turn from everything which you know is wrong in your life. This is what the Bible means by ‘repentance.

**‘Thank you’**

We believe that Jesus died for us on the cross. You need to thank him for dying for you and for the offer of his free gift of forgiveness, freedom and his Spirit.

**‘Please’**

God never forces his way into our lives. You need to accept his gift and invite him to come and live within you by his Spirit.

If you would like to have a relationship with God and you are ready to say these three things, then here is a very simple prayer which you can pray and which will be the start of that relationship:

*Lord Jesus Christ,*

*I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life*(take a few moments to ask his forgiveness for anything particular that is on your conscience). *Please forgive me. I now turn from everything which I know is wrong.*

*Thank you that you died on the cross for me so that I could be forgiven and set free.*

*Thank you that you offer me forgiveness and the gift of your Spirit. I now receive that gift.*

*Please come into my life by your Holy Spirit to be with me forever.*

*Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

**Week 3rd**

**Getting It Right With Others**

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/1/segment/0)
* [Hebrews 12:15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/1/segment/1)
* [Colossians 4:6](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/1/segment/2)
* [Ecclesiastes 7:9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/1/segment/3)

Devotional

**What is conflict?**  
Have you ever noticed that your greatest pain and disappointments came as a result of a broken relationship?

When something isn’t right between you and someone else, we call that ***conflict.***

You know how it goes. It’s like that time you had a horrible fight with your parents, or when your friend spread rumors about you at school. Or maybe, for you, it was when your girlfriend or boyfriend dumped you over Snapchat.

It’s not hard to figure out what conflict is because we experience it every day. Sorry to break it to you, but it’s also unavoidable. Why? Because we’re human, and humans mess up! None of us are perfect, and when imperfect people try to do things, conflict can easily come up.

But conflict isn’t always a bad thing. In fact, healthy conflict can lead to healthy relationships. But, when we don’t deal with conflict in a healthy way, it’s like a poison. It’ll slowly seep into our relationships, infecting everything and everyone we interact with. In the Bible, the writer of Hebrews knew this well. That’s why Hebrews 12:15 NLT says this:  *… Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.*

It’s important for us to work through conflict, because **the quality of our lives is only as good as the quality of our relationships.**

So, how do we work through conflict in a way that honors God? Over the next four days, we’ll learn why we fear conflict, how conflict affects our relationship with God, and how to deal with conflict in a healthy way. Our prayer is that you’ll stop fearing conflict and start dealing with it so that you can build better, stronger relationships.

Devotional

Day 2

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/2/segment/0)
* [Philippians 2:4](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/2/segment/1)
* [James 1:19-21](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/2/segment/2)
* [2 Timothy 1:7](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/2/segment/3)
* [James 1:5](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/2/segment/4)

**Why do we fear conflict?**

As we learned yesterday, conflict is unavoidable. So, why are we so afraid of it? Here are a few reasons we tend to fear conflict:

**1. It makes us uncomfortable.**Ultimately, conflict just isn’t fun. When we sense that something isn’t right, we know we need to do something about it, but sometimes we try to hide our feelings to avoid conflict.

**2. It makes us feel out of control.**When we experience conflict, we feel like we’re no longer in control of our lives. It’s the same reason we prefer to send a text instead of talking on the phone—we like to be in control of the conversation and the situation.

**3. We’re not obeying God.** Sometimes we fear conflict because we’re not doing what God wants us to do. When we trust God, we know that He wants our relationships to be in the right place. When we choose to avoid conflict and allow it to poison us, we’re hurting relationships that God wants us to make right.

Now that we know why we fear conflict, we can start to overcome it. God is bigger than your fears, and fear is not from God. So, when you’re worried about conflict, pray about it. Ask God to give you wisdom and to give you the right words to heal that broken relationship. Tomorrow, we’ll find out how conflict can affect our relationship with God.

Week 4th

Day 3 .

