

Weekly Theme:
Godliness— The
Calling of
Submission

Daily Bible Reading:
Psalm 95

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

Memory Verse:
1 Timothy 4:8
*for bodily discipline
is only of little profit,
but godliness is profitable
for all things,
since it holds promise
for the present
life and also for the
life to come*

Read through the
Bible this Year
Matt 21:1-22
Ex 27, 28

Monday, February 1

The position of President of the United States is an amazing role. It is said that he has a red phone capable of contacting any political person in the world. On Air Force One it is said he can actually contact anyone in the world listed or unlisted. Have you ever witnessed the President of the United States walk in a room either on TV or in person? The doors open and hush comes over the crowd. People instantly stand to their feet with great respect and awe. There is a response to greatness and power despite your feelings of the person. I tried this the other day at my home being the spiritual leader of the house. I jingled the keys even before opening up the door to prepare my family for my entrance. They must not have heard the keys so I hollered, "I'm home!" and no one responded. My 6 year old was playing in her room. My wife was on the computer and our other daughter was staring at the TV. Even the cat ignored me, so I yelled out, "I've got presents." Instantly I felt little arms grab my legs!

Psalm 95 is rich with information regarding prayer and worship. The psalmist places particular emphasis on God as the great King (v. 3). The Psalm has three movements and each reflecting a mood of worship: celebration, contemplative, and obedience. We see exactly what God desires of us.

Many times people will complain that they don't hear the voice of God, however when they feel guilt or conviction in their hearts they brush it off or ignore it. Verse 8 reminds us to not harden our hearts when we hear God speak. It is in that instance which a boundary has been broken or removed to fulfill our selfish desires. This tells me that when I hear what He has to say I am not always going to like it, but He calls out in anticipation of a response back. We find a spiritual and physical peace in obedience as we walk daily in God's grace. Whenever I choose to ignore His voice and harden my heart, there is a lack of submission. The more I have continual conversation of prayer with God the more I understand His leading in my life.

Review vv. 3-5 and revel in His majesty.
If you have a small God, you'll have small faith; if you have a great God, you'll have a great faith. Respond to Greatness!

Eric Miracle

Weekly Theme:
Godliness— The
Calling of
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Daily Bible Reading:
Habakkuk 2:20-3:19

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

Memory Verse:
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Read through the
Bible this Year
Matt 21:23-46
Ex 29-30

Tuesday, February 2

If anyone had told me that I would be writing devotions for a church wide unification endeavor I would not have believed them. But here I am again writing as God moves me. And the catch phrase here is that it is God moving me. He is my motivator. Honestly when the request for these devotions first came out in an e-mail I thought to ask my husband to do it. I thought “oh he’s the creative thinker and writer in our family”. But in my spirit I knew immediately that God didn’t want me to ask my husband. God was asking me to step out on that limb of submissive faith. So I submitted. I sent a responding e-mail that I would participate. I had no idea what I would write about but God knew. God’s work is at hand here. He gives me the first part of the devotion before He gives me the scripture reference. That’s how I know it’s God’s handiwork and not mine. You know how they say “give credit where credit is due”? Well these words are to God’s credit. As we read in Habakkuk today we are reminded of God’s majesty. The words scripted here are Habakkuk’s prayer of faith. They conjure up visions worth meditating on. It is an eloquent display of worshipful attitude. A response to the Sovereignty of God. A rejoicing and resting on God’s sufficiency. Even in the midst of troubles and the loss of worldly possessions the prophet can rejoice in the triumph of God. I love the last verse and its descriptiveness. I too can say God is enabling me to go on the heights as I submit to Him. When God asked me to submit to Him through writing I didn’t know that He would have me soaring.

What invitation of submission is on your plate?
What new heights has your submission to God
brought you to?

Kim Waters

Weekly Theme:
Godliness— The
Calling of
Submission

Daily Bible Reading:
Ephesians 5:15-21

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

Memory Verse:
1 Timothy 4:8
*for bodily discipline
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Read through the
Bible this Year
Matt 22:1-22
Ex 31,32,33

Wednesday, February 3

In today's Scripture Paul is encouraging his converts to live wise. The time in which they were living was filled with evil and he was encouraging them to rescue their time from the evil uses of the world. In order to accomplish this task he reminded them to make the most of their time by knowing the will of the Lord.

What is the will of the Lord for your life today?

Please understand that God has a perfect plan for your life today and has given you the time to accomplish it. Time is the commodity of life that everyone has the same amount of. It matters not if you are a new born baby or the president of the United States you have twenty four hours in a day. If you have a time shortage in life or are not an effective manager of time there are numerous classes and resources available to teach you how to maximize and manage your time.

One of the 2010 Football Bowl Series Championship participants this year had time scare during the season. Texas was able to play in the championship because on the next to last play of their final game the quarterback saved one second on the clock. One second allowed Texas to kick a field goal, win the game and play for a national title worth millions of dollars.

In today's society there are many things that we spend time on that in no way could be considered evil when looked at as a single event. However, today's Scripture reminds us to not look at an event by itself but a part of the day given to you by God. When looking at something in this light, our innocent event may become evil because it takes up the second needed to finish doing God's will for the day. Obeying and completing the will of God is far greater than any championship, promotion or moment of fun.

Is your time designated for the will of God or for you today?

Dennis Dean

Weekly Theme:
Godliness– The
Calling of
Submission

Daily Bible Reading:
Romans 6:1-14

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

Memory Verse:
1 Timothy 4:8
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**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 22:23-46
Ex 34,35

Thursday, February 4

Do you remember when you were baptized? For me it was in 1968 in a small Baptist church in Satellite Beach, Florida. I remember my pastor lowering me into the water and coming back up soaking wet! The joy I had that night after church was amazing. I literally felt like I was a brand new person. The feeling of obedience to Jesus Christ was strong in my soul. Years later I have the privilege of baptizing many new believers here at Olive. The one constant thought that runs through my mind about baptism is it's a humbling act that produces joy in the Christian and glorifies our heavenly Father.

One of the symbols of baptism, lowering the person into the water, portrays the Christian dying to sin. This attitude needs to be practically lived out in the Christian's life on a daily basis. We must constantly think of ourselves as dead to sin because we are! Is there anyone who knows your weaknesses better than you? Maybe a practical solution to dying to self is intentionally avoiding certain "hot buttons" in your life that definitely cause distractions and will derail your obedience in Christ. In other words, avoid activities and attitudes that will cause you to fall into temptation.

For example, let's pretend that you are old enough to drive and you struggle with speeding. How can you combat this problem and be dead to sin, but alive in Christ? 1. Pray and ask the Lord for patience and to help you be aware of the speed limits everywhere you drive. 2. Hone your time management skills and slow down because speeding is one of the major contributors to accidents. (I learned that at the traffic class I took after my latest speeding ticket!) Thirdly, the next time you are pulled over by a police squad car, remember how awkward and embarrassing you feel to be in that situation!

If we are truly dead to sin, let's live like it by avoiding obvious temptations that could and would trip us up. Think about some areas that you need to avoid if you are truly going to be dead to sin and alive to Christ on a daily basis.

Jon DuBois

Weekly Theme:
Godliness– The
Calling of
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Friday, February 5

Worship = the love, adoration, and respect given to God by His children through their service. Worship is the outpouring of godliness in the Christian.

Daily Bible Reading:
1 Cor 11:23-34

Praises:

Did you know that we are supposed to worship God in such a way that points people to the Cross of Christ for salvation? In the weekly text of 1 Timothy 4, Paul encourages Timothy to continue in worship so that salvation is ensured for Timothy and those he leads in worship, by teaching and preaching.

Prayers:

Today, we read a text that shows us to worship God, our Father, corporately as a church family. His children uniting together to remember His shed blood and broken body on the Cross which allows us access to the throne room of God eternally. God gives Paul the prescription for the churches to follow when engaged in this act of worship.

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

The key verse is 26. We approach the table in a worthy manner in order to proclaim the Lord's coming. God calls us all to self-examination as an act of worship. He has never accepted human worship from dirty hands and impure hearts. God wants us to seek Him to search our hearts and reveal to us our shortcomings which inhibit the Gospel from going forth.

Memory Verse:
1 Timothy 4:8
for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.
Psalms 139:23-24

Taking the Lord's Supper is an act of corporate worship which demands our clear conscience and a clean witness. Joining hearts with your brothers and sisters in corporate worship week after week also demands the same self-examination.

Is there someone in your life who, if they saw you at worship services this week would turn and walk away because of the broken relationship that may be present? Are you confident that you are leading people to the Cross through your witness?

Read through the Bible this Year
Matt 23:1-22
Ex 36,37,38

Robert Gilliland

Weekly Theme:
Godliness— The
Calling of
Submission

Daily Bible Reading:
1 Cor 16:1-12

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 Timothy 4:7 - 16

Memory Verse:
1 Timothy 4:8
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Read through the
Bible this Year
Matt 23:23-39
Ex 39,40

Saturday, February 6

Just the other day my wife (Kelly) and I had to go to Wal-Mart to buy a gift for my nephew who was having a birthday party. The party was held on Sunday at 2:00pm. After church service was over, we raced to see what we could find, have it wrapped, and be on time. When we pulled into the parking lot and as soon as we got out of the car, a man walked up to us. He asked if we had any money for him to eat with. And with not much thought, I gave him money. A part of me wanted to help, yet a part of me wanted to hurry along and get to where I needed to go. And as we were walking through the toy aisles of Wal-Mart, Kelly asked me, "Why didn't we have lunch with that guy? Sonic is across the parking lot." Immediately, the Lord convicted me of having such selfish desires. I could have shared the gospel with him and have a little lunch. But, I just wanted the man to be gone so we can go about our business. But that was the thing, it's not about our business, it's about His business, God's business.

In I Corinthians 16:2 it says, "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem."

Here Paul is saying that it is very important to give to the church so that the church may allocate where needed. These were instructions concerning the offerings for poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem. And as you see, God wants us to give. God commands us to give. Give with a loving heart, not a reluctant heart. Look in chapter 16 verse 14: "Let all that you do be done with love." Paul writes this letter because just like the church in Corinth, we too have a problem with this call of submission, the call to give.

Is your heart reluctant?

Chris Reeser

Weekly Theme:
Godliness– The
Calling of
Submission

Sunday, February 7 1 Timothy 4:7-16

The Calling of Submission

SSCG Outline

Paul helps us understand submission through the:

1. Training in Godliness v. 7-9

Daily Bible Reading:

1 Timothy 4:1-16

SSCG

Praises:

2. Mission of Godliness v. 10 & 16

3. Ministry of Godliness v. 11-15

Prayers:

Pastor's Sermon Outline

Memory Verse:

1 Timothy 4:8

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**Read through the
Bible this Year**

Matt 24:1-28

Lev 1,2,3

Weekly Theme:
Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing

Daily Bible Reading:
Genesis 19

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
Hebrews 13:1-6

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 24:29-51
Lev 4,5

Monday, February 8

American Humorist Arnold Glasow once said, “Some folks make you feel at home.” Others make you wish you were.” Have you ever shown kindness to a complete stranger? Maybe it’s the homeless man standing on the street. It could even be the quiet person in a crowded room that looked out of place. Whomever it was you may well have entertained angels and not even known (Heb. 13:2).