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/3/segment/0)
* [Matthew 5:23-24](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/3/segment/1)
* [Colossians 3:13](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/3/segment/2)
* [Matthew 5:9](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/3/segment/3)

Devotional

**How does conflict affect our relationship with God?**

When someone messes with your best friend, it’s hard for you to like that person, isn’t it? That’s the way God is with us—*His kids*. You can’t be right with God if you’re hurting one of His kids.

Your relationships with people and your relationship with God are directly connected. Basically, before making things right with God, we need to make things right with others.

In the Old Testament, people connected with God by offering gifts at the altar. People would travel for *days*to present their offering. By time they got there, they were likely exhausted.

With that context in mind, Jesus said in Matthew 5 that if you’re offering a gift at the altar and remember someone has something against you, you should go and fix that relationship first.

Did you catch that? Even if they had been traveling for days, they *still*had to go back and resolve conflict with the person that had something against them, which would have made their entire journey a waste of time.

That might seem a bit extreme, but Jesus wasn’t playing around. He knew something that we often forget: **You can’t be right with God if you’re wrong with others.**

Now we know what a big deal conflict is to God. Tomorrow, we’ll talk about what healthy, God-honoring conflict looks like.

Day 4

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/4/segment/0)
* [Matthew 18:15](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/4/segment/1)
* [Ephesians 4:25-32](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/4/segment/2)
* [Proverbs 11:13](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/4/segment/3)
* [Proverbs 15:1](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/9128-getting-it-right-with-others/subscription/438804980/day/4/segment/4)

Devotional

**What does healthy conflict look like?**

An oxymoron is when seemingly contradictory words appear together. Like jumbo shrimp. Pretty ugly. Virtual reality. Random order.

Get the idea?

At first glance, *healthy conflict*might seem like an oxymoron too. However, when we look at what the Bible says, *healthy conflict*is exactly what God had in mind.

In Matthew 18:15, Jesus said that if a brother or sister sins against you, you should go directly to that person and point at their fault—just the two of you.

Woah. Okay, Jesus.

This is the completely opposite of what we want to do when someone offends us.

And you know what we *want*to do? We either want to **run or rant.**When someone makes us mad, we either want to run away and avoid the problem, or we want to rant about that person to everyone *but*that person.

Jesus proposed a different way—a *better*way—which involves us confronting the situation at the root of the problem.

So, how do you confront conflict? Here are three ways:

**1.)** **Go immediately.**Ephesians 4:26 says to not let the sun go down while we’re angry. Confront the conflict as soon as possible.

**2.)** **Go directly.**When you and a friend have conflict, it’s tempting to go to everyone but that friend! But Proverbs 11:13 says that a gossip betrays a confidence. God dislikes gossip and spreading rumors.

**3.)** **Go humbly.** It may not have occurred to you, but you might *not*be in the clear. Be willing to admit that you were wrong, and be humble. Humility looks good on everyone. Proverbs 15:1 says that a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

So, how do we deal with conflict in a healthy way? We go. We resolve the conflict immediately, directly, and humbly. And when we do that, it honors God and starts healing our hearts.

**MAY 2020**

**The Proverbial God.**

**Week 1st**

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/1/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:10](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/1/segment/1)
* SAY WHAT?  
    
  What you’re actually worth is more valuable than anything on the earth, and that’s priceless.  
    
  BREAKDOWN: My kids love bread, and although I hate bread, I love it, too. I especially hate bread when they place it on the table at restaurants. I usually give the waiter or waitress the evil eye as I say to myself, “Now you know you’re wrong for putting that delicious, buttery, hot bread on my table”. As tempting and delicious as that bread is, it has absolutely no nutritional value. So, I stopped allowing the servers to put it on the table altogether. “For her worth is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10).  
    
  How is this possible, and what makes this Proverbial Girl so valuable? What makes her valuable is not what’s on the outside, but everything she responsibly deposits on the inside, like personal quiet time with the Father, healthy friendships, good mentors and even healthy diets and exercise.  
    