In Genesis 19:1 we find Lot sitting at the gate as he encounters two angels. Most city officials and prominent citizens conducted the community’s affairs at the gate. In verse 2, Lot he invites them into his house. Lot’s invitation to the two angels was not just courtesy, but an effort to protect them from the perverse city. When the angels declined he was nervous, scared, and dumbfounded as to what would happen to them. Their preference to stay in the town square could not be permitted therefore Lot insisted strongly!

Throughout Scripture cities like Sodom and Gomorrah stand as a symbol of divine judgment upon their wickedness. What was once a well-watered, fertile region is today barren, full of tar pits, riddled with sulfur balls, and ash. There is much discussion as to where these cities are located. The list ranges from north, south, and southeast of the Dead Sea. The Bible indicates that there were more than just two cities destroyed that day.

Lot was tempted. One step toward sin demolished all boundaries previously set. God allowed him to choose to go up the hill towards Abraham and he said NO, and went down the hill towards Sodom. Sodom was enticing, but stank worse than rotten eggs. The cost of compromise can be great. Neil McClendon once said, “What one generation allows in moderation, the next allows in excess”. For every action there is a reaction. We reap what we sow. Lot’s compromise cost him his: testimony (19:9), part of his family (19:14), ability to respond (19:15-16), wife (19:26), and his legacy (19:36-38).

Have you ever been to someone’s home and you just did not want to leave? What did they do?

Who or what in this world tends to entice your heart away from God?

Eric Miracle

Weekly Theme:
Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing

Daily Bible Reading:
Genesis 45

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
Hebrews 13:1-6

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 25:1-30
Lev 6,7

Tuesday, February 9

Imagine being in the courts of one of the most powerful rulers in all the world and learning that he is the brother you sold into slavery many years ago. He is the one you betrayed and essentially murdered. I imagine my reaction would be one of fear, guilt, and searching for the nearest exit! However, as we read Genesis 45 we see a story of genuine brotherly love as Joseph confronts his brothers with tears, a kiss, and an invitation to a life of abundance in a time of great famine.

Bad things happened to Joseph; however, we witness Joseph honoring God during every affliction. God had a plan for his life. It was through his adversity that God was able to place Joseph in a position which allowed him to save Egypt, the world, and his family which would become the nation of Israel. Later in scripture, Joseph lovingly tells his brothers, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” (50:19-21) Joseph’s model of brotherly love is an example for us all.

About two thousand years after Joseph’s life on Earth, it’s interesting to see a similar pattern in another man’s life. Jesus Christ was sent to save Israel and all the world. Like Joseph, bad things happened to Jesus. He was arrested, falsely accused, mistreated, and sentenced to death on a cross. Even as Jesus was being nailed to the cross He was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) Christ “came that [we] may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10) Again the combination of affliction and brotherly kindness produced life preserving results. Jesus Christ was the ultimate example of brotherly love.

Can you think of a family member, friend, co-worker, or even an enemy that may benefit from an act of brotherly love? Whether in times of distress or peace, it has been demonstrated that brotherly love can be life changing.

Lonny Hughes

Weekly Theme: **Wednesday, February 10**

**Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing**

Daily Bible Reading:
Joshua 2

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
Hebrews 13:1-6

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 25:31-46
Lev 8,9,10

In the busyness of our routines, we often use common courtesies like “please” and “thank you” without ever thinking twice. There are other times when being kind takes a little more effort, maybe even a lot more. In fact, when someone unexpectedly performs a good deed for another, we often hear it called a “random act of kindness”, and the story may even make the evening news! While I don’t consider anything with God to be “random”, Rahab’s actions in the passage today were certainly tremendous acts of kindness! So how did she do it? How did Rahab get the courage to put her own safety at risk in order to save the lives of the spies?

The Bible calls it faith and states that it was faith *demonstrated through her kindness* that counted her as righteous. No doubt Rahab took a step of faith in trusting that by hiding these two Israelites, her life and the lives of her family would eventually be saved. However, what she probably couldn’t predict was that she would also have the honor of being included in the line of Christ as well as being mentioned in the book of Hebrews’ hall of faith. Now, we may not find ourselves in circumstances as extreme as these, but some acts of kindness will require a measure of faith that only comes from God--like lending an ear to the hurting when we’d rather be somewhere else, or providing resources for the poor when our own wallet isn’t bulging, or helping the helpless even though we ourselves feel tired and worn out.

The question is, “*Are we willing to interrupt the safety of our routines to extend kindness to someone in need?*” Who knows what joys and treasures may await if we will but only follow His leading!

Dear God,
Please help me take the time to realize when I, too, can demonstrate brotherly kindness. Help me not to be so busy that I miss a chance to serve You and forfeit Your blessings in the process. Thank You for the kindness You showed me when You died on the cross for my sins. Amen.

Shea Riles

Weekly Theme: **Thursday, February 11**

**Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing**

Daily Bible Reading:
Ruth 3

Praises:

I have a friend who I can talk to about anything and she never rejects me. She feels the same way about me. We tell people we are “soul sistas”. And we are because God has sifted our souls together. He started our relationship many years ago and it has stood the test of time, separation and adversity. When I think of my friend I’m reminded of Proverbs 18:24 where it says there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. That’s my friend. I even have her name written in my Bible at that very point of reference. Don’t get me wrong, neither one of us is perfect or without flaws. We just know that God has melded us together to help each other through life’s troubles and triumphs.

Prayers:

In today’s daily Bible reading we see how Naomi has instructed Ruth on the premise of finding her a home of her own. Ruth was obedient to Naomi’s instructions which had a powerful impact on Ruth’s life. Ruth had dedicated herself to staying with Naomi through several adversities and had endeared herself to Naomi. Thus Naomi watched out for Ruth. Ruth saw in Naomi the love of God and it drew her to Naomi. They were a huge help to one another and that to me is the best visual of brotherly kindness. The older woman exhibiting God’s love to the younger woman draws her to God himself.

Sunday text:
Hebrews 13:1-6

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

We should all have people in our lives that we are showing that same kindness to. I’m thankful that God placed my “soul sista” in my life so that we too can help one another, love one another, and pray for each other. After all she is a friend who sticks closer than a brother or can I be so bold as to say sister in this context?

Has God placed someone in you life to show brotherly kindness to?

Kim Waters

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 26:1-25
Lev 11,12

Weekly Theme: **Friday, February 12**

**Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing**

Daily Bible Reading:
1 Samuel 20

Praises:

One of the strongest friendships you will ever find in the Old Testament was the one that existed between David and Jonathan, the son of King Saul of Israel. Have you ever heard the phrase, “*I’ve got your back*”? That’s exactly the kind of relationship these two young Hebrew men had with each other. There was a fierce loyalty between these two. Jonathan was the King’s son. He was the obvious heir to the throne of Israel. Then there’s David. God was not pleased with the way Saul was running the nation of Israel and He wanted to remove Saul as king. The only problem was, God wanted David to replace Saul as king, not Jonathan. Jonathan was well aware of the destiny that David held with God. He loved David more than he wanted to follow his father on the throne.

Prayers:

In life, we are blessed if we have a relationship like the one that existed between David & Jonathan. What makes a friendship so special? It’s the kindness that each one shows to one another. It’s the loyalty that is there despite outside distractions. It’s the spirit of sharing that says to each other, “What’s mine is yours.” Sharing our stuff doesn’t come too easily. We are trained even back in kindergarten that it’s nice to share our things with others. What did Jonathan share with David? He shared his fierce devotion and loyalty as a friend. He wasn’t going to let anything happen to David. He was willing to forgo the throne of Israel because he loved his friend more than power.

Sunday text:
Hebrews 13:1-6

Do you have a close friend like Jonathan?

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

If you do, thank God for that friend. I heard a wise man once say, “*If you want a good friend, be a good friend to someone else.*” Pretty good advice, I would say.

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 26:26-56
Lev 13

Jon DuBois

Weekly Theme:

**Brotherly-kindness–
The Calling of
Sharing**

Saturday, February 13

“Don’t be afraid,” David said to him, “for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul and you will always eat at my table.”

Daily Bible Reading:

2 Samuel 9

-2 Samuel 9:7

Praises:

Just about everyone has seen the movie, “Pay It Forward”. Trevor, a seventh-grader, responds to the call of his Social Studies teacher to come up with a plan to change the world, and act on it. His strategy is to help three people, who must each help three other people. We find a similar story of kindness in the Bible too.

Prayers:

The story of David’s care and provision for Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9 is one of the most heart-warming accounts in the entire Bible. Jonathan was the son of King Saul, and David’s best friend. Saul wanted to kill David. 1 Samuel 20:14-17 reveals a covenant between Jonathan and David to care for one another and their families. David was able to keep that covenant by showing loving-kindness upon Jonathans’ crippled child. When David summoned him he must have felt it was a death sentence. Instead, David restored to him the family lands of Saul and Jonathan.

Sunday text:

Hebrews 13:1-6

Chuck Swindoll states, “*Kindness is a language that deaf people can hear and that blind people can see*”. The love and mercy which King David showed to Mephibosheth went far beyond the call of duty. As a member of the deposed house of Saul, Mephibosheth deserved nothing from King David. In those days when a new dynasty came into power, the king would quickly put to death any possible rival threats to the throne. The best he could hope for was exile. David not only showed mercy to Mephibosheth, he treated him as a member of his own household. David demonstrated love to one who didn’t expect it, felt undeserved, and feared him.

Memory Verse:

Hebrews 13:1

Let love of the brethren continue.

Whom do you need to seek out with grace, mercy, and love?

When we help those in need how does it change us?

How can you demonstrate kindness today?

What activities can you and your family do together to show unexpected kindness to someone?

Read through the Bible this Year

Matt 26:57-75

Lev 14

Eric Miracle

Weekly Theme:
Brotherly-kindness—
The Calling of
Sharing

Daily Bible Reading:
Hebrews 13

SSCG
Praises:

Prayers:

Memory Verse:
Hebrews 13:1
*Let love of the
brethren continue.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 27:1-26
Lev 15,16

Sunday, February 14
The Calling of Sharing

SSCG Outline

Sharing is evident in Christian:

1. Conviction v. 1-3

2. Covenant v. 4

3. Contentment v. 5-6

Pastor's Sermon Outline

Hebrews 13:1-6

Weekly Theme:
**Love— The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
John 14

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Matt 27:27-56
Lev 17-18

Monday, February 15

In today's text we see that even the disciples needed and received a little comfort. Jesus reminds the disciples of the promise that He has prepared a place for them and that He will always be there to strengthen and guide them. In order to make sure they would never forget His promises Jesus went a step further and promised them that when He is gone the Holy Spirit will be there to teach and help them remember His promises.