  A Proverbial Girl must be willing to stop allowing things of no value to be placed on her table of life and be willing to invest quality “ingredients” on the inside. A Proverbial Girl also takes proper care of herself because she knows that her body, soul and mind are the temple of God.  
    
  QUALITY INGREDIENTS + PROPER CARE= GREAT WORTH AND VALUE. Are you investing quality ingredients and taking proper care in your life? All of these things play a role in producing an excellent and valuable you.  
    
  HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
  Thank you for being my example of greatness. All that you are is excellent. Show me how to be a person of excellence and great value. Thank you for the strength to deposit good things in my life, and even greater strength to walk away from things that harm my worth. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
    
  LIVE IT OUT: Take a moment to write down 5 things that make you valuable and 5 things that can destroy your worth. Make a conscience effort to be more involved in the things that make you valuable and begin to pull away from the things that can destroy your value.
* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/2/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:10](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/2/segment/1)
* [Galatians 5:22-23](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/2/segment/2)
* SAY WHAT?  
    
  Your results are inaccurate if you measure yourself with the wrong thing.  
    
  BREAKDOWN: She was my cousin and she was beautiful. Not only was she beautiful, but she had everything she wanted and everything that I wanted, too. I remember going to her house to play. Her room was every girl’s dream: pink and white with a beautiful canopy bed in the middle, and a Barbie dollhouse almost big as my own! While I was happy to play with her, I secretly measured my value and worth to her beauty and the things she had.  
    
  Against what do you measure your worth? When determining who’s taller, we use a ruler. When deciding the right amount of liquid in a container, we use a measuring cup. When looking to see how much weight we gain or lose, we use a scale. How silly would it be to measure your weight with a tablespoon, a glass of water with a ruler or salt on a scale? Pretty silly, huh?  
    
  “For her price is far above rubies.” Her price is known because her worth has been measured properly, using the correct system. We can never get the true worth or value of anything when we measure its value using the wrong measuring system.  
    
  A Proverbial Girl never measures her worth by outward people or things. Measuring ourselves by other things and people causes low self-esteem and leaves us feeling insecure. A Proverbial Girl knows her true value can only be determined when she measures it by the great potential the Father has already placed on the inside of her.  
    
  HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
  Thank you for creating me in your likeness. I understand that because I was created in your likeness I am priceless. Teach me how not to measure myself against my friends, but instead appreciate my friends’, and my own, worth. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
    
  LIVE IT OUT: Read Galatians 5:22-23. Take a moment to measure where you are in life by the Fruit of the Spirit. Circle the characteristics you now have and underline the ones you need to work on.

Week 2nd

Day 3 of 7 • On Track!

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/3/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:11](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/3/segment/1)

Can God Trust Me?  
  
BREAKDOWN: Who’s on your team? Our life is like a team and we are the team captain. We have the opportunity to manage our team, and that includes the people you encounter every day–your parents, siblings, friends, classmates, and yes, even your teachers. God blesses us with different types of relationships that He trusts us to handle well. Even when people are hurtful or annoying, like little brothers or sisters, He expects us to handle them with love and with kindness.  
  
Now ask yourself this question, “Am I helping or hurting my team?” It’s easy to help the team when you feel appreciated and valued, but that task can be a bit more challenging when the team hurts us. Jesus is such a great example. God trusted Him with a great assignment, and Christ showed the greatest love to people who didn’t love Him back. He was able to do this because He trusted God.  
  
“Her husband can trust her.” Trust is the key to this wise proverb. The way you respond to the world around you shows how you can be trusted in it and with the people in it. God can trust her because He knows she can trust Him to protect her in every situation, even painful relationships.  
  
A Proverbial Girl can be trusted by God to properly manage relationships that He gives her. She ensures that everyone feels appreciated and valued, just as God the Father makes us feel. And as God can trust you with the relationships you have, He will trust to give you more relationships to both manage well and cherish forever.  
  
HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
I want to be someone you can trust, so teach me to trust that you will not put me in any relationship that won’t ultimately help me to grow.  
  