Do you have a troubled heart today?

This past year I had the opportunity to take a mission trip to Egypt. It was a wonderful trip but I was handicapped because I did not know the language or where to go in the city. On the last night of our stay we called two taxis to take our team to the airport. When the taxis arrived we stuffed the luggage in one vehicle and hoped to all ride in the other taxi. As luck would have it all ten of us would not fit in one taxi and I was left all alone to ride in the other taxi. The team captain told me that if something happens and I get separated that the airport was only twenty minutes away. He then proceeded to tell me a bunch of directions of how to get there without giving me any opportunity to write anything down. Before we left I asked for the number of the missionary in the country in case I was left in Egypt for the rest of my life. After getting a contact number to someone in the country I felt much more secure because I knew I would have their taxi in sight and at worst case I had a number I could call for help.

Today Jesus says, "I am the way and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." Please be comforted to know that Jesus didn't call out a bunch of directions to heaven but came to earth to show us the way. He then left us the Holy Spirit to call on Him when we are in need or separated from Him. He is the comforter you can count on if you will allow him. Who or what are you depending on to comfort you today?

Dennis Dean

Weekly Theme:
**Love— The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
John 15

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**

**Matt 27:57-66
Lev 19-20**

Tuesday, February 16

In John 15, Jesus tells his disciples to “*abide in Me.*” Jesus wanted them to understand how serious it was to depend on Him for everything. He even used the example of a tree to illustrate this biblical truth. The vine or the tree trunk represents Jesus. The gardener represents the Heavenly Father who prunes the tree when needed so it will produce fruit. The branches represent those who have trusted Christ by faith. The branch cannot bear fruit unless it is attached (abiding) to the tree trunk. The reason we abide in Christ is so we can produce spiritual fruit thus proving that we are relying on Jesus for all we need and do for Him.

Even though we don’t often hear it in our cultural lingo, “abide” is a word that has many definitions. There are actually four definitions of abide that directly apply to our relationship with Christ. The most familiar one means to “*reside with or live with someone.*” Another definition is to “*work with or cooperate with someone.*” A third meaning of abide is to “*tolerate or put up with someone.*” The last definition, “*to yield to someone else,*” is the most difficult for me to apply to my life. The word “*Yield*” always reminds me of the traffic sign. According to the law, when a driver approaches a yield sign he must slow down and allow other cars the right of way. In other words, he has to let the other driver go first. Allowing Christ to go ahead of us in life is a great way to express our love for Him. Yielding to the lordship of Jesus Christ must always be generated by a heart of love. When you grudgingly allow someone to go ahead of you there is little or no love in your heart for that person. Surrender means to willingly let Christ have His way in us because we know He has our best interest at heart even though it may not seem to make sense to us at the time.

Are you having trouble yielding certain areas of your life to Christ today? Be honest with God about what’s on your heart. When you yield to God in your life, you know you can count on Him to lead you in the right direction.

Jon DuBois

Weekly Theme:
**Love— The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
John 21:1-19

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**

**Matt 28
Lev 21-22**

Wednesday, February 17

When you've failed someone how do you feel? How do you respond once you've hurt or disappointed them? The first question cuts to the core. This is what drives the second question. Without a feeling of remorse or understanding how it affected the other person; your actions (good or bad) still are worthless. So, what do you do? Replay the failure? Deny it is your fault? Dismiss the importance? At some point you resort back to your roots. Peter displays several stages from failure to faithfulness. They are as followed: ran from the mission (John 18:25-27 and 21:1-3), roots (21:3), relived (21:6), remembered (21:7), restored (21:15-17), and returned to the mission (John 21:19). Spiritual maturity also moves through stages. The four stages are: help me, tell me, show me, and follow me.

In John 21:1-19 we see just how Peter handled the pain. To no surprise he says, "I'm going fishing". That was Peter's way of dealing with the questions, guilt, and pain. He doesn't want to think about what just happened with Jesus so escapes into mindless fishing. That's the problem with most of us. We revert back to our old ways instead of continuing in the spiritual foundations we have laid.

How do you handle failing Jesus? You can only run away so long. Once you see him in clear sight again it doesn't take long for the guilt to subside and you begin to run towards Him. Peter couldn't constrain himself. He left everything behind and swam towards the shore. After breakfast Jesus focuses on Peter. He asks three times "Do you love me?" Each time Jesus spoke, become more intense with His wording. Do you physically (eros), brotherly (phileo), and divinely (agape) LOVE ME? Jesus still believed in Peter just as He does you and I. That moment with Peter proved to be a turning point in his life. Weeks later Peter would preach one of the boldest sermons of all time.

What do you love the most? Where does your time and money go to the most? That's your answer!
What kind of friend inspires devotion such as above?
Where are you in your spiritual maturity?
Do you love Jesus? Follow Him!

Eric Miracle

Weekly Theme:
**Love— The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
Luke 10:29-37

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**
Mk 1:1-22
Lev 23-24

Thursday, February 18

As a hiker was traveling up a mountain trail one beautiful, sunny day in the majestic Colorado Rockies, he noticed a bird lying on the ground. As he went over to investigate, the hiker surmised that the bird must have fallen out of its nest and was fluttering around trying to fly back home! Having been a veteran hiker in the park for quite a few years, he knew it was common sense to avoid contact with all wildlife for the purpose of safety. Something rose up inside the hiker's heart. He couldn't ignore that feeling of compassion that swept over him. He slowly lowered his heavy backpack to the forest floor, and moved closer to see what he could do to help. Finding a pair of gloves and an old t-shirt in his back pack, the hiker gently picked up the bird and wrapped it in the old t-shirt. Then he gently carried it to the nearest park ranger station about a quarter of a mile up the mountain trail. The park rangers were able to nurse the bird back to health and return it to its natural habitat in a few days.

Natural instincts can help us in many ways. They keep us out of trouble and help us make pretty good decisions most of the time. Sometimes in the Christian life, logic and common sense need to be ignored in order to be obedient to God. When the Good Samaritan stopped to get involved with the man left for dead on the road, he took a major risk. There could have been other robbers and thugs waiting to jump him, too! Something happened to the Samaritan when he saw the man lying in the road. The Bible says he felt compassion. Compassion is a strong feeling that we better not ignore. It usually is a signal from the Lord urging us to help someone who is in dire straits. It's risky helping total strangers. The unknown goes against our logic and common sense. But sometimes, we have to be led by our hearts. Common sense comes in handy when someone is trying to take advantage of you. Compassion helps us see someone who really needs our help!

Jon DuBois

Weekly Theme:
**Love– The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
1 Corinthians 13

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**

**Mk 1:23-45
Lev 25**

Friday, February 19

“And I will show you a more excellent way...”

Paul is writing to the churches of Corinth in anticipation of his coming visit. Chapter 13 is tucked in the middle of a discussion about correct corporate worship and the abuse of spiritual gifts being used as a type of pecking order in the church.

-Bottom-line...Paul explains that the gifts are nothing unless the Christian possesses the fruit of love.

LOVE:

- Suffers Long = Patient > able to persevere calmly
- Kind = having a generous, warm, compassionate nature
- Does not envy = wanting others things
- Does not parade itself = brag
- Is not puffed up = pride
- Does not behave rudely = self-centered
- Does not seek its own = selfish
- Is not provoked = easily aggravated
- Thinks no evil = sins of the mind
- Does not rejoice in iniquity = celebrate others sin
- Rejoices in truth = looks for truth to acknowledge
- Bears all things = advocate for others
- Believes all things = avoids skepticism
- Hopes all things = wants the best in every situation
- Endures all things = willing to stick it out to the end
- Never fails = is always eternally successful

***Why is this passage so important?
Jesus said that the people will know that you are one of My followers because of the way you love.
Not conditional love, based on circumstances, but passionate, unconditional love for mankind.
Jesus loved unconditionally and selflessly.
This is what we must strive to do as we strive the more excellent way.

Pray and ask God to purge your selfish desires and be able to genuinely love others, no matter what the circumstance.

Love is action and love is personal, you must be busy with people in order to love; connect the way Jesus does.

Robert Gilliland

Weekly Theme:
**Love— The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity**

Daily Bible Reading:
1 John 4:20-5:13

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
1 John 4:7-21

Memory Verse:
1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**

**Mk 2
Lev 26-27**

Saturday, February 20

We all come into this world as infants. Most of us are blessed with parents that care for us as we develop into adults. As mature adults we most often have characteristics that are similar to our parents. Even though many parents would like to stop their children from growing up so fast, physical maturity still takes place.

Spiritually, we are expected to mature in a similar pattern. Just as in our human bodies we grow to resemble our parents, we are expected to grow to be like our Creator. “God is love.” (1 John 4:19) Our physical maturity is measured by height and weight, but our spiritual maturity is measured by our ability to love. We are told to “be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved [us].” (Eph. 5:1-2) Further, Christ tells us we “are to be perfect, as [our] heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matt. 5:48) “If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.” (1 John 4:12).

Spiritual perfection is similar to physical maturation given that they both develop over time. Physically, we crawl, walk, run, drive, and then leave home. Spiritually we go through stages as we must love Jesus, love others, and love His commands. Jesus tells us to “love one another, even as I have loved you... By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

In creation, animal and plant life is created to reproduce more life. Spiritually we are also expected to be fruitful. Jesus tells us to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...” (Matt. 28:19:20) He did not limit this command to clergy only, but to all of His disciples. In creation, plants and animals have been created with different characteristics to serve different purposes, and as maturing disciples we have all been given different spiritual gifts with which we are to serve God. However, if we have every spiritual gift, “but do not have love, [we are] nothing.” (1 Cor. 13:2)

Lonny Hughes

Weekly Theme:
Love– The Calling of
Spiritual Maturity

Sunday, February 21 *1 John 4:7-21*
The Calling of Spiritual Maturity
SSCG Outline

Essentials of Active Love>

Daily Bible Reading:
1 John 4-5
SSCG
Praises:

Active Love is:

Displayed through Christ v. 7-10

Displayed through Christians v. 11-16; 20-21

Displayed through Confidence v. 17-19

Prayers:

Pastor's Sermon Outline

Memory Verse:

1 John 4:7
*Beloved, let us love
one another, for
love is from God;
and everyone who
loves is born of God
and knows God.*

**Read through the
Bible this Year**

Mk 3:1-19

Num 1-2

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Luke 9:1-62

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:
2 Peter 1:5-7
...in your Faith
supply:

Moral excellence
Knowledge
Self-control
Perseverance
Godliness
Brotherly kindness
Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 3:20-35
Num 3-4

Monday, February 22

It was time for them to go. They had been trained by the Master Teacher, and it was time to put into practice what they had learned and observed firsthand. Jesus had called them, but now He was sending them out “to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.” What a tremendous task that lay ahead of them. But isn’t that how it is with us?