Show me how to identify the people you want in my life and how to manage them properly, even when I feel mismanaged. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
  
LIVE IT OUT:  
What relationship in your life challenges you the most? How might that challenge help you to grow in love?

Day 4 of 7 • On Track!

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/4/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:12](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/4/segment/1)

he will be a 5-star friend at all times.  
  
BREAKDOWN: Imagine booking a night in a fancy hotel. You are so excited. You take in all it’s beauty as the clerk at the front desk checks you in. You can’t wait to get into your own private room, but when you do arrive you are greeted with chaos. The room doesn’t appear to have been cleaned, the bathroom floor is sticky and the shower looks like it’s been used by everyone else in the hotel. You’re confused because the hotel has received a 5-star rating, but what you are experiencing is a 2-star disaster!  
  
We often become friends in the same manner when we “check-in” to what we believe will be the perfect friendship, only for it to end up being a complete nightmare. She lied on you. She betrayed you. She let you down. Let’s face it, none of us have been the perfect friend, and the only friendship whose quality you can guarantee is your own.  
  
John 15:15 tells us that Jesus calls us friend. Imagine that! As often as we are unreliable, unpredictable and sometimes dishonest with Him, He still calls us friend. He calls us friend because of His loyalty to us, not necessarily ours to Him. He loves us and love makes adjustments for other people’s shortcomings.  
  
“She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.” It’s interesting how the proverb refers to her loyalty not his. Seems a bit unfair, huh? Being a 5-star friend does not rest on the person you are on the outside, but who you are inside. A Proverbial Girl is a good friend who knows her friends’ strengths and weaknesses. When she sees her friend has challenges with being honest, loyal or reliable, she is able to draw limits based on what her friend is able to handle because she’s a 5-star friend.  
  
HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
It’s not easy being a good friend to someone who is not a good friend to you. Help me to draw healthy boundaries in relationships. Teach me where to give more and when to step back. Remind me to pray for my friend and to love them the way you love me, unconditionally. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
  
LIVE IT OUT:  
Identify a friend who is a little rough around the edges. Ask her how you can pray for her, and commit to doing it.

Week 3rd

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/5/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:13](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/5/segment/1)

She goes the distance to be Soft and Beautiful.  
  
BREAKDOWN: I’ve always admired my friend Myshel. Not only is she a beautiful woman from Ghana, but she’s always so soft in her response to people. I would watch her from afar as she provided the softest responses in the most difficult situations. I was totally the opposite. My responses were nothing short of harsh, direct and defensive, and my cold and damaged heart only allowed the world around me to experience stiffness and pain. Somehow, Myshel had developed a gentle heart that everyone who encountered her had the opportunity to experience.  
  
One day, I mustered the nerve to ask what her secret was to being so soft and beautiful. Her response would both convict, as well as challenge me. She revealed that every morning before the world around her rises, she would rise to spend time with the Father. She would talk to God, pouring her heart out to Him and He would refill it with His love. “She seeketh wool and flax.” Anything worth having in life is worth seeking. While some things are easy to come by, other things require a little more time and effort to obtain. How bad do you want the best out of you? Are you willing to put in the time and effort to find it, to dig deep for it or to search for it?  
  
The Proverbs woman sought wool and flax. Wool is a soft textile fabric and flax is a beautiful flower. Both wool and flax are also expensive. Myshel possessed something I desired, but I had to be willing to seek and pay the cost of sometimes being uncomfortable to have. A Proverbial Girl is willing to seek out and pay the cost to be soft and beautiful towards the world around her because she knows it’s well worth it.  
  
HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
It is my desire to be both softer and beautiful inside and out. Help me to be softer in my tone and responses to my friends and family. Let my life reflect how beautiful and soft you are. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
  
LIVE IT OUT:  
Identify where your response has not been the softest. Today, practice thinking before responding. Make it your goal to respond in a soft and beautiful manner regardless of the situation.

4th week.

Day 6

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/6/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:12-13](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/6/segment/1)

A Proverbial Girl is consistent and refuses to give up.  
  