God calls and equips us to serve, too. He doesn’t give us His Word and His Spirit just for us to sit around and do nothing. When God teaches us something, He expects us to share it. Just like the disciples, we have been blessed in America and at Olive to learn His Word through sound preaching and Bible study. But it doesn’t stop there. Jesus gave the disciples specific directions as to what they were to do. Then, after going out, the apostles returned and gave an account to Him of all that they had done. They needed to spend time with Him to be prepared for their next task.

What about you?
Are you spending time with the Master Teacher seeking His direction?

Not only do we have the written account of Christ’s teachings and example, we also have a direct line to the Father through prayer. That’s no ordinary privilege.

Heavenly Father,
Thank You for allowing me to share the Good News.
Help me to be available, willing, and prepared to go.
I’m glad to be a part of Your plan!
Amen.

Shea Riles

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Luke 10:1-24

Praises:

Tuesday, February 23

After 35 years a mute and deaf man speaks! The man had wandered away from his home in Manhattan and couldn't tell people where he lived so they placed him in a mental hospital. 35 years he remained there, until one day words began to form. His very first words were, "Find my family".

Do you remember your first word as a baby? Most first words result from being around someone or something. Although my daughter is a daddy's girl she certainly didn't say my name first. What she did say was, "Mommy". You can bet I worked hard at changing that habit really quick!

Prayers:

Jesus spent time with his core of 3, disciples, and followers. They lived out what He taught. It isn't enough to just believe. Jesus teaches us to use what we've learned in our life.

Jesus provides a 5 step plan for his followers:

Partner together: He handpicked people out of a large crowd to work in twos.

Plan: Jesus sent them where He was headed.

Plenty of work: The harvest is ripe for picking.

People Needed: 72 weren't enough for the harvest.

Pray: Ask God

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:
2 Peter 1:5-7
...in your Faith
supply:

Moral excellence
Knowledge
Self-control
Perseverance
Godliness
Brotherly kindness
Love

When Jesus sent out the 12 disciples in Chapter 9 and the 72 in Chapter 10 you can't help but feel energized! This isn't the Lone Ranger, but a Revolution! *"The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.'" v. 17 (NASB).* Can you sense the excitement? These disciples have just been used by God to do some amazing things. When we are given an opportunity to be used by God our response shouldn't be "there is no way I can do that". Do not hinder the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Jesus has power over the enemy and has given authority to us as we GO!

What are your favorite hobbies and places to go?

Where do you work?

What's the real problem in this passage? (Hint: It's found in verse v. 2)

Why were they not to greet anyone on the road in v. 4?

When's the last time you shared with someone?

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 4:1-20
Num 5-6

Eric Miracle

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Mark 5:36-38; 9:1-3;
13:2-4; 14:32-34

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:

2 Peter 1:5-7

...in your Faith

supply:

Moral excellence

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 4:21-41

Num 7-9

Wednesday, February 24

At Olive this year we are making a commitment to DISCIPLESHIP. In reading Matthew 28, we know that discipleship is commanded by Jesus Christ.

Discipleship programs and processes come in all shapes and sizes but if performed correctly yields great results.

*Eternal Results = life transformation and fruitfulness

In scripture we find three categories or principles of disciple making:

-Large group discipleship where basic Bible study, ministry, fellowship, and evangelism take place

-Smaller group discipleship where 2 to 4 individuals grow to a better understanding of Scripture, form close bonds, and hold one another accountable

-One-on-one discipleship where life coaching is practiced and effective reproduction takes place

We see in the passages today where Jesus walked with three men: Peter, James, and John. This is small group discipleship. We read of four specific benefits of being a part of a small group discipleship team:

1. Ministry - Jesus wanted His group to go along with Him on ministry visits forming a tight team

2. Trust - Jesus desired His team to witness what had never been witnessed with confidence that they would not share the experience with anyone until His resurrection

3. Guidance - Jesus explained clearly what was on the horizon for His team. He was readying the troops with openness and honesty so that they would not be taken by surprise. There was no control of knowledge, rather freedom in this group of men to be all God called them to be.

4. Accountability - Jesus held His group accountable by calling them out when He found them in their laziness

*How about you today? Are you a part of a small group that pushes each other to new ministry, communicates with ultimate trust, leads by Godly advice (Psm 1), and holds one another accountable for their sinful behavior? If so, thank the Lord for your relationships and strive to attain these Christ-like benefits.

If not, ask God to grant you the vision to seek out two or three Christians to team up in ministry this year.

Robert Gilliland

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Acts 13

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:

2 Peter 1:5-7

...in your Faith

supply:

Moral excellence

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 5:1-20

Num 10-12

Thursday, February 25

I am sure that there are times when God has called you to go, for he has a special work for you to do, but you are unsure whether you should go. And you are unsure only because you are unsure about the outcome of where you are going and what you are doing.

Let's look at Paul and Barnabas for an example of discipleship, an example of obedience no matter the outcome.

Their first stop, they began preaching in Cyprus. They come across an intelligent man, a proconsul named Sergius Paulus. This man, unfortunately, was accompanied by a sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus. Now the proconsul wanted to hear the Word of God, but the sorcerer opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Praise the Lord, Paul, through the Holy Spirit, rebuked the sorcerer and made him blind. And through this encounter the proconsul believed!

Now, Paul and Barnabas' second stop...

They are now at Antioch in Pisidian. After being asked to speak a few words of encouragement to the Jews in the synagogue, they began sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. After the congregation dismissed, they were asked to return next Sabbath, this time by the Gentiles. When they returned and the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy and began opposing what Paul spoke. Paul and Barnabas explained that the gospel was for both Jew and Gentile, but the Jews began stirring up the people and rose up persecution against them. Then the men were expelled from the region.

If you notice, there was opposition in both instances.

And there will be opposition when you do what the Lord has called you to do. Opposition from the outside (sorcerer=lost people) and the inside (Jews=God's people). But as you are being prepared to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, you must be obedient through opposition. Since Paul and Barnabas were doing what the Lord had asked them to do, people came away believing and the Word of the Lord spread throughout the regions. And look at verse 52, "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (even amongst the opposition)

Chris Reeser

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Mark 16:7 & Acts 2

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:

2 Peter 1:5-7

...in your Faith

supply:

Moral excellence

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 5:21-41

Num 13-15

Friday, February 26

According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, a disciple is one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. In Acts 2 we see the definition put to life through Peter's actions. As he stood in the midst of thousands of people, he began sharing the gospel with them. Peter had no F.A.I.T.H. evangelism model, ABC's of salvation, or even a tract of the "Roman's Road." In fact at this time, around A.D. 30, Saul (Paul) had not even been converted, the *Holy Bible* did not exist, and the term "Christian" had not been conceived. In 2010, Christian's struggle to evangelize with these tools, so how in the world did "about 3,000 souls" get saved that day? (2:41)

First Peter knew the scriptures. His Gospel presentation was 23 scriptures long, and 13 of those scriptures were references from the Old Testament about the Messiah. Next, Peter shared the story of Jesus. Jesus came and God performed many marvelous wonders through Him, we nailed Him to a cross and crucified Him, but God raised Him up again! AMEN! Finally, Peter shared about his experiences with Christ.

Today, evangelism is the same! As disciples we should know what the Bible says through daily reading, what Jesus did for us, and what Christ has done in our personal lives. But discipleship doesn't stop at salvation. Read the end of Acts 2. Did the "Christians" just go back to their old way of living? Absolutely not. They learned and taught others, fellowshiped, helped each other, shared with those in need, and praised God. What was result? "The Lord add[ed] to their number day by day those who were being saved." (2:47)

Some may think, "Peter was an apostle, so it must have been easier for him." Let's back up a little in Acts 2. In verse 2, we see the Holy Spirit filling the place like a "violent rushing wind." Peter had nothing to do with any of the salvations! It was the preparations made by word of God, the blood of Christ, and the moving of the Holy Spirit that contained eternal power. Peter was just obedient.

Disciple, what is Jesus preparing you for today?
Remember: He goes before you.

Lonny Hughes

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
Acts 16:1-13

Praises:

Prayers:

Sunday text:
2 Peter 1-3

Memory Verse:

2 Peter 1:5-7

...in your Faith

supply:

Moral excellence

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 6:1-29

Num 16-18

Saturday, February 27

In this passage of scripture, Paul demonstrates for us the essence of true discipleship. He seeks out a younger believer and invites him to join him in his ministry efforts. As Timothy traveled with Paul, he most certainly watched the way that Paul went about his life. He watched the way he responded to conflict and he recognized the way that he treated people day by day. Certainly the wisdom gained through conversations between the two of them while traveling a long dusty road was invaluable to Timothy's future ministry. The times that Timothy merely observed Paul's actions when no words were needed served to further equip Timothy for the plans that God had for him. However, I'm sure that Timothy also took notice of Paul's mistakes and the times that he didn't handle a situation the correct way. But discipleship doesn't call for perfection. It doesn't ask of the teacher to never mess up in front of the student. In fact, real discipleship requires honesty, transparency and vulnerability.

As I was a young teenager my youth pastor, Alan, began discipling me. He never called it that, but that's what it was. He allowed me to spend time with him at the church and he invited me over to watch movies with he and his wife. We talked about girls, music and the Bible. He even washed his car for me so that I could take a girl to the prom in something other than my old Jeep. But, he was also very consistent with asking me how my quiet time was that morning and what the Lord was teaching me. He certainly wasn't perfect and never claimed to be but I knew that he loved the Lord and cared about me. We still have a great relationship today and I'm so thankful for how he invested in me throughout those critical years of my life.

Christ has called each of us to discipleship. We must evaluate our lives and ask ourselves whom we are investing in each day? Is there a person with whom we are pouring our life into and helping guide them through their spiritual journey? We need to ask the Lord to reveal to us that one person with whom Christ could use us as an instrument to help develop spiritually.

Jeremy Lloyd

Weekly Theme:
Prepared for
Discipleship

Daily Bible Reading:
2 Peter 1 - 3

SSCG
Praises:

Prayers:

Memory Verse:

2 Peter 1:5-7

...in your Faith

supply:

Moral excellence

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Read through the
Bible this Year

Mk 6:30-56

Num 19-21

Sunday, February 28 *2 Peter 1 - 3*

Prepared for Discipleship

SSCG Outline

1. Christians are encouraged to Know their
Salvation v. 1: 3 - 9

2. Christians are encouraged to Know the
Truth v. 2: 1 - 3

3. Christians are encouraged to Know the
Future v. 3: 1 - 9

4. Christians are encouraged to Know the
Present v. 3: 14 – 18

Rick Burgess Sermon Outline