BREAKDOWN: One of my greatest challenges was starting something and not finishing it. Every year was going to be “THE YEAR” of me getting in shape and losing weight, eating NO MORE meat, or playing my guitar for 30 minutes every day. We all mean well when we first start out, but the real challenge comes when we have to be consistent in maintaining what we started. I started learning to play the guitar after a mentor encouraged me to do so. He suggested that it would really add to my singing and writing, all while making me a more well-rounded artist. My goal was to play fluently in one year, and I knew the only way to reach that goal was to be consistent.  
  
The key to being consistent is planning ahead, counting up the cost (what am I getting myself into and what will I have to be willing to sacrifice), being determined and having a great support system to help you along the way. Soon, even my hurting fingertips couldn’t keep me from reaching my goal. Almost one year later I had met my goal, and I was able to play my guitar (which I named “Ella”) at a wedding.  
  
“She worketh willingly with her hands.” There are two things a Proverbial Girl is not afraid to do: work hard and be consistent. When you have a goal and you believe in that goal, your actions to diligently work toward it will always bring you success. The Proverbial Girl also knows how important it is to surround herself with encouraging people who love and want to see her succeed in life. Because of this, I have been a successful vegetarian for over a year now, and I have played my guitar occasionally at different public places.  
  
Always remember, a Proverbial Girl is up for the challenge to be consistent in every part of her life because consistency helps her meet her goals.  
  
HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
I desire to be successful in life and I know that takes willingness and consistency. I thank you that all good works start and end with you. Thank you for starting this great work of ideas in me. Help me to do my part in being disciplined and trust you to do what only you can do. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
  
LIVE IT OUT:  
So, let’s get real! What are you procrastinating to do? Make a new deadline. Divide the work by the number of days you have before your deadline. Ask a reliable friend to check on your process. Now get to work! Success is waiting.

Day 7 of 7 • On Track!

* [Devotional](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/7/segment/0)
* [Proverbs 31:14](https://my.bible.com/users/bisola_oak/reading-plans/1390-proverbial-girl-wisdom-values-and-being-fabulous/subscription/438812747/day/7/segment/1)
* SAY WHAT?  
    
  She brings life to others.  
    
    
    
  BREAKDOWN: Have you ever known someone that drains everything from you? They complain all the time and are always negative. They even looked draining! I called them “SUCKERS.”  
    
  They suck the life out of life! You feel bad to admit it, but you hate to see them coming. There’s nothing worse than having a great day only to have one person come around to single-handily make it become a nightmare.  
    
  I use to be a “sucker.” I could never see the good in anything because I always saw the negative first. I had not learned how to bring life because I had not fully accepted that Christ had given me life, and with His life, I no longer needed to be and feel lifeless.  
    
  A Proverbial Girl brings life to everyone around her because she knows she possesses life inside. You may be having the worst day ever, but she has the ability to make your day a whole lot brighter.  
    
  You may feel like there’s no reason to smile, but she gives you many reasons. “She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.” A merchant ship receives goods and products from far places and brings them in reach of those who need them. The Proverbial Girl is compared to a merchant ship that brings food, or the Bread of Life, from a distance. As a Proverbial Girl you not only bring life to others from afar, but you also possess life for yourself.  
    
  I eventually learned how to embrace life, and I realized that I was draining and I didn’t want to be that way anymore. I surrounded myself with people that would challenge my lifeless thinking and give me a reason to live. Embrace the life that is in you and be willing to be the Proverbial Girl who will deliver that same empowering life to others.  
    
  HI GOD, IT’S ME!  
  Thank you for empowering me to carry life within myself and bring life to others. Help me to resist the urge to complain and bring darkness to the life of others. I want to represent life to everyone I meet, and let everyone who leaves my presence leave with more LIFE and more of you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.  
    
  LIVE IT OUT:  
  List how many great things you can spot in your day today. Post them on your social media pages and hashtag them #ThankfulForLife.